

a system there will often arise difference of opinion as between Surveyor and owner, and, also, even, what one Surveyor will pass another Surveyor will not pass, the difference between them being merely matters of opinion. There was, also, the weakness that while there might be reasonable doubt whether repairs were necessary for so short a period, there would be no doubt in respect of a longer period.

After a thorough investigation, it became evident that a new system of survey could be devised under which the result would be more satisfactory to the Department, and less burdensome to owners. Under the Regulations and Instructions to Surveyors a ship may remain under the system in operation prior to new regulations, for the first four years, but eventually all ships must come under the new system. Under the latter, the survey will be carried out by a departmental Surveyor in conjunction with the insurance corporation surveyor, if the vessel is classed with such a corporation. The survey will be an intensive one, embracing every part of the ship, enabling a complete establishment of her conditions, and specifications of reconditioning required for classification. This will form the basis for further four-yearly surveys in which the Department and the insurance corporation surveyors act in conjunction. So far as the Department is concerned, there will be annual or biennial surveys, as the case may be, of certain parts of the ship, so as to maintain a regular watch on those parts of the ship which may possibly get out of condition within the four-yearly period. Apart from the fact that the regulations require that *every part* of the ship shall be seen and examined and tested where necessary every four years, the instructions inform Surveyors definitely just what examination is to be made at each interim survey, and, what is most important, completely instruct them as to standards of allowable deterioration. Thus, both Surveyor and shipowner will know exactly where they stand and there will be no room for differences of opinion between them, or difference of opinion among the Surveyors at the different ports at which a ship may come up for survey. But, notwithstanding the prescription of detail and periods of main and interim surveys, if the Surveyor should find or hear, at any time, that any part of the ship is not as it should be, he will have full authority to investigate and take such action as may be necessary to ensure safety.

The Chief Surveyor and myself are convinced that the new survey system will be more satisfactory and dependable than the old.

#### SAFETY CARGO-WORKING HOOK.

Arising out of representations made by the National Disputes Committee appointed by the Shipowners' and Waterside Workers' Federation, the Department, in continuance of its endeavour to make cargo-working more safe, instituted a competition for the production of a safety cargo-working hook. Over one hundred and seventy specimen hooks were received in due time, and, despite that the competition had closed, a considerable number have since been sent in for the Department's consideration in the event of the competition failing to produce a satisfactory hook. These latter hooks cannot, of course, be considered in connection with the competition.

The conditions of the competition indicated that the design of the hook should be, as far as possible, such that—

- (1) The sling will not become detached when the hook is in a resting position :
- (2) The sling will not come off the hook should the hook turn upside down through the yard-arm wire fouling and midship wire :
- (3) The hook will not foul the coamings or obstruction :
- (4) The hands of workers are not liable to be injured when the sling is attached to or detached from the hook :
- (5) The hook is practically fool-proof :
- (6) The hook is convenient to use.

An Advisory Committee was set up consisting of four representatives each of the Waterside Workers' Federation and Shipowners' Federation, and two representatives of the Department. Seven hooks were selected by the committee for trial under actual working-conditions on various ships and at various ports. Five of these hooks were of the type where what would ordinarily be a gap in the hook is barred by some mechanical contrivance. The other two hooks had no mechanism, but relied for safety on design.

As the competition is not yet disposed of by the Advisory Committee it would not be appropriate to make further comment on hooks submitted. The Department regrets that the matter is taking so long to finalize, but has not been able to avoid the delay.

#### REGISTRATION OF SHIPPING.

On the 31st December, 1930, there were on the register of vessels in the Dominion 65 sailing-vessels, of 5,892 tons register ; 242 steamers, of 98,305 tons register ; and 224 motor-vessels, of 7,773 tons register, as compared with 71 sailing-vessels, of 8,868 tons register ; 253 steamers, of 104,407 tons register ; and 217 motor-vessels, of 6,242 tons register, at the end of the previous year.

The number of seamen and boys employed on board was 3,680, as compared with 3,805 for the year 1929.

#### GOVERNMENT SHIPPING OFFICES.

In the Government shipping offices the administration of the Shipping and Seamen Act has been efficiently carried out. Appended is a statement showing the number of seamen engaged and discharged at the various ports during the year, and the fees received for such transactions. The total