

1893.
NEW ZEALAND.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

(ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1892-93.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

MY LORD,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 22nd September, 1893.

I do myself the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, the report of the Marine Department of this colony for the financial year ended on the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,

P. A. BUCKLEY,

Minister having charge of the Marine Department.

His Excellency the Right Honourable the Earl of Glasgow, &c.,
Governor of New Zealand.

The ASSISTANT SECRETARY to the MINISTER of MARINE.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 7th August, 1893.

I have the honour to submit the following report of this department for the year ended the 31st March last:—

Lighthouses.—No accident that affected the light was reported from any of the lighthouses during the year. Cuvier Island Lighthouse was struck by lightning on the 4th November last, but no damage was done to the lantern or tower; the coils of two of the electric bells were, however, fused. The light on the French Pass Beacon was not extinguished during the year. No repairs of any importance have been carried out to any of the lighthouses or buildings. The new lantern for Farewell Spit has been procured from Scotland; and it is to be hoped that a sum of money will be provided for the erection of a new tower. There is a convenient site for the new lighthouse a little further towards the spit end, and the tower need only be 60ft. in height, instead of 100ft. as at present; this reduction can be made as the light will not be of so much importance after the exhibition of Stephens Island Light. The trial shipment of mineral colza oil did not prove satisfactory, the burners at present in use apparently not being suitable for its consumption.

I regret to have to report the death of two principal keepers—Kidson and Scopes, both valuable servants. Their widows were given a year's pay as a compassionate allowance. Two assistant-keepers were appointed to the vacancies created by their deaths.

New Lighthouses.—The works on Stephens Island have been carried on during the year with the result that it is anticipated that the light will be ready for exhibition in January next. The tower is of cast-iron, and the contract for its construction has been carried out by Messrs. Beane and Sons (who made the one erected at Cuvier Island) for the sum of £689. The lantern and apparatus have been received from England, the apparatus being a revolving one, showing a double flash every thirty seconds. Masters of vessels have expressed great satisfaction at the prospect of the speedy exhibition of this light. Mariners urge the erection of lights at Cape Palliser, eastern entrance to Cook Strait, and at Rocks or Kiourangi Point, on the west coast of the South Island. Both these lights would be of great service, the one near Rocks Point being wanted in connection with the coal trade to Westport. The cost of their erection would probably be between £6,000 and £7,000 each.

Harbours.—The buoys at the harbours under the control of this department have been kept in order by the "Hinemoa." No works of any importance have been carried on in connection with any harbour except the dredging at New Plymouth, a sum of £3,961 9s. 6d. having been expended under the direction of the Public Works Department in carrying out this work. The master of a vessel, who discharged ballast in Kaipara Harbour, was fined 50s. and costs for so doing. The County Council of Whangarei was authorised, by Order in Council dated the 13th December last, to exercise all the powers of a Harbour Board in Whangarei Harbour, contracts having been first let for putting the local wharves in order. A sum of money was granted to the Mongonui County Council for repairing and enlarging the wharf at Mongonui. A harbourmaster, at a small salary, was appointed at Waikawa to look after the beacons and to see vessels did not discharge their ballast in the harbour. In February a very heavy gale blew down the leading beacons on the north side of the entrance to Manukau Harbour, and, consequently, the leading lights were extinguished; the harbourmaster, however, succeeded in temporarily repairing the beacons, and the lights were relighted after being out for four nights only. A sum of money has been placed on the estimates for the erection of new beacons, of which it is proposed only to have two instead of three, as at present. A sum of £100 was granted to the Opunake Wharf Company for the purpose of laying down moorings near the wharf recently erected at that port. By direction of the Government, Mr. T. Perham visited and reported on the following works: Dredging at Nelson Harbour, and improvement of Mokau, Waitara, and Wairoa (Hawke's Bay) Rivers.