

1895.
NEW ZEALAND.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

(ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1894-95.)

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

MY LORD,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 31st August, 1895.

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

I have, &c.,

J. G. WARD,

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

Minister of Marine.

The SECRETARY to the MINISTER of MARINE.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 30th June, 1895.

I have the honour to make the following report on the administration of this department during the financial year ended the 31st March last:—

The work of the department continues to be performed by the reduced staff to which I drew attention in my report for last year, and, although I have found the active oversight of the work, in addition to my duties as Secretary of Customs, a very severe tax on my time and energies, I do not anticipate that I shall be compelled to ask for relief, unless some unexpected development of work takes place. I regret to state that for over three months I was deprived of the very valuable assistance of Mr. George Allport, Chief Clerk, owing to a severe illness, from which, I am glad to say, he has completely recovered. During his absence his duties were efficiently performed by Mr. Julian J. D. Grix, the second Clerk; but owing to the work of the latter falling into arrear, in consequence of his having to take up Mr. Allport's duties, it has been necessary to employ some temporary clerical assistance.

I regret to have to report the death of Captain Robert Johnson, who held the position of Nautical Adviser and Examiner of Masters and Mates, which took place on the 19th August last. He had been in the service of the department since the 10th November, 1861, and was a most valuable officer. When the department was separated from the Customs, in April, 1878, he was appointed Secretary, which position he held until the two departments were again placed under one permanent head in October, 1880. Since his death, Captain George Allman has been appointed Nautical Adviser and Chief Examiner of Masters and Mates.

Lighthouses.—Out of the sum of £810 voted for repairs to lighthouses and keepers' dwellings at several stations in the southern part of the South Island the sum of £215 14s. 11d. has been expended, and, when the works which were in hand at the end of March are completed, the stations in that part of the colony, with the exception of the keepers' houses at Centre Island and Puysegur Point, will be in good working condition. At Nelson, the house-accommodation for the keepers is very poor, and it is proposed, as soon as the necessary funds are voted by Parliament, to erect a new house for the principal keeper, and to utilise the house he at present occupies to provide proper accommodation for the assistant-keeper. The lighthouse artificer has recently visited the North Island lighthouses, and reported on the repairs which are required at some of the stations. The most extensive work which will have to be done is the repair of the houses at Tiritiri. On the 19th September last a heavy sea wrecked the crane at Cuvier Island: a new one will be erected at an early date.

Owing to the lighthouse artificer being so much occupied in carrying out the repairs above referred to, and visiting the various lighthouses for the purpose of reporting thereon, no further progress has been made in practically testing the suitability of mineral colza oil for use in our lighthouses. One of the burners which is used for this oil in Tasmania has been obtained from the Marine Board at Hobart, and it will shortly be used to further test the oil at Pencarrow Head Lighthouse. I feel satisfied that the only difficulty in the way of the use of the oil is the adaptation of the present burners. When this point is solved the oil will be available for many of the lighthouses, and a great saving in cost will result from its use.

The "Hinemoa" having been sent to the Auckland and Campbell Islands on special service in connection with the prevention of sealing during the close season, it became necessary to make