

1901.

NEW ZEALAND.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1900-1.

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

MY LORD,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 16th September, 1901.

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.,

WM. HALL-JONES,

Minister of Marine.

His Excellency the Right Hon. the Earl of Ranfurly,
Governor of New Zealand.

The SECRETARY to the MINISTER of MARINE.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 13th September, 1901.

I have the honour to make the following report on the work of this department during the financial year ended the 1st March last:—

Lighthouses.—The cost of maintenance, exclusive of the cost of the attending steamer, was £13,573 10s. 9d. The efficiency of the lighthouses has been properly maintained and everything has worked smoothly.

The new lighthouse on East Island, off East Cape, has been completed. This light was first exhibited on the 9th August last, and has proved to be of great service to shipping. The proposal to connect it with the telegraph system has not been carried out, as the most suitable route has not yet been ascertained; a further survey will be made shortly. Since the completion of the lighthouse, a large landslip has taken place, destroying part of the tramway, burying the landing store, and partly filling-up the landing place.

The site for a lighthouse at Kahurangi Point, about sixty-five miles north of Westport, has been selected by the Marine Engineer and Nautical Adviser. A lantern and apparatus for a second-order fixed white light, to show a sector of 20° of red light over Stewart breaker, have been ordered through the Agent-General, and steps are being taken to proceed with the erection of the tower, dwelling-houses, and other necessary buildings.

Pencarrow Head Lighthouse has been connected with the telegraph system of the colony.

At Nugget Point a new flagstaff and a house for a third keeper have been erected. The flagstaff has been placed where it can be easily seen from passing vessels, and it has been arranged that one of the keepers is to be always on the look-out during the day, so that all vessels may be reported. A contract has been let for the supply of the timber required to renew the keepers' houses at Farewell Spit, and various minor repairs have been effected to the buildings at several stations.

In consequence of the erection of East Cape Lighthouse, the coastal light dues at Gisborne and Tauranga have been altered, so as to provide that vessels visiting those ports and deriving benefit from the light shall contribute towards its maintenance.

The work of inspecting the lighthouses has been performed by Captain Bollons, of the s.s. "Hinemoa."

The sum of £22,240 9s. 3d. has been collected for light dues during the year, as compared with £20,996 8s. 3d. during the previous year, being an increase of £1,244 1s.

Harbours.—Last session Acts were passed to constitute Harbour Boards at Nelson and Mokau, and the Boards have been duly established, and have taken over the control of the harbours.

The Governor in Council has declared that the Whakatane County Council shall exercise the powers of a Harbour Board in Whakatane Harbour. The buoys in the harbours under the control of the department have been overhauled and attended to by the Government steamers.

One of the buoys at Nelson sank in consequence of the master of a cutter using it as a target for rifle practice. The offender was prosecuted and fined, besides having to defray the cost of recovering and repairing the buoy.

The dredging near the wharf at Onehunga has been completed, and has very much improved the approach to the wharf. Shipowners are now urging that a shoal-patch below the wharf should be removed so that vessels may be able to leave at low water.

The wreck of the "Waipara," which for some time obstructed the navigation of Okarito River, has been blown up by Captain Falconer, of the Defence Department, and a party of his men, and the channel is now clear.