

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

MARINE DEPARTMENT

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE).

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

SIR,— Marine Department, Wellington, 23rd September, 1879.
I do myself the honor to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, the report of the Marine Department of this colony for the financial year ended the 30th June last.

His Excellency Sir Hercules Robinson, G.C.M.G., &c., Minister having charge of the
Governor of New Zealand. Marine Department.

REPORT.

SIR,— Marine Department, Wellington, 1st July, 1879.
I have the honor to submit the following report on the working of the Marine Department for the year ended 30th June last:—

Lighthouses.—During the past year the following lights have been exhibited for the first time:—Timaru on 1st July, Centre Island on 16th September, Puysegur Point on 1st March, and Cape Maria van Diemen on 24th March. Timaru Light is a fixed white light of the fifth order dioptric; being a local light, it is maintained by the Harbour Board. Centre Island is a fixed white light of the first order dioptric, with red arcs over the inshore dangers. Puysegur Point Light is a flashing white light of the first order dioptric, showing a flash every ten seconds. Cape Maria van Diemen is a revolving white light of the first order dioptric, obtaining its greatest brilliancy once a minute; and there is a fixed red light in the lower part of the tower, showing over an angle of 30 degrees in the direction of Columbia Reef.

It is anticipated that the lights at Akaroa Head and Cape Saunders will be lighted early in 1880. The Hokitika Light will be ready for lighting in September; this light, being a local light, will be maintained by the Harbour Board.

A report by the Marine Engineer on works in connection with lighthouses which have been executed under his direction during the past year is appended.

Mokohinau Light has not yet been commenced, the Auckland Harbour Board having requested that it should not be erected on that island, but on Moro Tiri, one of the Hen and Chickens Islands. Mr. Blackett has been instructed to report on the proposed new site when a suitable opportunity arrives.

Mana Light has not yet been removed to Cape Egmont, the necessary land at that place not having been procured.

Stephen's Island and Kapiti have been visited to see whether there were available lighthouse sites; but, owing to the difficult nature of the ground, Stephen's Island could not be thoroughly examined. A track has since been cut, and the Marine Engineer will revisit the island on the first convenient opportunity. Stephen's Island is a capital position for a lighthouse, and it is to be hoped that a suitable site will be found.

The new fountains have been fitted at Nugget Point, and paraffin burners for Pencarrow Head and Tiri Tiri will be ordered shortly.

The port lights referred to in last report have been received, and found to be suitable for the purpose for which they are intended; a further supply of them has been ordered from England.

The plans for a store for the Marine Department, to be erected on the reclaimed land, Wellington, have been prepared, and tenders are shortly to be called for its erection. When this store is built it will prove a great convenience to the Department, and will enable a proper supply of spare stores, &c., for lighthouses to be kept.

Light Dues.—The light dues collected at the various ports of the colony during the year amounted to £13,664 9s. 11d., being £2,146 10s. 9d. more than the previous year.

Government Steamers.—The "Hinemoa" has been almost exclusively employed in work outside this department. A steam starting-gear has been fitted to her engines, which has been found to work very well. The "Stella" has been employed in landing stores at existing, and materials for the construction of new, lighthouses, overhauling buoys, &c. She has, however, undertaken a considerable amount of work for other departments, such as attending on the Jackson's Bay Commissioners (over six weeks), &c.

Examination of Masters, &c.—Certificates of competency have been issued to 87 candidates, 68 being for masters, mates, and engineers of sea-going vessels, and 19 for masters and mates of river steamers. New regulations for the examination of masters, mates, and engineers have been prepared and issued under the authority of "The Shipping and Seamen's Act, 1877."

Shipping Law.—The consolidation of the law relating to shipping, harbours, and Harbour Boards, by the assent of Her Majesty being given to "The Shipping and Seamen's Act, 1877," and by the passing of "The Harbours Act, 1878," has been found most beneficial. A considerable number of