

DEFENCE WORKS.

AUCKLAND.

A large amount of work has been done in improvements and additions to the various forts and mine-fields. At one fort the fire command has been improved, erection of an electric-light plant is in progress, and a small hospital-hut has been built. At another fort a large gun has been emplaced, a fire commander's station built, and a caretaker's cottage, and some fencing done. At other forts battery commanders' stations have been built, the arc of fire of the guns improved, and additional guns emplaced, the roads repaired, outbuildings put up, and improvements in drainage made, some minor repairs to the buildings done, and improvements in gates, &c., made. Submarine depot: Tram-lines have been laid to the submarine-mining wharf, the fitting- and testing-rooms have been moved and refitted, a concrete floor has been laid in one shed, a coal-shed and carpenter's shop built, and the smithy has been moved. Gas and water have been laid on to the testing-rooms, which have also been done up; turntables have been fixed, and drainage work done; two cranes have been fixed on the wharf, and a boat-shed is in progress. The cable to the observing-station has been trenched, a survey of the mine-field has been made, and some of the necessary appliances have been provided.

Estimates for additions and alterations to the drill-shed have been prepared, and also for additional rifle-ranges.

WELLINGTON.

Some additional work has been done in finishing the electric-light installations. The engine-room has been ventilated, the boiler has been lagged, and some fittings provided. Some improvements have been made in the searchlight emplacements. A new floor has been laid in a shell-store. Head-covers have been finished in some fighting-stations. A site has been surveyed for a submarine-mining station, and work on it has begun. The hauling-gear in the Shelly Bay slip-way has been improved, and side-moorings are being provided. The Mahanga Bay Wharf has been finished, and a crane fixed in position. The boundary-fence has been put in good order, and the Evans Bay Road repaired. Additional gun-emplacements have been built, and guns mounted.

LYTTLETON.

A new engine and boiler have been provided for the searchlight. The shed has been lined, roads and approaches have been formed, and a large amount of levelling done. Large additions have been made to the Sumner Road Barracks; a large retaining-wall has been built to protect the parade-ground and to allow for its enlargement; the road and buildings have been kept in a good state of repair. The residence of the sergeant-major, Erskine Point, has been repaired and renovated.

DUNEDIN.

Some fencing has been erected in front of one of the batteries, and a fighting-station is being built. At another battery a concrete roof has been built over the engine-room and one of the galleries, and covered with earth, a wall built in rear of a gun-pit, ramps formed at ends of passages, wing-walls to loading platforms built, and some asphaltting done, a new gun-pivot has been fixed, some slopes have been sodded, and other earthwork on slopes, the Defence Reserve fenced in, and the road leading to the battery repaired. Some excavations and concrete work has been done for a fighting-station at another battery.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM H. HALES, Engineer-in-Chief.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.