

The erection of a new tower for Dog Island Lighthouse is now in progress. This is necessary owing to the mortar in the present stone tower perishing. The new tower is being built in ferro-concrete round the present structure.

Three new houses for the keepers have been erected at Puysegur Point to replace the old houses, which have become decayed. New houses are being built at Tiritiri, as the present ones are becoming uninhabitable.

An incandescent light has been installed at Mokohinou Lighthouse, and a new cowl fitted on the tower. A new crane has been obtained to replace one washed away during a heavy gale at Cuvier Island. An incandescent light has been installed at East Cape; a revolving cowl has been erected on the tower and an incandescent apparatus installed at Portland Island. An earthquake having shifted the apparatus at Castle Point, and damaged the chimney and roof of the principal keeper's house, the necessary repairs have been effected. The revolving machine at Cape Palliser has been overhauled and put in order. The fog-signal at Pencarrow Head has been overhauled and put in order. An Aga light has been installed at Jackson's Head in place of the Pintsch-gas light which was there; and an incandescent light has been installed in Moeraki Lighthouse.

One lightkeeper has been transferred to another Department, one has retired on superannuation, and seven have resigned during the year. Twelve positions are filled by temporary keepers owing to permanent keepers not being obtainable. Some returned soldiers have been appointed to the service, but the life does not appear to suit them, as most of them do not stay long. Seven keepers have joined the military forces. Owing to the depletion of the service the Department has had to appeal against keepers called up in the ballot being taken for military service, and in each case the Military Appeal Boards have adjourned the cases *sine die*, subject to the men remaining in the service.

Owing to the depletion of the office staff, caused by several officers being at the front, I have only been able to inspect the lighthouses at Castle Point, Portland Island, East Cape, Cuvier Island, Pouai Passage, Tiritiri, Mokohinou, Chickens, Cape Brett, Cape Maria van Diemen, and Kaipara. These stations were found to be in good order. Captain J. Bollons, of the s.s. "Hinemoa," who is also Inspector of Lighthouses, has inspected the lighthouses during the vessel's periodical visits with oil and stores.

Appended is a report by the Marine Engineer on the works dealt with by him during the year.

The amount of light dues collected was £28,141 4s. 11d., as compared with £32,790 13s. 9d. during the previous year.

#### Harbours.

The buoys and beacons in the harbours under the control of the Department have been overhauled and painted under the direction of Captain Bollons, of the s.s. "Hinemoa." This has also been done in the case of the coastal buoys and beacons.

A beacon has been made for the Brothers Rock in the Bay of Islands, and it will shortly be erected.

Groynes constructed on the Waikato River by the River Board having proved to be injurious to navigation, the Department has called upon the Board to remove a portion of them.

A large number of plans of works to be carried out by Harbour Boards have been submitted to the Department and approved by the Governor-General in Council, in accordance with the requirements of the Harbours Act, 1908. A return of these Orders in Council and of the Orders approving of plans of works constructed by other local bodies and persons is appended.

The sum of £907 3s. 4d. was collected for pilotage and port charges in respect of harbours under the control of the Department, as compared with £1,100 15s. 10d. during the previous year.

A return of the amounts collected at the various ports, and also the amounts collected at ports under the control of Harbour Boards, is appended.

#### Fisheries.

The picking and sale of northern oysters by the Department was continued last season, the season being open from the 1st May until the 31st October. The quantity picked and sold was 10,357 sacks, which realized £6,890, and gave a net profit of £1,071 9s. 8d., a portion of which was expended in replanting depleted areas. Of the quantity mentioned 875 sacks were disposed of in parcels of about five dozen at 1s. and in parcels of about sixteen dozen at 3s. 6d. Of the quantity sold, 7,917 sacks were sold in Auckland, 305 at Russell, 3 at Hokianga, 445 at New Plymouth, 9 at Wanganui, 378 at Gisborne, 106 at Napier, 8 at Hokitika, 28 at Greymouth, 29 at Westport, 127 at Wellington, and 8 at Christchurch. The balance, 119 sacks, which was received during the hot weather at the end of the season, arrived at the depot in an unsaleable condition and was bedded down. The price charged per sack at Auckland was 13s. 6d.

Replanting of depleted areas has been carried out in Whangaroa Harbour, and some Foveaux Strait oysters have been planted off the south coast of Cook Strait between White Bluff and the Awatere River. Further planting in this area will be undertaken shortly.

In the Bay of Islands oysters attached to loose stones near high-water mark, where the oysters never grow to full size, have been moved down to near low-water mark, as it has been found that when this is done the oysters soon grow to full marketable size.

The oysters taken in Foveaux Strait last season were 1,333,520 dozen, valued at £12,548, of which 49,900 dozen, valued at £338, were exported to Australia, the export being low owing to the absence of regular steamers from the Bluff.

Quinnat-salmon ova were again collected in order to continue the stocking of the Hokitika River and commence the stocking of the Wairau and Clutha Rivers. 1,525,000 eyed ova were obtained, of which 25,000 were sent to Tasmania, 1,485,000 fry were obtained, and these were liberated in equal quantities in the rivers mentioned.