

HARBOURS.

A beacon has been erected on the Brothers Rock, in the Bay of Islands, and a buoy laid down to mark D'Urville Rock, in the Hauraki Gulf, in place of the beacon which was washed away during a heavy gale. It was found impossible to obtain a foundation for another beacon as the rock had worn away.

A large number of plans of works to be carried out by Harbour Boards has been approved, and the buoys and beacons in the harbours controlled by the Department have been overhauled, cleaned, and painted, and new moorings have been put down where required.

GOVERNMENT STEAMERS.

The s.s. "Hinemoa" has carried out the work of attending to the various lighthouses and to all coastal buoys and beacons belonging to the Department.

The training-ship "Amokura" has had a full complement of boys during the year, but owing to her condition it was found that she was not fit to go to sea during last season. She has therefore been kept in Wellington Harbour, and the boys have received such training as could be given to them whilst the vessel was in the harbour.

In consequence of the "Amokura's" condition it was decided to endeavour to obtain another vessel, and the Imperial Government was asked whether it could let the Dominion have one. This request was agreed to, and the commander of the training-ship "Amokura" has been sent to England to select the most suitable vessel from those available.

Reports have been obtained in regard to the cost of altering the s.s. "Tutanekai" to make her fit for cargo-carrying. It was intended to use her for the purpose of mine-sweeping, and the necessary alterations were made, but when the work was completed the Department was not able to get a crew for her, and therefore she was not used for the purpose.

The s.s. "Rama" (formerly H.M.S. "Torch") was lent to the Commonwealth Government for services connected with the war, and she has not yet returned to the Dominion.

IMMIGRATION.

The facilities of shipping have not become normal, and for that reason the only immigrants arriving at the present time are the wives and families of the members of the Expeditionary Force.

The Imperial Government has invited this Government to indicate to what extent we can arrange that soldiers of the Imperial army may be assured of immediate employment and opportunity of settlement if they emigrate to New Zealand. The Imperial Government has been informed that until our own returning soldiers have been provided for we are unable to offer such facilities, but that we hope later to be in a position to request employers to give preference to immigrants who have served in the cause of the Empire over any other class coming to our shores.

It is intended, as soon as shipping-accommodation can be secured, to resume with vigour the work of the Immigration Department in England, and to endeavour to secure for New Zealand at least its full share of the best class of those who leave the Mother-country to settle in the distant parts of the Empire.

Arrangements have been made to grant assistance to members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force to enable them to nominate their fiancées for passages to the Dominion. The Immigration Department is co-operating with the Defence Department, each paying one-half of the Government contribution.

The Imperial Government is despatching to New Zealand two women delegates to make inquiries regarding openings for women settlers from the United Kingdom. Arrangements are being made to give the delegates every assistance during their visit to New Zealand.