

Kahurangi.—This is at present a second-order watched oil-burning light; it is proposed to convert it to an automatic acetylene light. Plans and estimates have been made, and it is hoped to make a start with the conversion very shortly.

Anglem Point.—The necessary apparatus for the conversion of this light to an automatic flashing type has been obtained, and is at present undergoing tests prior to installation.

The Brothers.—New rollers and roller-paths have been fitted to the revolving portion of this light to take the place of the original ones, which had become badly worn.

General repairs and maintenance works were carried out at the various light-stations, cottages, &c.

HARBOUR-WORKS.

Gisborne.—A great deal of controversy has arisen concerning the proper solution of the Gisborne Harbour problem, and, with the idea of endeavouring to come to a settlement, I accompanied the Hon. Minister of Marine to Gisborne, and discussed with the Board and its officers the whole question. It was finally decided that certain definite questions concerning a scheme put forward by Mr. G. H. Lysnar should be answered by me, and after a great deal of investigation the questions were answered and the Board definitely decided to adhere generally to the scheme of harbour-improvement devised by Mr. Leslie Reynolds, and approved some years ago by the Department. The Harbour Engineer is now working up the detail plans, which will be forwarded for formal approval in due course.

Waikokopu.—The Waikokopu Harbour Board having amalgamated with the Waikāra Harbour Board, the combined Board decided to do nothing further in the way of improvement with the Waikāra Harbour, but to concentrate on Waikokopu. However, after spending a considerable amount of money in an unsuccessful attempt to dredge out the inner basin, the Board found itself unable to proceed further for want of finance and public confidence. Eventually the Minister of Public Works agreed that his Department would erect a wharf in such a position and of such extent and depth of water as would cater for all coastal and lighter traffic, and would yet fit in without loss with the major breakwater scheme, should that be put in hand at a later date. The wharf was pushed on with, and will be ready for use very shortly. Being connected with the railway to Wairoa and the freezing-works and other industries, it will be of great assistance to the district generally, and also to the Government, in landing material for its works.

Westport.—The principal work in connection with this port has been the maintenance dredging at the bar and at the berthages. The "Eileen Ward" removed 472,705 tons from the entrance, and the "Mawhera," which was chartered from the Greymouth Harbour Board, dredged 67,350 tons from the berthage area. The "Eileen Ward" has not handled as large a quantity during the past year as usual. This is owing to the fact that dredging was suspended during the coal strike, as there was at that time practically no shipping working the port. Weather conditions were such that a sufficient depth of water was maintained on the bar to adequately serve any vessels visiting the port at that time. No additional work was carried out on the breakwater, the work which had previously been carried out proving very satisfactory and maintaining its position well. While the dredge was idle the work of painting and repairing all buildings in connection with the harbour-works was put in hand, and these buildings are now in first-class order. The fleet and all plant necessary for the prosecution of the works has been carefully attended to and kept in first-class repair throughout the year. A survey of the roadside has been made and all soundings plotted on regularly.

Waitangi Harbour, Chatham Islands.—A number of requests for improved harbour facilities at Waitangi having been received, arrangements were made to visit these islands and report on the position generally. Surveys were made, and the various propositions put forward investigated. The present wharf is unsatisfactory in that the depth of water is insufficient at low tide for the boats lightening cargo from the steamers. This aspect of the question can be improved by extending the wharf and deepening the channel, but not sufficiently to enable steamers to unload direct. It is naturally desired by the residents to have a wharf at which small steamers could lie while loading and unloading, and it has been proposed that a small breakwater might be constructed. Unfortunately, this would be a fairly expensive undertaking, and the present volume of trade is not sufficient to justify it. There is at present no local authority with power to control and finance any improvement scheme, and until such is established matters are not likely to improve to any great extent. A movement is now in progress to form a County Council, which could also act as a Harbour Board and attend to such matters.

Bruce Bay.—The crane-landing and approach bridge at the Flowerpot Rock has been completed and is in operation. Considerable difficulty was experienced in erecting some of the piers owing to very heavy weather when the concrete bases were being set. Loading and unloading can now be satisfactorily carried out here.

Kaipara Beacons.—These have been repaired, and arrangements made for protection work to be carried out at the North Head to guard against the sand erosion.

Tryphena Wharf, Great Barrier Island.—A very full investigation has been made to ascertain the best locality in which to erect this wharf. A subsidy has been provided by the Government, and immediately the local interests are agreed the work can proceed.

General repair and maintenance works were carried out at the various small harbours under the control of this Department, and regular surveys have been made and complete records are being obtained of the various changes which have taken place at the Wairau bar.

GENERAL.

As usual, a number of applications have been received from local bodies and private individuals for the approval of works involving marine interests. These have all been carefully investigated, and, where desirable, approved. Some of the principal items were:—