

*Mamukau Head Leading Lights.*—The necessary steps for proceeding with the erection of these lights have been taken, and the work is now in progress.

*Jackson's Head Beacon.*—Designs for a concrete beacon, to replace the one which was swept away by a gale in March, 1885, shortly after its erection, were prepared by the Marine Engineer, Mr. Blackett, and the works were commenced in February last. An experienced foreman was engaged, and he was sent to the rock with a staff of men in the s.s. "Napier," which vessel was chartered for the purpose. At the end of the financial year the work was progressing favourably.

*Kaikoura.*—It is proposed to place a sum on the estimates for the purpose of having a survey made of the proposed site for a lighthouse on this peninsula.

**HARBOURS.**—The control of the harbour staff at Gisborne was handed over to the Harbour Board of that port on the 1st March last.

The Auckland Harbour Board abolished compulsory pilotage from the 1st October last, and thus took the lead of other Boards in the liberal policy of reducing the charges on shipping. It is to be hoped that the Harbour Boards at other ports where compulsory pilotage is still in force will not be slow to follow the good example set by Auckland.

Considerable injury having been done to the channels of various harbours by the disgraceful practice of masters throwing their ballast overboard, and, repeated warnings having been disregarded, it has now been determined to prosecute all persons who are found doing this. In pursuance of this determination, proceedings were, in September, 1885, taken against the master of the "Maria Virginia" for discharging ballast in Mongonui Harbour, when he was fined £5 and costs.

A large iron buoy was found on the beach on the south side of Young Nick's Head, near Gisborne, and was recovered by the Harbourmaster there, whose description of it led to the belief that it belonged to the Bluff Harbour Board. On inquiry, this was found to be the case, it having broken away from the Bluff Harbour in a gale of wind in March, 1885, and, after drifting about at sea for about four months, was picked up, as above stated, 670 miles to the northward of the port from which it started.

*Kaipara.*—The repairs to the steam-launch referred to in last report were completed early in the year; she is now in thoroughly good order. Representations having been made that the shoals about the Heads had altered considerably, instructions were given to have a survey made of the Galatea Channel, and the banks and channels of the Wairoa River, including the entrances to the Oruawharo, Otamatea, and Kaipara Rivers up as far as Te Rewa Point. This is now being done. Plans for some new buoys for buoying the Wairoa River have been prepared, and it is proposed shortly to call for tenders for making them. The necessary properly-tested buoy-chain for mooring them has been procured from England.

*Hokiangā.*—I regret to have to report the death of Captain Thomas Seon, who had been Harbourmaster and pilot at this port for upwards of thirteen years. It is proposed to fill the vacancy so caused by the appointment of Mr. George Martin, who has acted as signalman and occasional pilot for the last twelve years.

*Wairau.*—Here, too, I regret to have to report the death of the signalman and pilot, James Bulliff, who died on the 7th January last, having nearly completed eighteen years' service. He was succeeded by John Rodgers, who had been a boatman at Hokitika for over nineteen years. A house for the signalman and pilot has been built on the pilot-station reserve, near the entrance of the river, at a cost of £294 3s. 6d. The station is now connected with the telegraph system of the colony by telephone to Blenheim. The sum of £92 15s. 2d. was expended in clearing the river of snags. This was done under the superintendence of the River Board.

*Whakatane.*—The contract for the removal of rocks at the entrance of the Whakatane River was completed early in the year, and the balance, £47 11s. 5d., paid to the contractor. The total cost for this service was £149 14s.

*Nelson.*—A new pilot-boat of approved design has been supplied to this station.

*Waitapu.*—A small boat, and material to enable the Harbourmaster to build a boat-shed, have been supplied to this place.

*Mokihinui.*—The sum of £332 16s. 11d. has been expended in improving the bar and channel, and in erection of a flagstaff, purchase of lights for leading-lights, &c.

*Orders in Council.*—The following Orders in Council under the provisions of the Harbours Acts have been issued during the year:—

April 22: Validating election of Chairman of Waitara Harbour Board.

April 22: Authorizing Mercury Bay Timber Company and Messrs. Schapp and Aussenne to construct boom across Waiwawa River.

April 22: Approving plans of boom across Waiwawa River.

May 5: Approving plans of bathing-place at Sumner.

May 5: Approving plans of breakwater, training-bank, and railway north side of Grey River.

June 9: Approving plan of swimming-bath at Timaru.

July 7: Fixing dues and rates and making regulations for Kaikoura Wharf.

July 21: Authorizing Messrs. Lane and Brown to construct boom in Whangaroa Harbour.

July 21: Approving of lease of portion of Thames foreshore for erection of furnace, &c., for gold-saving.

July 28: Approving plan of mooring-stage, Greymouth.

August 4: Approving plan of New Zealand Frozen Meat Company's wharf at Waitara.

August 18: Approving of Thames Harbour Board licensing J. Darrow to use portion of fore-shore.

August 18: Vesting Kaiwaka Wharf, Point Curtis, in Hobson County Council.

August 18: Approving plans of Wellington Harbour Board reclamation.

August 18: Approving plans of wharf at the Needles, Manukau.

August 25: Approving of Thames Harbour Board licensing Messrs. Tapp and Dunlop to occupy foreshore.