

closed up to the Lion Rock, the work between which and Moturoa would be undertaken only if found absolutely necessary. The effect of this work should be well watched as it proceeded, as it might be found that a partial closing of the gap would answer the intended purpose, and thus save further expenditure; or, at any rate, it might be found that a smaller expenditure per year would be sufficient.

Further work would be needed in the removal of the sandspit already formed in the harbour, or as much of it as would permit of direct access to the wharf. This will not be a serious matter. The Harbour Board has an excellent small dredge, which, however, needs a stronger crane than the one now fitted. This could be supplied for, say, £250 to £300; and probably a similar amount or a little more would secure all the necessary dredging.

To summarise the results of my observations, I may say that at New Plymouth the Harbour Board has expended on all works a total sum of about £220,000. For this expenditure they have (besides certain plant and material on hand) an excellent harbour of moderate but good capacity, where vessels such as trade between the provincial ports have every convenience necessary for loading and discharging while lying in safety at a good wharf. It seems desirable that such a favourable state of things should, in the interests of the country, be conserved, and this can be done, as has been shown above, by the expenditure of a moderate sum of money per year, the funds being already available for the first necessary piece of work, which should at once be undertaken. The importance of maintaining a harbour of such a character is great, and, in my opinion, would justify even exceptional measures to secure the necessary amount required per year.

In conclusion, I most strongly recommend that this view of the subject should meet with serious and favourable consideration.

I have, &c.,

JOHN BLACKETT.

P.S.—Attached hereto is a plan (M.D. 1406) showing generally the features described in this report.

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