

1898.

NEW ZEALAND.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

(ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1897-98.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

MY LORD,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 30th June, 1898.

I do myself the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, the report of the Marine Department of the colony for the financial year ended the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,

WM. HALL-JONES,

Minister of Marine.

His Excellency the Right Hon. the Earl of Ranfurly,
Governor of New Zealand.

The SECRETARY to the MINISTER of MARINE.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 30th April, 1898.

I have the honour to make the following report on the administration of this department during the financial year ended the 31st March last.

Lighthouses.—The cost of the maintenance of the lighthouses during the year was £12,860 17s. 5d., but this amount does not include the proportion for lighthouse-work of the expenses—£6,775 4s.—of the Government steamer which periodically visits all the stations with oil and stores. Such proportion may be estimated at about £5,000. The work of inspection has been carried out by Captain Allman, whose report is appended hereto. The erection of the tower and other buildings at Cape Palliser was completed by the Public Works Department in July last, and, on their being handed over to this department, the Lighthouse Artificer proceeded with the erection of the lantern and apparatus. This work was completed in October, and the light was exhibited for the first time on the 27th of that month. The light is a second-order dioptric revolving white light, flashing twice every half-minute, with intervals of three seconds between the flashes, and can be seen in clear weather at a distance of 25 statute miles. The cost of the erection of the lighthouse, keepers' dwellings, outbuildings, and the formation of a road to the tower was £6,243 16s. 1d.

During the year the sum of £306 3s. 7d. has been expended on repairs and additions to lighthouse-dwellings, &c., and the erection of a schoolroom at Portland Island. At Stephens Island a room has been added to the second assistant keeper's house. The house was too small for a man with a family, and in order that the aided school on the island may be kept up it is advisable that the three keepers stationed there should be men with families. At Pencarrow Head the dwelling-houses have been repaired and a workshop erected. During the present year it will be necessary to execute repairs to the dwelling-houses at Farewell Spit and Manukau Head.

As regards schools at lighthouses, it may be mentioned that most of the Education Boards grant capitation on the children attending the schools, and the keepers are thus assisted in the payment of the teachers' salaries, and the schools are inspected by the Board's Inspectors. So far as I am aware, the Auckland Board is the only one in the colony which has refused to grant any assistance, and the keepers in the Auckland District are therefore at a disadvantage as compared with those in other parts of the colony. Both the Minister of Education and this department have urged the Auckland Board to give some assistance, but without effect.

On the 13th January last a fire broke out in the flax near the landing-place at Cape Maria van Diemen, but the keepers succeeded in extinguishing it before any damage was done. At Stephens Island a heavy sea broke the crane at the landing-place. The necessary repairs were effected by the department's carpenter and an assistant while they were on the island enlarging the house before referred to.

The following lighthouses are now connected with the telegraph system of the colony—namely: Cape Maria van Diemen, Tiri Tiri, Somes Island, Cape Egmont, Manukau Head, Kaipara Head, Cape Foulwind, Farewell Spit, Nelson, Cape Campbell, Godley Head, Akaroa Head, Taiaroa Head, Cape Saunders, and Nugget Point, and it would be of great benefit if arrangements could be made to connect Cape Palliser, Dog Island, and Puysegur Point.

The erection of a lighthouse on East Cape Island having been decided on, the island has been taken under the provisions of the Public Works Act for the purpose, and sites for the tower, dwelling &c., have been selected by the Marine Engineer and Nautical Adviser. Plans and specifications for