

## LIGHTHOUSES AND HARBOUR-WORKS

In addition to the usual maintenance of lighthouses and beacons, an extensive programme of conversion to electric power has been pursued. This work has been completed at Nugget Point, Waipapa, and Moeraki Lighthouses, and is well in hand at North Cape and Chicken Island. Preliminary work is in hand at a number of lighthouses and beacons.

By arrangement with the Wanganui Harbour Board, remedial work was carried out where erosion threatened the safety of the South Spit.

Repairs were made to wharves at Tairua and Onekaka. Investigations were made into extensions of the tidal compartment at Westport by dredging, and into the development of Tauranga Harbour and wharves for the shipping of exotic timbers from State and other forests in the Murupara and Putaruru areas.

## PLANT AND MACHINERY

The Department's construction plant was fully employed on hydro-electric construction, highways and roads, and opencast mining. The plant has been increased during the year and a number of additional new units has been coming to hand from overseas.

A very large number of machines of all types has been reconditioned during the year in the Department's workshops at Mangere, Gracefield, and Sockburn, despite difficulties due to shortage of suitable replacement parts.

Numerous plant items for special work such as tunnelling equipment, concreting plant, crushing plant, and hauling and hoisting equipment have been designed by the mechanical staff in Head Office, and designs have been carried out where necessary for other Departments.

## LAND-IMPROVEMENTS

Sand-dune reclamation has been continued in the North Auckland and Manawatu areas and at the Waikato Heads.

In Southland the output of land-clearing by machinery was somewhat reduced by diversion of plant to coal-stripping, but, nevertheless, appreciable progress was made both in that district and at Ohakune.

## SERVICES TO OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND LOCAL BODIES

There is still a large accumulation of work which Government Departments and local bodies wish to overtake, and investigations have therefore been numerous. Many of these investigations are undertaken at the request of Treasury, and the preparation of reports has involved considerable work. Maintenance of Government buildings throughout the country continues to be carried out by my Department, and this work is causing an increasingly heavy demand on the staff concerned.

## PUBLIC WORKS WORKERS' AGREEMENT

The Public Works Workers' Agreement and the Highways and Road Maintenance Workers' Agreement expired on 31st March, 1949, and will not be renewed. The New Zealand Workers' Union, which represents nearly all the Department's employees, has been declared a "Service organization" under the Government Services Tribunal Act, 1948. Agreements will therefore be superseded by a principal order of the Government Services Tribunal. Conciliation proceedings already taken have led to a substantial measure of agreement on the terms which may be incorporated in the order. This is most gratifying, and I would like once again to record my appreciation of the co-operative spirit in which the executive officers of the union have approached me on matters affecting their members. In so far as relations with the workers are concerned, the Government has experienced one of its best years since taking office in 1935 in that so little working-time was lost through disputes.