

morning newspapers. Special warnings have also been issued in the evening to lighthouses when any sudden changes in the weather are likely to occur to endanger shipping. Rainfall statistics have been collected, and the Rev. Mr. Bates has, outside his official duties, collated and presented to the Department all the statistics available since observations were first taken in any part of the country. Twenty-four stations report to the office rainfall, air-temperatures, humidity, sunshine, earth-temperatures, &c., and 191 report rainfall, &c. The results of the observations are published in the *New Zealand Gazette* monthly. Since January last the Department has published a monthly Meteorological Journal containing such results, and maps and diagrams illustrating climatic and weather conditions, as well as brief summaries of the weather and its effects. The annual statistics of the chief stations are also prepared in the Meteorological Office for publication by the Registrar-General in the Statistics of the Dominion, and it is proposed to issue a more comprehensive annual report, which will include maps and diagrams.

The Notice to Mariners regarding the weather-forecast signals which are shown at the various stations has been revised and published. As Stephens Island and Centre Island have been connected with the telegraph system of the Dominion, forecast signals are now shown at the lighthouses on those islands.

*Government Steamers.*—The “Hinemoa” has continued to carry out the work of attending to lighthouses, and to the buoys and beacons in harbours under the control of the Department. She has also made trips to the Three Kings, Kermadec, Auckland, Campbell, Antipodes, and Bounty Islands to search for castaways, and to examine and replenish provision-depots.

When she visited the Kermadecs a new depot for castaways was erected on Macaulay Island, and when at the Auckland Islands a boatshed was erected on Disappointment Island, and a boat, with a supply of provisions and tools, was put in it. The “Tutanekai” has been employed on cable laying and repairing, including the laying of cables to the Great Barrier, Centre Island, Stephens Island, and Dog Island. She has also attended to some of the lighthouses and has done general work, including the making of a search for the “Rio Loge” between New Zealand and the Chatham Islands.

*Training-ship “Amokura.”*—During last winter the vessel remained in Wellington Harbour, where the boys underwent courses of training, and during the spring, summer, and autumn she has been a good deal at sea. Besides trips for ordinary training purposes, she visited Auckland while the American fleet was there, made a trip to the Chathams in search of the “Loch Lomond,” and made two cruises in Cook Strait, and went down the east coast for some distance past Kaikoura to search for missing vessels and reported derelicts. The boys have been well-behaved, and apt at learning their duties. Employment has been found in other ships as ordinary seamen and boys for several who have proved themselves qualified, and there are now others ready to go in other ships as soon as the Department can obtain employment for them. There are a few vacancies for boys on board, and, judging from the number who come forward, I think that for some time to come the ship will be large enough to take all those who desire to join her. Indeed, it appears to be very doubtful whether it would be possible to obtain employment in merchant ships for more than can be trained on her. She has accommodation for sixty. Regulations have been made providing that if boys leave the training-ship before the expiration of the time for which they have engaged to serve, or if they do not take employment on other ships at the expiration of their time when the Department can procure it for them, their parents or guardians shall pay the cost of their training and maintenance to an amount not exceeding £50.

I attach a return showing the boys who have passed through the ship and those who are still on board.

*Lighthouses.*—The lighthouses have been inspected by Captain Bollons, of the “Hinemoa,” when making his periodical visits with oil and stores, and I have paid visits of inspection to Cape Palliser, Brothers, Godley Head, Jack’s Point, Akaroa Head, Moeraki, Taiaroa Head, Cape Saunders, Nugget Point, Waipapapa Point, Dog Island, Centre Island, and Puysegur Point. The stations are in good order, and the keepers have carried out their duties in an efficient manner.

During the year incandescent lights have been installed at the Brothers, Cuvier Island, and Cape Maria van Diemen, and similar lights are now being installed at Nugget Point, Centre Island, and Puysegur Point. Besides providing better lights, these installations effect a great saving in the consumption of oil, and I recommend that provision be made in the current year’s estimates for ten of these lights for other lighthouses.

Cape Brett: A contract has been let for an iron tower for Cape Brett, and the erection of the keepers’ dwellinghouses, outbuildings, and stores at that place is now being carried out. The lantern, apparatus, machine, and lamps have been received from England. A telegraph-line to the station is being constructed, which will enable it to be used as a signal-station for reporting vessels.

Jackson’s Head beacon: The Wigham light on this beacon not being satisfactory, a Pintsch-gas occulting light has been procured, and steps will be taken at an early date to erect it on the beacon. The gas for this light will be obtained from the Railway Department, and will be conveyed from Wellington to Jackson’s Head by the Government steamer when she makes her periodical trips to the Brothers lighthouse.

Tuahine Point: The necessary tower, lantern, apparatus, and acetylene-generating plant for an occulting acetylene light for this point have been procured, and are now being erected. The work of erection is being carried out by the Department, but the light will be under the control of and maintained by the Gisborne Harbour Board.

A plan for improved dwellinghouses for keepers has been adopted. This provides for a larger kitchen than formerly, for three fireplaces instead of two, for a bathroom with bath, for fixed cupboards in three rooms, and for a wardrobe in one room.