

Three keepers have retired from the service during the year on superannuation allowances, one of the retirements being on account of age, and two on account of ill health. Seven keepers have resigned. Ten appointments have been made to fill the vacancies caused by the retirements and resignations.

The following works have been executed at lighthouses during the year:—

Cape Maria van Diemen: An incandescent light has been installed, a landing-store erected, a new tramway laid down, and the landing-place improved.

Ponui Passage: A landing-store has been built, and a new stairway has been constructed in the tower.

Cuvier Island: An incandescent light has been installed.

East Cape: An oil-engine has been obtained to haul stores and oil up from the landing-place, and arrangements are being made to construct an overhead tramway, the old tramway having been destroyed by a landslide.

Portland Island: A landing-store, wash-houses, and a porch to one of the houses have been erected.

Pencarrow Head: New roofs have been put on the dwellinghouses, and the chimneys have been rebuilt. The incandescent installation in the lighthouse has been replaced by an improved type.

Kaipara Head: The coalshed has been raised in consequence of the sand banking up round it.

Godley Head: Wash-houses, coalsheds, workshop, fowlhouses, stable, and cowshed have been erected, and the yard has been asphalted.

Cape Saunders: A new crane has been made for this station, and will shortly be placed in position.

Nugget Point: A combined workshop and outlook-house at the flagstaff has been erected.

Waipapapa Point: The galvanised iron covering the dwellinghouses having worn out, it has been taken off, and replaced with malthoid.

Dog Island: The lighthouse has been connected with the telegraph system.

Centre Island: Repairs have been made to the dwellinghouses and other buildings, and a flagstaff has been erected. The lighthouse has been connected with the telegraph system.

Puysegur Point: The Post and Telegraph Department has extended the telegraph-line to the lighthouse.

Nelson: Wash-houses, coalsheds, and fowlhouses have been built, and repairs have been executed to the dwellinghouses.

Brothers: An incandescent light has been installed and a flagstaff erected.

A report by the Marine Engineer is attached.

The amount of light dues collected during the year was £34,590 17s. 11d., as compared with £32,377 8s. 8d. during the previous year.

*Fog-signals.*—Explosive fog-signals have been erected at Godley Head and Cuvier Island lighthouses. There are now four of these signals in operation in the Dominion, the other two being at Pencarrow Head and Taiaroa Head. They are all worked by the lightkeepers; but in the case of that at Godley Head, owing to its being situated a good distance from the lighthouse, the two keepers cannot attend to it and the light at the same time without assistance. Arrangements have, therefore, been made with the Lyttelton Harbour Board for one of its men to go out and help the keepers during the times it is necessary to work the fog-signal.

*Harbours.*—The various harbours under the control of the Department have been properly attended to, and the buoys and beacons have been kept in good condition. A light has been established on the beacon which was erected last year in the Helensville River, Kaipara. A mast-head light which had to be attended to daily was placed on the beacon and first lighted in July last, but this has recently been replaced by a Wigham light which will burn without attention for over a month. The light is attended to by the Kaipara Steamship Company without charge, this Department providing the necessary oil, wicks, &c. A large number of logs which were impeding navigation have been removed from the Wairoa River, Kaipara, and the cost of doing this work is being recovered from the owners of the logs.

Some rocks which were obstructing the navigation of the Helensville River have been removed.

Some new beacons have been erected at Catlin's River, and the old beacons have been repaired and painted. A request was made for the appointment of a signalman at this place owing to the revival of the timber trade, but it has been decided to defer the matter until it is seen to what extent the shipping trade increases.

A tender was accepted for the removal of some rocks which are obstructing the navigation of the Holyford River, Martin's Bay, but the contractor threw up the contract as he found that he could not carry out the work. The Department is now sending a party of men to remove the rocks.

New beacons have been erected at Whangateau Harbour.

Captain Neale, Harbourmaster at Manukau, and Captain Martin, Harbourmaster at Hokianga, have retired from the service on superannuation allowances on account of age, and Captains R. H. Gibbons and F. A. Hardy have been appointed to succeed them.

As the shipping to Picton and the regulation of the oil-engine boat traffic in the Sound required more attention than could be given by the Railway Wharfinger, it was decided to appoint an officer who should devote the whole of his time to these duties, and to the performance of the duties of Customs Officer; and Captain J. W. Burgess has been appointed Harbourmaster, Pilot, and Customs Officer.

An Act was passed last session constituting a Harbour Board for Foxton. The Board has been set up, and the control of the harbour has been handed over to it. The Governor in Council has, under the power given by the Counties Act, declared that the Cook County Council shall exercise the powers of a Harbour Board in Tolaga Bay, and that the Waiapu County Council shall exercise similar powers in Tokomaru Bay.