

A communication was received from the Vice-Admiral in command of the Australian Station stating that the position of the Three Kings was wrongly charted, and that the position of the South Point, Great Island, as ascertained by sights from H.M.S. "Cambrian" was latitude  $34^{\circ} 11' 48''$  S., longitude  $172^{\circ} 7' 24''$  E., and the relative bearing from Cape Reinga of South Point, Great Island, N.  $60^{\circ}$  W. true 31 miles. The charted position is latitude  $34^{\circ} 9' 9''$  S., longitude  $172^{\circ} 8' 8''$  E., and the bearing from Cape Reinga N.  $58\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  W. 31.8 miles.

A further communication has been recently received from the Vice-Admiral stating that the "Cambrian" has taken further observations from on shore in order to check with greater accuracy the position of the islands, and that the result of these observations places the position of the depot on Great Island, the place of observation, as latitude  $34^{\circ} 9' 11''$  S., and longitude  $172^{\circ} 0' 1''$  E. This places Great Island about one mile and a quarter south and a third of a mile east of the present charted position.

The coastal buoys and beacons have been overhauled and painted, the work being done by the "Hinemoa" in the course of her periodical trips round the Dominion.

*Nautical Publications.*—The Nautical Almanac for 1911, which is prepared by Captain Blackburne, Nautical Adviser to the Department, was issued in November last, and, as in former years, it found a ready sale. Copies of the Azimuth Reduction Tables and Azimuth Chart books, published by the Department, were supplied to the "Terra Nova" before she sailed for the Antarctic with the exploring expedition.

Arrangements have been made for Messrs. J. Brown and Son, of Glasgow, publishers of the well-known Nautical Almanac, to be the sole agents in Great Britain for the sale of the Azimuth Tables issued by the Department.

Appended is a return of the Notices to Mariners regarding the Dominion which have been issued by the Department during the year. Besides these a great many notices concerning matters outside New Zealand are published for the information of mariners.

*Meteorological and Weather Office.*—Daily weather-forecasts are telegraphed to 102 places, and 10 places receive occasional forecasts of storms. Arrangements are also made for sending special warnings from time to time to persons requiring them for particular purposes, the recipients paying the cost of transmission. Rotorua has been added to the list of places receiving regular forecasts, and requests for such forecasts have been made by several other places, but owing to want of funds they could not be acceded to.

The Meteorological Office has collated all the rainfall returns available so far as is known from the earliest days until the end of 1909, and from the means obtained constructed approximate mean annual and monthly rainfall maps for the Dominion. These are now almost ready for the printer, as also are the collected returns for 1910, and a rainfall map for the same year. The monthly rainfall and climatological statistics are published regularly in the *Government Gazette*, and reports on weather and agriculture are supplied by arrangement to the Agricultural Department for publication in the *Agricultural Journal* each month. The annual statistics are published in connection with the Registrar-General's Department in the blue-book and in the *Official Year-book*.

During the past year there has been a slight extension of the work of the office in securing more rainfall stations. This is a very important matter on account of closer settlement and the advent of hydro-electric power schemes.

The visit of the British Antarctic Expedition impressed upon Australasian meteorologists the importance of meteorological observatories and the standardization of the instruments; inspection of all the chief stations and establishment of others were urged upon the Government. Sums of money were placed upon the supplementary estimates for these purposes, but the time between which the money was available and the end of the financial year, as well as the smallness of the staff, did not allow its proper expenditure, and these projects are still incomplete. Through stress of weather the Antarctic vessel "Terra Nova" was unable to establish a station at Campbell Island, for which instruments were provided, but the station at Chatham Islands has been reorganized under Mr. F. A. D. Cox since the death of Mr. A. Shand, who perished in a fire wherein some instruments and records of the office were also lost. Mr. Shand for many years had done most valuable work at the Chathams as a meteorological observer.

In the latter end of February Mr. D. C. Bates, Director of the Meteorological Office, inspected several of the chief stations and weather-reporting observatories around the South Island. His visit showed the need of new and reliable instruments at many stations—*e.g.*, at both Christchurch and Dunedin, where aneroid barometers were in use for weather-reporting purposes, and at several places the thermometers were quite unreliable. At Dunedin a new observatory as well as a new set of instruments are urgently required. The meteorological observatory has been in charge of Mr. H. Skey since 1870. It was established first in Dunedin, but the City Council resumed the land, and Mr. Skey had to remove the instruments to his own private residence at Woodhaugh. This action of the City Council was very detrimental, above all to their own interests. Meteorological observations are of great importance to the city, and in England are the especial care of the civic authorities.

The Auckland City Council have provided a suitable site in Albert Park, and the Government last year fenced it in and provided the instruments and observer. At Wellington the City Council proposes to lease at a small rental a site for an observatory on the Town Belt at the top of Constable Street. Though not central or well adapted for meteorological purposes, it is believed to be the best site available, and superior to the temporary observatory on Mount Cook, near the Alexandra Barracks. It is hoped that the new observatory will soon be equipped with a set of instruments by which automatic and continuous records may be taken of the chief meteorological elements—wind direction and force, rate and duration of rainfall, &c. The observatory will then be raised from a station of the second to one of the first order.