

similar to that in its 1919 report, which said, "The port and railway equipment is in first-class order and capable of dealing with an output (export) of 40,000 tons of coal per week." This is equivalent to 2,080,000 tons per annum. It is difficult to understand, therefore, why there should be any criticism of the capacity of the port to deal with the export which now occurs.

HARBOUR LEGISLATION.

During the year five Bills were promoted and passed as follows:—

Harbours Act Amendment.—This Bill provided for—

- (a.) The establishment of a uniform set of accounts for all Harbour Boards, in order to enable the compilation of reliable data and comparisons:
- (b.) Placing a Harbour Board in the same position as any other local authority with regard to the hypothecation of debentures:
- (c.) Repeal of section 218 of the Harbours Act, thereby placing a Government harbour in the same position as any other harbour authority as regards pilotage:
- (d.) Extension of harbour authorities' powers to make by-laws in respect of discharge of oil in harbours, and regulation and control of anchorages, buildings, and equipment provided for yachts, boats, launches, and other small craft, and to fix fees for use of same:
- (e.) Enabling a harbour authority to establish an imprest account out of which wages of casual labour and emergency payments may be made:
- (f.) Enabling a Harbour Board to enter into an agreement with any corporate body representing growers of fruit to provide cool or refrigerated storage:
- (g.) A declaratory provision as to leasing-powers of Harbour Boards.

Auckland Harbour Board Empowering.—The decision of the Board to construct a viaduct across Freeman's Bay had the effect of prejudicially affecting leaseholders. The Act empowers the Board to make any necessary adjustments in leases, or to give leaseholders leases of other areas, with a provision for arbitration where the adjustment cannot be amicably settled.

Napier Harbour Board Rating Regulation.—The Board by its 1921 legislation anticipated the provisions of the Harbours Act of 1923, which enables a Board to levy upon constituent local bodies within its district for any rate struck by the Board. The Napier Act, however, contained a provision that a constituent local authority need not collect the Board's rate unless it decided by special resolution to do so. Certain local authorities objected to collecting the rate, and the Board had therefore to collect its own rate in these districts. By the repeal of its special legislation the Board is now enabled to take advantage of the provisions of the general statute.

Whangarei Harbour Board Vesting and Empowering.—This Act vests some 10 acres of foreshore in the Board. It is proposed to erect a cement-works on the site.

Whangarei Harbour Board Empowering.—This Act authorizes the Board to borrow £25,000 to enable it to carry out certain harbour improvements giving deep water at the town wharves, and enabling the section of railway to Onerahi, with its lifting-span railway-bridge, to be eliminated.

HARBOUR-WORKS.

Gisborne.—The works authorized are being actively prosecuted and are making good progress. It is anticipated that the new works will be available for coastal shipping in about twelve months. The provisions for overseas shipping and elimination of lighterage charges will follow as the full scheme of construction becomes available.

Napier.—The Board, as a result of changed personnel, decided to reconsider its policy, and to that end called in Messrs. Cullen and Keele, who had previously reported. These gentlemen, after further investigation, concluded by recommending adoption of the breakwater harbour, thus supporting the recommendation of the Marine Engineer. The Board thereupon decided to promote legislation authorizing it to complete the breakwater harbour. Shortly thereafter county elections again changed the personnel, with the result that, despite the recommendations of the Marine Engineer and Messrs. Cullen and Keele, the Board has rescinded the previous decision to proceed with the breakwater harbour and is now promoting further legislation which, it is understood, proposes to embark on a reclamation policy, leaving the essential harbour-construction policy entirely in abeyance and affording a new lease of life to those apparently dominating interests which are concerned only in subverting the proper functions of a Harbour Board.

New Plymouth.—Works authorized under the loan authority granted by the 1924 Act are being vigorously proceeded with.

Timaru.—The proposals put forward by the Board in December, 1923, which involved an expenditure of some £400,000, not having been approved by the Commission set up in terms of the Board's Act of 1876, the matter could proceed no further. The Board has now asked for another commission to investigate a modified plan, and the Commission is now in course of being set up.

Lyttelton and Otago.—The Lyttelton and Otago Harbour Boards are each contemplating an expenditure of £300,000 to £350,000.

Opunake.—Certain works are being carried out in this harbour by the Harbour Board, under existing statutory authority. Owing to various causes, principally the difficulty of obtaining suitable stone, the estimated cost of the work is likely to be exceeded, and the Board has applied for authority to raise an additional amount equal to 10 per cent. of its loan authority (£50,000). While the Department is of the opinion that the work should never have been authorized in the first place, it is considered hardly advisable, at the present stage of the work, to stop it altogether, and it has therefore been agreed to allow the promotion of the necessary legislation to enable the Board to raise the