

interest on its loans in two half-yearly instalments on fixed dates. Other machinery legislative provisions were also granted. The legislation is contained in sections 41 to 45 of the Local Legislation Act, 1933.

In the meantime, as it was deemed inadvisable to allow Thames Harbour Board debenture-holders to take any steps for the appointment of a Receiver, Orders in Council were issued from time to time, under section 10 of the Thames Harbour Board Loans Adjustment Act, 1932-33, preventing such proceedings from being taken.

Local-government Reform.—The Inter-Departmental Committee on local-government reform held further meetings during the year and decided upon certain lines of action which, in the opinion of the Committee, should be followed in bringing about reform of local government in the Dominion. The Committee furnished to the Government a first interim report containing its suggestions.

LEGISLATION.

The following legislation affecting the Department was before Parliament :—

Municipal Corporations Act.—The Municipal Corporations Bill was again introduced. It was referred to the Local Bills Committee, which took considerable evidence thereon and reported the Bill back for favourable consideration with certain suggested amendments. The Bill was passed into law, with the alterations recommended by the Local Bills Committee, and came into force on the 1st April, 1934.

The Act consists of 393 sections, and thirteen schedules, divided into eight divisions and thirty-three parts. It is a consolidation of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1920, and its various amendments, but revised and redrafted in such a way as to make for consistency and accuracy of expression and convenience of reference. In addition, it makes several important substantive amendments to the previous law, designed to remedy certain defects therein and meet the present-day needs of municipalities.

The measure was framed in close collaboration with the Municipal Association, many of the alterations being made for the purpose of giving effect to remits of Municipal Conferences and suggestions of the Association.

This is the most important statute affecting municipalities passed for some considerable time.

Clearing of Watercourses by Drainage Boards.—An important provision contained in section 47 of the Finance Act, 1933 (No. 2), overcomes the difficult position arising out of the decision of the Court of Appeal in *Thompson v. Wakiapuaka Drainage Board* ([1929] N.Z.L.R. 548; [1929] G.L.R. 348), and gives Drainage Boards greater power in adequately maintaining watercourses and drains under their control.

Local Legislation Act.—The usual Local Legislation Act contained sixty-four clauses affecting the activities of numerous local authorities and public bodies.

Local Acts.—Twenty-one Local Bills were submitted to the Department by the Local Bills Committee for examination and report. A representative of the Department appeared before the Committee and gave evidence on several of such Bills. Nineteen Local Bills became law.

National Art Gallery and Dominion Museum Amendment Act.—This Act gives additional representation to the Wellington City Council on the Board of Trustees of the National Art Gallery and Dominion Museum, and makes further provision as to an Acting Chairman.

Summer Time Amendment.—This Act extends by approximately seven weeks the period during which what is popularly known as “daylight saving” is in force in each year, so that such period now begins on the last Sunday in September and ends on the last Sunday in April.

Local Government Officers Bill.—This Bill was again introduced and referred to the Local Bills Committee, which heard more evidence thereon. In view of certain representations made by the Municipal Association which necessitated further investigation progress on the Bill was again deferred.

TOWN-PLANNING.

Town-planning activities were again severely restricted during the year. Two meetings of the Town-planning Board were held.

The Timaru Borough Town-planning Scheme, 1932, was received from the Timaru Borough Council, considered by the Town-planning Board, and referred to a Committee for investigation and report. The Committee has held four meetings thereon. Progress is being made with the scheme, in collaboration with the Borough Council.

The Napier Business-area Town-planning Amendment Scheme, 1933, was received from the Napier Borough Council. The object of such scheme was to modify certain provisions in the Napier Business-area Town-planning Scheme, 1931, in relation to—

- (1) Dalton Street widening :
- (2) Proposed Albion Street.

The Town-planning Board approved of the proposed modification in regard to Albion Street, and rejected the Dalton Street proposal.

The following additional schemes were received during the year :—

- (a) The City of Christchurch Town-planning Scheme, 1933.
- (b) A provisional town plan for the Borough of New Lynn.
- (c) A civic survey and provisional town plan for the Borough of Huntly.
- (d) A civic survey for the Mount Wellington Road District.