

Conference was presided over by the then Minister of Internal Affairs (Hon. Sir Alexander Young) and was attended by representatives of the principal Government Departments, local authorities, and financial organizations interested in the welfare of Thames. Proposals were made to the Conference for amalgamation of the administration of Thames Harbour District with that of the Thames Borough, but, as no agreement could be reached on conflicting financial aspects of the proposals, no practical results were achieved. The question of bringing about that amalgamation was subsequently again raised and was under consideration at the close of the year.

Meanwhile, the time within which persons were prevented from applying for a receiver in regard to the Board's loans was further extended on a number of occasions.

Town Districts.—The Norsewood Town District was merged in the Dannevirke County.

Road Districts.—The Kenepuru Road District, in the Sounds County, was constituted, and the necessary arrangements made for the first election and first meeting of the Board thereof. Arrangements were also made for the first election and first meeting of the Board of the French Pass Road District, which had been constituted during the preceding year.

The Akaroa-Wainui and the Coldstream Road Districts were respectively merged in the Akaroa and Ashburton Counties.

River Districts.—An extension of time was granted for holding the election of members of four River Boards. Results of the election of members of several River Boards were gazetted in accordance with law.

Land Drainage Districts.—A petition for the constitution of the Mangaorongo Drainage District, in the Otorohanga County, was declined. The Woodlands Drainage District, in the Waikato and Piako Counties, was abolished. Three alterations of boundaries of Drainage Districts were made. Results of the election of members of several Drainage Boards were gazetted in accordance with law.

Urban Farm-land Rating.—Several further farm-land rolls were prepared. Assessment Courts were set up for three boroughs, four town districts, and one road district. Judges of Assessment Courts were appointed for two town districts and one road district.

Local Elections and Polls.—The time for closing polls was extended in two cases. Minor irregular proceedings in respect of a loan poll by the Grey Electric-power Board were validated.

The triennial general election of members of Borough Councils, County Councils, and River Boards was held on the 8th May, 1935. This involved consequential elections of members of Electric-power Boards, Harbour Boards, and Hospital Boards. This was the first step in carrying into effect the scheme contemplated by the Local Elections and Polls Amendment Act, 1934-35, of holding all local-body elections on the same day.

By-laws of Local Bodies.—The by-laws of two local bodies were confirmed under the By-laws Act, 1910.

Public Bodies' Leases Act.—The Oamaru Borough Council was declared a leasing authority under the Public Bodies' Leases Act, 1908.

Designation of Districts.—The name "Mangamuka Bridge" was assigned to a locality in the Hokianga County.

LEGISLATION.

Urban Farm-land Rating Amendment Act, 1935.—This Act provides that the special rateable value of any property is not at any time to exceed the ordinary rateable value of that property; provides for a refund of rates which have been overpaid through a ratepayer obtaining a special rateable value under the Urban Farm-land Rating Act, 1932; makes it clear that special rateable values for properties which are situated outside a borough through exclusion from the borough are to be used for rating purposes by only the Borough Council that is still rating the excluded properties; and provides that after the preparation of a farm-land roll no property under 3 acres in area can be added to that roll unless, at the time of the preparation of the roll, it was actually urban farm-land.

Rating Amendment Act, 1935.—This Act amends section 79 (6) of the Rating Act, 1925, by providing that, when the proceeds from the sale of lands for non-payment of rates are being apportioned, local authorities may share in the apportionment in respect of any unpaid rates, whether or not the rates are protected by judgment or statute-barred. The position created by the judgments of the Supreme Court in *Hewlett v. Kelly and others* (1935, G.L.R. 495; 1935, N.Z.L.R. 170), and the *Mount Albert Borough v. Registrar of the Supreme Court* (1935, N.Z.L.R. 807) is thus overcome. The Act also validates all classification lists for land-drainage and river-protection purposes previously used, or in actual use at the passing of the Act, by Land Drainage Boards, River Boards, and County Councils, and provides that a separate classification list must be prepared or expressly adopted by any such local authority for the purposes of the special rate for any future loan raised by it. The position created by the judgment of the Supreme Court in *Lower Mangapiko Drainage Board v. Public Trustee* (1935, G.L.R. 670; 1935, N.Z.L.R. 789) is thus overcome.

Housing Survey Act, 1935.—This Act requires certain Borough Councils, Town Boards, and Road Boards to make housing surveys within their respective districts, preparatory to the inauguration of a Dominion housing scheme.

Finance Act (No. 2), 1935.—Section 21 validated expenditure by local authorities in connection with the celebration or commemoration of the Silver Jubilee of the Accession to the Throne of His Majesty King George the Fifth, or public functions of welcome to Their Excellencies the Right Honourable Viscount Galway and Lady Galway.

Local Legislation Act, 1935.—The usual Local Legislation Act contained forty-three sections affecting the activities of numerous local authorities and public bodies.

Local Acts.—Eighteen Local Bills were submitted to the Department by the Local Bills Committee for examination and report. Representatives of the Department appeared before the Committee and gave evidence on several of those Bills. All those Bills were passed into law, several being amended.