

HARBOURS AND LIGHTHOUSES

Iceland is rich in good natural *harbours*, especially her eastern and western coasts, while the southern one, being remarkably free from indentations, has no harbours worthy of the name. In several places wharfs have been built where large ships can be accommodated, but other modern facilities for loading and landing are generally wanting. In various places the construction of breakwaters gives good harbours. During 1913—18 a harbour was constructed in Reykjavík, at the cost of 2 million krónur; it has subsequently been greatly improved. And at the Westman Islands large sums have been expended on a harbour to accommodate the fishing fleet stationed there.

The first *lighthouse* in Iceland was erected in 1878, on the Reykjanes peninsula, a point which is passed by all ships on their way to Reykjavík from abroad; and in 1897 three more were added around the Faxi Bay. It may seem strange now how long this lack of lighthouses was put up with, as navigation around the coasts of Iceland is in some places very dangerous. But it should be remembered that Icelandic waters were navigated almost exclusively during summer, when there is so much light that artificial "sign-posts" are not needed. But as the fishing fleet increased and deep-sea fishing came to be pursued mainly during the winter, and as navigation to the country developed, also during the darker seasons of the year, the want of lighthouses began to be more keenly felt, and since 1900 the erection of lighthouses has been in rapid progress, with the result that they are now (1930) 101 in number, 57 of which are kept up entirely by the State, the remaining 44 by municipalities and parishes.

The State expenditure towards lighthouses, including control and salaries to keepers, amounted in 1928 to 246 thousand krónur, while the light dues reached 449 thousand (see page 43); but it should be borne in mind that during preceding years the State has expended considerable sums towards the erection of lighthouses.

POST, TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES

In Iceland the *postal service* has from the first been under State management, and almost all the inter-provincial mail has, until quite recently, been conveyed on horse-back. The chief mail-routes are traversed regularly every month during the winter and more frequently in summer, for the purpose of delivering and collecting letters, parcels