

The concentration of the available resources on the above-mentioned types of building projects has resulted in an extensive back-log of building-works which, although in many instances considered highly essential, must be relegated to a lesser priority. Buildings which come under this category include post-offices, police-stations, and departmental offices, &c.

The buildings programme has been carefully studied to ensure that the materials and man-power available are being utilized to the maximum extent possible, thus mitigating against the commencement of projects which, having regard to the resources available, would be under construction for indefinite periods.

Education Department.—Hostel accommodation for rehabilitation students at Massey Agricultural College has been completed, as have also the Lower Hutt Intermediate School and the gymnasium and assembly hall at the Southland Technical College. Class-room additions are continuing at this latter college. A domestic-science block is under construction at the King Edward Technical School, Dunedin. In addition, class-room and recreational accommodation and many works of lesser magnitude have been provided throughout the Dominion.

It is acknowledged that the present rate of construction in education buildings will have to be considerably accelerated to provide the additional class-rooms required to meet the expected increase in the attendance rolls during the next five years. As a result of a recent comprehensive survey, it is estimated that to meet the requirements of primary and intermediate, post-primary, and Maori schools an additional 1,823 class-rooms will be required by 1952.

In addition, during the same period the University colleges will have an extensive building programme.

Health Department, including Mental Hygiene Division.—Work is proceeding steadily on the St. Helens Hospital, Christchurch, staff residences having been completed. The nurses' home kitchen, Nelson Hospital, is almost completed, and work progresses favourably on the main kitchen at this hospital. Shortage of steel has caused delays on this work.

Progress continues on the villas and cottages at Lake Alice Hospital and on the villas at Porirua Hospital. During the year, the occupational-therapy block at Tokanui Hospital was commenced.

Police Department.—New police-stations have been completed at Grey Lynn and Waitangi, Chatham Islands, and a start has been made on the new station at Dobson.

Public Works Department.—Work progresses favourably on the mechanical plant depot and the bulk stores, Christchurch.

Post and Telegraph Department.—During the year, the Karori Telephone Exchange was completed; the post-office at Te Kuiti is almost finished, and work continues on the Feilding Post-office. Many other works have been undertaken. To meet the needs of this Department, extensive use has been made of surplus defence buildings.

Labour and Employment Department.—Conversion to an immigration hostel at Fort Dorset and the erection of the Reefton Miners' Hostel has been completed. An immigration Hostel at Wigram and miners' hostels at Ohai, Huntly, and Ohura have been commenced.

Miscellaneous.—The maintenance, repair, and renovation of Government buildings has presented a heavy programme of work, and engineering services, including heating, refrigeration, air-conditioning, and fire-protection equipment, have been installed in many buildings throughout the country.

HYDRO-ELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT

Hydro-electric development has again been given very high priority, with the result that, in spite of continued difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of skilled workmen and an adequate supply of materials, there has been a substantial achievement in both construction and investigation for future work.