

The plans for the new Magistrate's Court at Auckland are well in hand, but some minor details still remain to be settled.

Tenders have been invited for the much-needed new building at Masterton.

For the current year, votes are asked for buildings at Kaikohe, Auckland, Taumarunui, Opotiki, Waverley, Ohakune, Masterton, Petone, Greymouth, Methven and Tapanui; for additions at Hamilton, Gisborne, New Plymouth, Cheviot, and Timaru; and for converting the police-station at Warkworth into a courthouse. A considerable number of applications for new buildings have been received, many of which call for early attention, but they have had to be postponed until other works now in hand and in contemplation have been dealt with.

Gaols.—As was the case during the previous year, the principal expenditure last year was in connection with the new wing at Mount Eden, Auckland, and the gaol at Invercargill, while various small additions, alterations, and improvements have been carried out at Lyttelton. A contract for a new police-gaol at Gisborne has been let. This was a very necessary work, as the old building is in a dilapidated condition. A police-gaol is in course of erection at Greymouth as an addition to the police-station, and when completed the present gaol at Hokitika will be closed as a gaol and utilized as a mental hospital. The total expenditure on gaol buildings amounted to £4,231.

The new votes include provision for further work at Mount Eden and Invercargill, for the new building at Gisborne, for development work at Tokanui Reformatory Farm, and an addition to the police-station at Timaru, to serve as a police-gaol. Last year's votes for additions at Wellington and gaoler's residence and warders' cottages at Dunedin have been omitted, as it is not now intended to proceed with these works.

Police-stations.—The votes in last year's appropriations provided for twenty-eight new buildings, besides other items for lock-ups, additions to stations, quarters, purchase of land, repairs, &c. New buildings have been erected at Kaitia, Kaikohe, Hamilton, Shannon, Pongaroa, Takaka, Dunollie, Sydenham, Lincoln, Rakaia, and Chatham Islands, and various others are in hand.

Apart from the unexpended votes of last year, the chief new items are for buildings at Warkworth, Remuera, Takapuna, Mount Albert, Ponsonby, Taumarunui, Te Puke, Napier, Waitara, Whangamomona, Taihape, and Cobden, and a gymnasium at the Newtown Training Depot. There is an increasing demand for police-stations in many settled districts, and as settlement progresses further expenditure under this head may be anticipated.

POST AND TELEGRAPH.

An extensive building programme is in hand for the Post and Telegraph Department—the expenditure during 1908–9 having amounted to £62,262, and during last year to £68,574. The principal works in hand last year were new offices at Whangarei, Maungaturoto, Mount Eden, Epsom, Pukekohe, Huntly, Ngaurawahia, Otorohanga, Te Kuiti, Morrinsville, Taumarunui, Nuhaka, Hastings, Ongaonga, Aramoho, Ohakune, Foxton, Weraroa, Upper Hutt, Te Aro, Richmond, Wakefield, Wallsend, St. Bathans, and Wyndham, and the important new buildings in Auckland and Wellington, with both of which satisfactory progress is being made.

In addition to the above, new quarters have been provided at Whitianga, Waipiro Bay, and Ophir; new properties purchased at Karori, Upper Riccarton, Dunedin (Moray Place), and Owaka; and more or less extensive additions or alterations made at Te Puke, Napier, Okato, Stratford, Ashhurst, Wellington (parcels-post), and Christchurch.

The expansion of the work of the Post and Telegraph Department is so great that heavy expenditure for buildings must be looked for in the near future. In addition to large appropriations on account of the new offices at Auckland and Wellington a considerable sum is required this year to meet the award of the Compensation Court in respect of the land and building at Wanganui adjoining the present post-office, which has been taken under the Public Works Act to provide for very necessary enlargements. A large amount on account of buildings for wireless telegraphy will also be required. The erection of a bulk store on the land recently reclaimed on Waterloo Quay, Wellington, will absorb a considerable sum. Other important buildings have also to be erected.