

shops machinery. The balance covered expenditure upon improvements to workshops, station facilities, water-services, locomotive depots, stock-yards, tablet-installation, telegraph and telephone facilities, and purchase of land.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

GENERAL.

Parliamentary Buildings.—The energies of the contractor during the first half of the year were concentrated on pushing forward work in the chamber in the House of Representatives and lounge lobby to admit of its occupation by honourable members last session, and since that time the work has been chiefly in connection with the Legislative Council chamber. The Council chamber has been advanced sufficiently to admit of its being occupied this session.

Most of the stone required for completion is worked and ready for setting as soon as the cornice and column stones can be obtained. When these latter are placed in position the three cranes will be removed, the large holes in the roof and floors finished, after which the final completion of the whole structure should be in sight.

Departmental Buildings.—The principal operations under this head were :
(1) The acquisition of a suitable site for a store and yard at Penrose, Auckland ;
(2) the conversion of the old police-station at Dunedin into offices for the accommodation of Government Departments ; and (3) alterations to the Government Printing Office, Wellington.

COURTHOUSES.

No new buildings were erected during the year.

PRISONS.

Auckland.—The principal building-work at the Auckland Prison has now been completed.

The provision of additional cottages for the accommodation of prison officers is, however, required, and it is hoped to proceed with their erection during the current year.

Waikeria Reformatory.—The administrative division of this reformatory has been finished, concrete-block cottages have been erected, and roadmaking continued.

Paparua.—The erection of the permanent prison at Templeton has proceeded satisfactorily. Two additional concrete-block cottages have been erected and roadmaking continued.

Invercargill.—The programme at Invercargill has, as usual, been on a comprehensive scale, and all the different sections carried through satisfactorily.

POLICE-STATIONS.

The expenditure during the year out of the vote for police-stations has been limited to a few urgent works. The new buildings at Oamaru and Wairoa which were put in hand during the preceding year have been completed, and a new station has also been erected at Houhora. A suitable house and section for use as a police-station were purchased at Karori (Wellington), and sites were acquired at Blenheim and Tokanui.

POST AND TELEGRAPH.

Expenditure on new buildings, and additions and alterations to existing buildings, has been kept down as much as possible.

During the year post-offices were erected at French Farm, Makotuku, and Patearoa. Additions and alterations were made to the office buildings at Devonport, Kaeo, Matamata, Ohakune, Palmerston North, Sydenham, and Whitianga.

In addition to the appropriations previously authorized but not expended, it is proposed to make provision for new post-office buildings at those towns where the need is most urgent, but where building-operations have been postponed owing to the war.