

About 6,000 cubic feet of stone was worked and about the same quantity was set during the year. The short delivery of stone largely accounts for the delay in the completion of the building. Thirty-two column and nine cap stones are still required to complete the portico at the front entrance. The plaster-work of rooms and corridors on the principal and first floors has practically been finished, and other portions have been completed as far as practicable.

The heating and ventilation contract has been completed as far as the progress of the building will allow. The installation of electric light and power mains in the newly finished portion of the building has been carried out by the Public Works workshops staff.

COURTHOUSES.

The only new Courthouse erected during the year was at Raetihi. With this exception only necessary maintenance has been done.

PRISONS.

Building operations have been somewhat hampered during the greater part of the year, owing to the difficulty in obtaining cement. Additional concrete-block and stone cottages for the occupation of officers have been commenced at Auckland. At Waikeria a reservoir of 35,000 gallons capacity has been finished; one cottage and another building were erected, but two other cottages as well as the officers' quarters are now awaiting the necessary timber to admit of the roofs being completed. Building has been carried on as vigorously as circumstances permitted at Point Halswell, Wai Tako (Trentham), Templeton, and Invercargill. The Prisons Department has completed arrangements to supply the Housing Department with concrete blocks and roofing-tiles for use in the erection of workers' dwellings, but the shortage of cement has prevented even a commencement being made with the manufacture of this material. Concrete-block and tile making have been carried on at Paparua, and drainage, reclamation, and other work at Invercargill.

POLICE-STATIONS.

On account of the scarcity of labour and the abnormal cost of building, very little was done in the erection of new police-stations during the year. Owing, however, to the Police Department's tenancy of rented premises being terminated, it has been necessary in several cases to purchase properties to enable police-stations to be kept open, and to provide accommodation for members of the Police Force in charge of stations.

New stations were erected at Raetihi and Lower Hutt, and the following properties were purchased: Houses and sections for use as police-stations at Freeman's Bay, Fendalton, Mornington, Duntroon, Greytown, Terrace End (Palmerston North), Lyall Bay (Wellington), and Waikiwi; site for sergeant's residence at Blenheim; site for new police premises at Dannevirke; Superintendent's residence at Dunedin; Inspectors' residences at Wanganui and Palmerston North; constable's residence at Picton; site for new police-station at Upper Hutt; and site for constables' cottages at Petone.

Many of the older buildings occupied as police-stations are now beyond repair and are reaching the limit of their useful life. The erection of new buildings in these cases will be put in hand immediately tenders at a reasonable figure are obtained.

POST AND TELEGRAPH BUILDINGS.

Expenditure on new buildings and additions during the year has been comparatively small.

New post-offices have been erected at Henderson, Pakakariki, Reikorangi, Tiraumea, Toatoa, Walton, and Wharepoa, and new automatic-telephone-exchange buildings at Khandallah and Wanganui. Residences have been purchased for Postmasters at Cromwell, Mercer, and Picton, and for linemen at Darfield, Havelock, Rakaia, and Te Awamutu; while a lineman's residence has been erected at Kahukura.

There have been additions and alterations to office buildings at Eketahuna, Fairlie, Ngauwahia, Palmerston North, and Rongotea.

Many important works postponed during the war period are being put in hand where satisfactory tenders are obtainable.