

bourne, St. John's (Wanganui), and Brooklyn (Wellington). Residences for senior officers of the Police Force were also purchased at the following places, where the difficulty of obtaining rented houses rendered it necessary for the Department to provide accommodation: Whangarei (Inspector's residence), Greymouth (Inspector's residence), Hamilton (sergeant's and detective's residences), Wellington (Chief Detective's residence), Invercargill (residences for senior sergeant, sergeant, and detective).

POST AND TELEGRAPH BUILDINGS.

Owing to the difficulty experienced in procuring labour and material, and latterly to the financial stringency which demanded that only urgent and essential work should be undertaken, the expenditure during the year was not very great. The result has been that several important works involving considerable expenditure have had to be deferred. This is particularly unfortunate, as during the period of the war many new Post Office buildings and improvements in existing buildings could not be proceeded with, and at the termination of the war the Department, so far as its building programme was concerned, was practically several years in arrear. A big effort was made to overtake deferred work, but the Department was immediately faced with the problems of shortage of material and labour. Time after time no tenders were received for the erection of buildings required urgently. When conditions regarding material and labour improved, a financial position arose which made it necessary to curtail the programme already planned. It is realized that when conditions improve a very active building programme will be necessary to bring the facilities of the Department up to the pre-war standard.

During the year Post Office buildings were erected or their erection completed at Crookston, Glen Massey, Kelburn (for automatic-telephone exchange), Ormondville, Owhango, St. John's (Postmaster's residence), and Sutton; while important alterations were made to the Post Office buildings at Auckland, Dunedin, Invercargill, Rangiora, Rawene, Ruatorea, Timaru, and Wairoa.

The acute shortage in housing during the year made it difficult for officers in some places to obtain accommodation, and rendered necessary the purchase by Government of residences for Postmasters and other officers at the following places: Balclutha, Blenheim (two), Coromandel, Darfield, Eltham, Frankton Junction Railway, Greymouth, Hamilton (four), Matamata, Ohura, Pahiatua, Palmerston North, Stratford, Te Araroa, Timaru (three), Tolaga Bay, Waitara, and Waverley (two).

AGRICULTURE.

At Ruakura Experimental Farm a building has been erected to house the electric-light plant. Additional quarters and larger kitchen accommodation have been provided on account of the extra number of returned soldiers. A store, transformer-house, and two cottages are in course of erection.

The scheme of field drainage was deferred for the time being, so also was the erection of a modern milking-shed, at the Central Development Farm at Weraroa.

The completion of the electrical installation at Ruakura (which has already been connected with Horahora power scheme) and the extension of the water-service, as well as the erection of a store at Motuihi, are amongst the proposals for the current year.

MENTAL HOSPITALS.

In addition to ordinary maintenance work, good progress has been made with the additions to the Women's Auxiliary building at Auckland. This new unit will accommodate about eighty patients, and is so constructed as to admit of their further classification. At Tokanui the Male Admission Block is well advanced and a large workshop is almost complete. Material for the Female Admission Block, the foundations of which are finished, is on the site.

The Reception-house at Nelson should be completed within the current year. The poultry-farm has been remodelled, and the necessary buildings erected.

The residence for the head attendant at Christchurch is nearing completion; as also are general additions and alterations at Hornby. A two-story addition, which will increase the day-room space of two wards in the main building, is well advanced.

Additional accommodation for sixty female patients at Seacliff is nearing completion.