

The efficient repair and maintenance of existing plant, which has been assisted by the better organization of the staff in the field, has resulted in keeping down purchases of replacements to a minimum.

Major items of plant purchased during the year include one steam crane, ten air-compressors, two stone-crushers, six air-receivers, four air-operated shovels, four motor generator sets, thirteen electric locomotives, two petrol-locomotives, four cement-guns, six concrete-mixers, seven petrol-engines, seven electric motors, seven pumps, six ventilating-fans, two winches, one electric lift, sixteen machine tools, eleven pneumatic mine-hoists, three welding plants, one motor grader, thirty-six motor-cars, thirty motor-trucks, and numerous other items of mechanical plant. This detailed list does not include the special items of plant which were purchased for main-highway work, and which are itemized in the special report of the Main Highways Board.

STAFF.

It is with sincere regret that I have to record that a number of officers of the Department died during the year.

Mr. J. W. Swaney, Power-house Superintendent, Arapuni, died suddenly of heart-failure, having worked a full day on the day of his death. Mr. G. H. Hill, Overseer, Whangarei, died of heart-trouble after an illness of four months. Mr. W. H. Boys, Chief Clerk, Gisborne, died suddenly, having worked until the day of his death. Mr. T. J. Kiley, Overseer, Kotemaori, died after an illness of three months. Mr. S. C. Collinge, fifth operator, Mangahao, died following an operation for appendicitis; and Mr. J. P. Good, cadet, Head Office, died of septicæmia after one week's illness.

The following officers retired on superannuation: Messrs. C. H. Williams, Road Engineer, Wanganui; E. Bold, Land Purchase Officer, Head Office; and G. Brown, Draughtsman, Wellington District Office.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I wish to acknowledge, with thanks, the loyal support and assistance I have received from all members of my staff. The Department has been called upon to work at exceedingly high pressure. The large increase in the number of men employed and the vigorous prosecution of all the works in hand represent increased work for the permanent staff. The fact that practically no additions to the staff have been asked for, notwithstanding the heavy programme in hand, gives cause for congratulation, and is an indication that each officer from the highest to the lowest is carrying his portion of the load.

As appendices to this Statement honourable members will find full details of the principal works carried out by the Department in the reports of the Engineer-in-Chief, Government Architect, Chief Electrical Engineer, and Main Highways Board respectively.
