

The work was authorized last March, and up to date considerable progress has been made in establishing construction buildings and camp accommodation for the work. Plant is on order and a contract has been prepared for the first section of pipes, comprising 16 miles of main pipe-line.

The present number of men employed is 47, and it is expected to complete the work by 1941.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The net expenditure for last year in the various classes of buildings was:—

	£
General Government buildings	261,017
Courthouses	16,403
Prison buildings and works	9,476
Police-stations	11,086
Post and Telegraph buildings	248,144
Mental Hospital buildings	125,829
Health and Hospital institutions	15,747
	£687,702

NEW DEPARTMENTAL BUILDINGS.

The ever present problem of providing accommodation for Government offices has been tackled resolutely, and large blocks of offices are under construction in Jean Batten Place, Auckland, and Stout Street, Wellington. Work on these structures was delayed owing to difficulties in obtaining steel of the necessary sizes, but supplies have come to hand and no further difficulty is anticipated from that source; new Government offices at Napier are approaching completion, and a new block of offices was erected at Palmerston North. Unforeseen difficulties over the supply of certain specialized equipment has delayed the completion of the new Government Life Building in Wellington, but it is anticipated that the building will be occupied in a few months. As a temporary measure a large wooden structure is being erected in Aitken Street for Government offices, but here again delays in the deliveries of timber have not helped to relieve the problem of providing new accommodation; this building is being erected by day labour under the supervision of this Department. A new building for the Government Life Insurance Department in Nelson and one for the State Fire Insurance Department in Invercargill will also provide accommodation for other Departments, and a three-storied building in Christchurch has been purchased and is being remodelled for a similar purpose.

Other departmental buildings include a large building for the Scientific and Industrial Research Station at Auckland, a new meteorological office at Kelburn, garages and plant depots at Maungaturoto, Gisborne, and Wellington, and extensions of the garages and depots at Whangarei and Rotorua. Staff cottages have been erected and other accommodation provided in the Whangarei, Auckland, Taumarunui, Tauranga, and Gisborne districts, and a number of buildings erected in connection with the Ahuriri development scheme. The restoration of buildings damaged in the recent disastrous floods has been undertaken by this Department and is well in hand.

The Customs building in Wellington is being strengthened; the old building which was originally used as the Railway Head Office is being adapted for other Departments, and the Ministerial residence in Tinakori Road has been converted into two flats.

COURTHOUSES.

Although not as accelerated as anticipated, steady progress is being made in giving effect to the Government's plan for replacement of a number of inadequate courthouses throughout the Dominion. There is still, however, a good deal of work ahead, and the Justice Department and this Department are in close collaboration in respect of all works contemplated and in hand.