

made to telephone-exchange plant in order to provide for the ever-increasing demands for exchange service and to improve the standard of service for existing subscribers :—

The laying of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of underground cable ducts.

The laying or erecting of 50 miles of lead-covered cable containing 10,667 miles of wire for subscribers' circuits.

The erection of 523 miles of pole-line and 5,111 miles of open aerial wire for the connection of telephone-exchange subscribers' stations.

The establishment of 112 public-call offices and pay-stations.

The opening of a new magneto-telephone exchange at Thorpe.

The reconstruction or partial reconstruction of open-aerial systems at a large number of telephone exchanges.

The provision of additional switching-apparatus at 21 exchanges.

The installation of branching multiple switchboard equipment at the Te Awamutu Telephone Exchange.

The replacement of existing switchboards at 16 manual exchanges.

The equipment for the new automatic telephone exchange to be installed at Napier is now arriving in the Dominion and the installation work is being proceeded with. Tenders have been called for the automatic-telephone-exchange equipment to be installed at Gisborne and New Plymouth to replace the existing manually-operated systems; and the initial equipment for two new sub-exchanges to be installed at New Brighton and Mount Pleasant (Christchurch) is due to arrive in the Dominion within the next few months. In addition, extension equipment for the St. Albans (Christchurch), Dunedin (Main), Hamilton, Hastings, Hawera, and Khandallah (Wellington) automatic exchanges is under order, while branching multiple-switching equipment has been ordered for improving the service of a number of the larger manual exchanges.

An extensive rearrangement and improvement in the transmitting-aerial system at Wellington-Radio has been undertaken during the year. At present these aerials are for the most part suspended from temporary wooden poles, but these will be replaced at an early date by steel towers. When these are erected the existing tower, which is in an unsatisfactory condition, will be dismantled. Extensive additions to the building at this station were completed recently in order to provide accommodation for the additional equipment necessitated by the continually expanding services being provided. At Awarua-Radio the 400-ft. tower which was erected in 1913 was dismantled and temporary masts were provided to carry the various aerials pending the making of permanent arrangements.

TOURIST AND HEALTH RESORTS.

The expenditure for the year ending 31st March last was £23,159, as against £16,789 for the previous year.

Major works completed during the year were improvements to the reserve and baths at Morere, extensions to the water and drainage and electrical systems at Rotorua, additions to the Te Anau Hotel and Lake House, Waikaremoana.

Tracks were formed and bridges erected to give better access to some of the scenic attractions of the West Coast of the South Island. Flood-lighting in the Rotorua Gardens was completed and has proved an added attraction.

LANDS IMPROVEMENT.

The net capital expenditure from the Public Works Fund on this class of work and on dairy-industry loans during the year was £152,001, as against £62,672 for the previous period. The actual total expenditure was considerably more, £287,381, there being credits of £135,380, representing local-body contributions and recoveries from revenue funds.

The work carried out under this section of the Department's activities comprises the improvement and control of rivers, reclamation of tidal-flat areas, reclamation of sand-dune country, and drainage schemes.