

The following are the principal new items of plant installed during the year under review—Composing Machinery: Two Morproof proof presses; Varityper (on loan to Census and Statistics for the preparation of statistical material); Ultra Simplex type-high-testing machine; space-band cleaner. Letterpress Machinery: Waite demy letterpress machine; Thompson automatic platen; Heidelberg automatic platen. Binding Machinery: Three Halley joggers; Brehmer stitching-machine; Union drilling press; Greig rotary cutting, creasing, and scoring machine; Challenge paper-drilling machine. Offset Machinery: Two small model R.K.L. and one model R. 30 Rotaprint machines. Process Engraving Plant: D.O.N. vertical camera. In addition, several items of mechanical handling plant were purchased for use in the bulk stores.

*Buildings.*—The Department continues to operate under a severe handicap with regard to accommodation. The present building is old and has been extended from time to time to cope with the expansion of the Department, but the point has now been reached where any further expansion either horizontally or vertically is impossible. The last addition was the erection of a new wing in Featherston Street where the letterpress machines, binding, and part of the composing branches are situated. In consequence of this piecemeal erection the layout and design of the building are far from satisfactory for modern industrial needs, and working conditions, judged by present-day standards, can only be regarded as poor. So far as the structural limitations of the building and the space available will allow, improvements are continuously being effected to provide better conditions, the most recent being the addition of a cafeteria on the top floor, the installation of fluorescent lighting throughout the factory branches, and of modern heating and ventilating plant in the letterpress branch. Painting and general repair work is being carried out all the time by tradesmen attached to the Department's staff.

The age and condition of the building and the method of construction add considerably to the difficulties of organized economic production and preclude the attainment of anything approaching a smooth flow-through of output. Congestion is apparent in every branch, and the Department has been compelled to utilize to an increasing extent outside premises for storage and for particular processes which can be removed from the main building without too great a disadvantage.

When the Stationery Branch is moved to Aotea Quay, the Thorndon Quay building will then be utilized for the accommodation of the Lithographic Branch. There is a limit to which the decentralization of the Department into small units at widely scattered points can be carried, however, as such renders control more difficult and involves a large amount of unproductive and expensive transport.

Of a total area of 175,000 square feet now occupied by the Department, only 77,000 square feet is situated in the main building.

*Production Control.* In past years very little attention appears to have been given to this important aspect of the Department's internal organization. From the very nature of the work performed it is difficult to institute and maintain a rigid system of control, as the Department is at all times liable to be required to perform jobs bearing the highest priority to which all other work must be subjected, and, furthermore, is unable to decline any work demanded of it on the grounds that production schedules are already full.

The Production Section was accordingly set up in August, 1949, and already a great improvement in job control has become apparent. Much more appears possible by the introduction of a system whereby some knowledge of forthcoming work is available to the Department in advance and a closer supervision is exercisable over the progress of orders through the factory. It is hoped that in a short time a complete schedule of routine and repeat work will be in the possession of the Department, enabling it to forecast its commitments in printing and to arrange a system of production so that the fullest economy and efficiency in man-power and machines can be attained.