

internal alterations were made in order to incorporate in the post-office buildings accommodation previously occupied by another Department, and by the Postmaster as residential quarters, respectively.

It was necessary during the year to purchase at Maungakaramaea, Plimmerton, Riccarton, and Waipahi buildings to accommodate the post-offices at those places. At Kohukohu a residence was bought for the Postmaster.

The extended use of motor-vehicles rendered necessary during the year the provision of workshops and garage accommodation at Invercargill, Palmerston North, Wanganui, and Wellington. Small garage buildings were provided at Matamata, Morrinsville, Opotiki, Papakura, Rotorua, Whakatane, and Whangarei; and a garage and store building was erected at Masterton.

A portion of the new building erected for the Department in Hereford Street, Christchurch, has been occupied by the Telegraph Branch, thus releasing for postal purposes accommodation urgently required in the chief post-office building. Necessary alterations are now being made to the latter building.

A portion of the old post-office building at Patea was moved to Whenuakura for use as a post-office.

At Lichfield and Okaramio small post-office buildings were provided by the settlers. In each case the cost of the work was subsidized by the Department.

In consequence of the opening of the Otira Tunnel, the post-office building at Otira was moved from a position near the western end of the tunnel to a site near the railway-station.

A building to house the automatic telephone exchange in Wellington is nearing completion.

The post-office building at Paeroa, which has served its period of usefulness, is to be replaced by an up-to-date structure on a new site.

Owing to increased business, additional accommodation for post-office purposes is required at Gisborne, Greymouth, Invercargill, Masterton, and Nelson; and the question of making additions to the post-office buildings at these places will require to be faced shortly. At Gisborne an extensive addition to the existing building is in course of erection.

#### MENTAL HOSPITALS DEPARTMENT.

At Auckland considerable maintenance work, together with minor alterations and improvements, has been carried out. Provision has also been made to light the institution with electricity supplied by the Auckland Power Board.

At Tokanui contracts have been let for the erection in brick of an admission ward for females, administration block, and central store, and work in connection therewith is proceeding.

At Porirua an additional area of farming lands was acquired during the year, and general maintenance work carried on as usual.

The expenditure at Nelson and at Stoke has been mainly on the lines of bringing the institutions up to date structurally.

Heavy expenditure at Hokitika is occasioned by the construction of an up-to-date reception ward, and by necessary alterations and removals to existing buildings, the whole being part of the general scheme for replacing the present old and unsuitable structures with buildings in line with modern ideas and requirements.

At Seacliff much maintenance work was carried out in addition to the provision of new bathrooms and lavatories on the male side and new airing-courts for female patients.

#### BUILDINGS FOR DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

For financial reasons the expenditure upon buildings, &c., at experimental stations has been restricted during the past few years to only the most urgent works, but provision is now being made for the erection of a residence and farm-buildings at Waimaunga, and up-to-date cattle-yards and slaughter-house at the Ruakura Farm of Instruction. The former buildings are being erected to enable dairying to be started and the farm to fulfil the purpose for which it was originally acquired. Provision is also being made for the erection of a residence and farm buildings at the Galloway Experimental Area, to enable dairying to be started for the purpose of demonstrating the best methods to employ in connection with the irrigation systems established in the district.