

Plans, &c., have been prepared for four large buildings which have not yet been commenced. Amongst these is the Dunedin Post-office, nine stories high, covering a whole city block, and estimated to cost not less than £200,000; High Street (Christchurch), £16,000; Courtenay Place (Wellington), £30,000.

The largest buildings erected in the period were: Wellington Automatic Telephone Exchange, £35,000; Napier Post-office, £53,000 (in course of erection); Stratford, £22,000; Gisborne (additions), £22,000; Hastings (additions), £16,000; Palmerston North (additions), £16,000; Dannevirke and Marton, £15,000 each; Dunedin Automatic Telephone Exchange, £13,000.

PRISONS DEPARTMENT.

Twenty-one new buildings have been erected, the total cost being £72,000.

The largest job was the men's prison, Watts Peninsula, Wellington, which cost approximately £35,000.

TOURIST DEPARTMENT.

During the last four years one new building per year has been erected, the total cost being £65,600.

The greater part of this expenditure was incurred for the new hostel at Waitomo Caves. This building, which will be a great attraction to tourists, was completed this year. It includes a steam laundry and boiler-house and a refrigerating plant, while all the cooking is done by electricity. The cost was in the vicinity of £45,000.

SUMMARY.

The grand total of buildings erected during the period was 488, at a cost of £1,965,690.

In addition to the above, very large numbers of minor works have been carried out, and a huge volume of maintenance work attended to every year by the district offices.

LIGHTHOUSES AND HARBOUR-WORKS.

The policy of the Government of making our shores safer to mariners has been steadily pursued, dealing with the greater dangers first.

In addition to providing new lighthouses and other aids to navigation, the policy of cheapening the cost of maintenance, without sacrificing efficiency, by the adoption of automatic lights instead of watched lights at a number of suitable stations has been followed. This is a work in which it is unwise to step too boldly in view of the vital interests concerned, but as the experience both here and in the rest of the world demonstrates the reliability of new methods, these are adopted. The following shows in detail the work that has been done in connection with lighthouses.

With harbours, the greater number of these are controlled by their own local authorities; but in the case of the Westport Harbour, the Government, after full consideration of the position, decided to abolish the Harbour Board and to assume control.

In addition to work in harbours actually maintained by the Government, assistance has been given in the case of a large number of small ports, either by means of direct grants or by subsidies, according to the requirements of the case, the work being supervised by the Government. Some details of the work are given.

MARINE WORKS.—LIGHTHOUSES.

Since March, 1920, a considerable number of new lighthouses have been built and, where suitable and advisable, some of the existing watched lights have been converted to automatic operation. In addition, two powerful fog-signals have been provided, direction-finder installed, new residences built, and various minor works carried out. The principal works dealt with are as under:—

North Cape.—Automatic flashing light provided, and now in course of erection.

Cape Maria van Diemen.—Two lighthouse-keepers' cottages have been erected.

Cape Brett.—New cranes, oil-engine, &c., provided and installed.

Kaipara Heads.—New beacons.

Kaipara South Head.—New flashing light (automatic) provided.