

Increased or improved accommodation for departmental purposes has been provided at the following places : Christchurch, Gore, Greymouth, Hokitika, Huntly (garage), Kaikohe, Kaitaia, Nelson, Newton (Auckland), Papatoetoe, Wairoa (garage), Wellington (workshops), Whangarei.

The following works are in progress : Courtenay Place (Wellington East)—new post-office building ; High Street, Christchurch—new post-office building ; Lower Hutt—automatic telephone exchange ; Masterton—additions and alterations ; Palmerston (Otago)—new post-office building ; Ruatoria—new post-office and residence ; Upper Symond Street (Auckland)—new post-office building ; Urenui—new post-office building ; Waitara—new post-office building ; Westport—new chief post-office building.

The foundations for the new chief post-office building at Dunedin have been completed. Plans and specifications for the erection of the building have been prepared, and tenders have been called, closing in January next.

Plans and specifications have also been prepared for the new post-office building at Taumarunui, and tenders will be called shortly.

The earthquake of the 3rd February, 1931, caused extensive damage to post-office buildings in the Hawke's Bay District. The new chief post-office at Napier, which was completed and opened for business on the 28th July, 1930, withstood the shock, but was subsequently gutted by the fire which followed.

The post-office at Port Ahuriri was badly damaged by the shake, and afterwards burned.

At Hastings the clock-tower collapsed, and the old portion of the post-office building, which carried the tower, had to be demolished.

The Wairoa Post-office was badly damaged, and the clock-tower collapsed.

There was quite a number of other smaller post-offices which were damaged and which are being repaired.

The net capital expenditure for the year amounted to £138,670.

#### MENTAL HOSPITALS.

The net capital expenditure for the year on mental hospitals amounted to £134,140. The following is a summary showing the position of the various institutions at the end of the year :—

Avondale : A new two-story residence in wood has been erected for the Medical Superintendent ; an additional lavatory block built for Ward M 9 ; and a new hot-water service has been installed at the Wolfe Home.

Puhitahi : Villas Nos. 1 and 2 were erected in brick and concrete at a cost of £25,000. These buildings will accommodate 100 male patients.

Tokanui : The Nurses' Home has been completed and handed over to the Mental Hospitals Department. A water-supply and fire service have been installed and the roads formed and metalled. A new transformer substation has been built and a standby generating plant has been installed.

Porirua : A surgery has been provided for " A " Ward, female division, the electrical change-over to the 230 voltage was completed in several buildings and residences ; the reservoir was completed, the dam-face being concreted to full height. Several alterations were made to various buildings and renovations carried out as required during the year.

Nelson and Stoke : Three villas commenced the previous year were completed, furnished, and occupied. The equipment for the new bakery was installed ; the Imhoffe septic tank was completed, and all drainage connected thereto. The new reservoir for water-supply for Stoke is nearing completion. Contour plans of York property have been prepared.

Sunnyside : A new villa, in wood, was erected, and will accommodate fifty-four male patients.

Templeton : A fire service was installed for Villas Nos. 2 and 3 and extensive drainage-work carried out at Villas Nos. 1 and 2.

Hokitika : A large villa, in wood, to accommodate forty-eight female patients, was completed and furnished during the year. A pumping plant was fitted up and laundry machinery installed. New farm buildings in wood and iron on concrete foundations were erected.

Seacliff : All necessary machinery and appliances were installed in the new laundry and kitchen block. The old kitchen block was altered and rearranged ; new service roads and paths were formed, and additional lavatories provided.