

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

GENERAL DEPARTMENTAL BUILDINGS.

At Napier temporary office accommodation was provided for departmental offices owing to the Government Buildings being destroyed by earthquake and fire.

At Wellington the installation of a central heating system in the Government Printing Office was completed, and a similar heating system has been installed in the main Government Buildings, thus doing away with the cost of electric radiators and open fireplaces and greatly reducing the fire risk. An instalment of £3,031 was made towards the cost of the new Museum building and Carillon at Mount Cook, Wellington.

The hostel for cadets in Fitzherbert Terrace was purchased from the Railway Department for office-accommodation purposes, and this building is now occupied by the Correspondence School, a branch of the Education Department.

The total net expenditure under this vote was £33,226, which includes an amount of £14,218 paid for the rescission of sale of lease of 415 The Strand, London.

COURTHOUSES.

During the year no new Courthouses were erected. The net expenditure under the vote was £3,513, and represented the final payments on the contract for the erection of the Hamilton Courthouse. The laying-out of the grounds is receiving attention.

PRISON BUILDINGS AND WORKS.

Very little new construction work on prison buildings or works was undertaken during the year, the major part of the £2,621 expended being confined to completing works already in progress. At Hautu Prison £585 was expended on portable hutments, kitchen, office, and storeroom in establishing a No. 2 camp to accommodate forty additional prisoners and necessary staff. On account of the pressing need to relieve congested accommodation in all the city and town prisons owing to a sustained increase in numbers, this camp was an urgent matter. Erection was both expeditious and economical, being completed within a few weeks of commencement. The total completed cost did not exceed £14 per head. Considering the location of the camp, fifty miles from National Park Station, this is satisfactory. It is estimated that the establishment will enable development of Hautu pumice lands to be increased by a further 300 to 400 acres per year.

At Wellington Prison duplication of the existing water-supply by a further 50,000-gallon storage-capacity was commenced and completed at a cost of £302. Concurrent with this work the Department was able to effect a permanent saving of £25 per annum in electric power for water-pumping, which adequately defrays all the interest and depreciation on the expenditure.

At Invercargill the draining and roading of the Waihopai Estuary was proceeded with, at a cost of £892 for the year, in terms of the 1919 agreement with the Invercargill City Council, under which the Government received the freehold of 748 acres and free rental of 1,600 acres for varying terms up to 1942. This agreement was reviewed during the year, and, in conjunction with a proposal by the City Council that a portion of the leasehold area be handed back before due date for aerodrome purposes, several of the uncompleted undertakings of the 1919 agreement were considerably modified, to the satisfaction of the Council and the Department, in view of the restricted finances available. A final and definite estimate of £2,500 has now been made of the total expenditure required to be borne by the Department to complete the terms of the amended agreement. This will be spread over the next few years.

The following summarizes the general nature of the net capital expenditure on all prison works during the year:—

	1931-32.	1930-31.	1929-30.
	£	£	£
Erection and extension of buildings ..	703	535	1,791
Water-supply and sanitary drainage ..	606	217	612
Officers' cottages and quarters ..	6	389	2,460
Completion of access road (Wellington)	390	747
Farm buildings	131	315	894
Estuary-reclamation (Invercargill) ..	892	534	1,399
Quarry and laundry plant.. ..	283	124	302
	<u>£2,621</u>	<u>£2,504</u>	<u>£8,205</u>