

GENERAL CONTRACTS.

At the 31st March, 1934, contracts arranged by the Board were in operation for the supply of the undermentioned stores to all Departments :—

Batteries for motor-vehicles.	Electric lamps.
Bricks, fireclay, earthenware pipes, and fittings.	Motor-lubricating oils.
Brushware—painters' and general.	Motor-spirit and kerosene.
Candles, soap, and soda.	Motor-tires.
Cement.	Photographic work.
Coal, coke, and firewood.	Polish—metal, floor, and boot.
Disinfectant.	Typewriters.

In addition to the above, numerous departmental contracts were also in operation, the principal items concerned being as under :—

Aviation-spirit.
Foodstuffs (milk, bread, fish, poultry, hams and bacon, &c.).
Fuel oil for Navy and Government ships.
Lubricating-oil for m.v. "Maui Pomare."
Tobacco for mental hospitals.
Uniforms for messengers.

Competition for all items has been exceptionally keen, and, despite the difficult trading period, the service rendered by contractors during the year has, in general, been efficient and satisfactory.

STATIONERY COMMITTEE.

The Stationery Committee, which was set up in 1929 with the object of co-ordinating the purchase of printing and stationery items required by all Departments, continues to function satisfactorily. During the year particular attention has been given to the standardization of items in general use and the bulk purchase of the combined requirements of the Post and Telegraph, Printing and Stationery, and Railways Departments, with resulting economy.

Acting under the Board's authority, contracts are arranged for the supply of items in common use, and contracts for the following supplies were in operation as at the 31st March, 1934 :—

Cyclostyle correcting fluid.
Cyclostyle stencils.
Ink—Cyclostyle, fountain-pen, and writing (powder and fluid).
Paper—Carbon, toilet, and wrapping.
Sensitized papers and linens.
Typewriter-ribbons.

The Committee has also given consideration to the standardization of types of diaries for use in Government Departments, and finality in this matter will be reached at an early date.

PURCHASES FOR AUSTRALIAN SQUADRON.

During the visit to the Dominion of the Australian Squadron the purchase of stores required by H.M.A. ships whilst in New Zealand waters was arranged by the Board, and the Australian Naval Board has expressed its appreciation of the services rendered.

STANDARDIZATION OF OFFICE FURNITURE AND FITTINGS.

During the year a special committee was set up to report on the standardization of office furniture and fittings for use by Government Departments. The committee has completed its work and the proposals contained in the report are now under consideration.

MAINTENANCE OF TYPEWRITERS.

Early in the year an arrangement was made with the Post and Telegraph Department to undertake the quarterly servicing of typewriters held by Government Departments at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin.

From data obtained since the inception of the scheme, it is apparent that, owing to the regular attention given to machines in operation, a definite saving will be effected in the cost of repairs and overhauls.

At the end of the year the mechanical condition of the machines had improved to such an extent that less labour is now involved in servicing, as a result of which the maintenance charge made by the Post and Telegraph Department will be reduced as from the 1st April, 1934.

PREFERENCE TO NEW ZEALAND AND BRITISH MANUFACTURERS.

In the purchase of stores for use by Government Departments preference is given to New Zealand and British manufacturers, and this policy has been maintained during the year.

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