

At Porirua additions for the accommodation of forty patients and twenty attendants have been commenced, and an auxiliary reservoir has been provided. The question of a suitable system of filtration for the water-supply has been under consideration, and something in this direction will have to be done shortly. An amount has been placed on the estimates for this.

The old gaol at Hokitika which was handed over by the Justice Department has been fitted up for the accommodation of patients, and sixty males were transferred there from Porirua at the end of June.

At Christchurch a refrigerating plant has been installed, and additions for fifty female patients commenced.

At Seacliff additions to Simla and a new infirmary block at the rear of the main building are under way. A contract for a new water-supply has been let, and the work is now being carried out. There has been a shrinkage in the water-supply in recent years, which rendered the provision of a new supply a matter of necessity.

At the Waitati auxiliary a building to accommodate fifty patients is being erected.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The amount expended out of the Public Works Fund on school buildings during last financial year was £89,535. Of this amount, over £78,000 was paid in the form of grants to the respective governing bodies for the erection and equipment of public schools and teachers' residences, secondary schools, and technical schools. The balance of nearly £11,000 was expended on buildings directly under the control of the Education Department—viz., industrial schools, Native schools, and the Home for Backward Children, Otekaike, near Oamaru. The following were the principal works carried out at these schools: A cottage was erected for the gardener at Auckland Industrial School, and a gymnasium was built and an additional cottage home completed at the Boys' Training-farm, Weraroa; this institution was also connected with the Levin Borough water-supply. At the Girls' Reformatory (Te Oranga Home) at Christchurch improvements were made to the water-supply, and a subsidy was granted towards the cost of a swimming-bath. Native schools (and residences) were erected at Taharoa (Kawhia), and at Rangiahua, Waihua, and Whakaki (all in the Wairoa district, Hawke's Bay). At the Home for Backward Children an additional block of buildings was provided.

WORKERS' DWELLINGS.

There has been considerable activity in the work of erecting dwellings for workers during the year, the expenditure having amounted to £22,644. A much larger expenditure is anticipated during the current year, however, and provision to the amount of £60,000 is made on the estimates. This sum includes the cost of acquisition of land, road-formation, and the erection, alteration, and enlargement of dwellings. All the work is being carried out under the direction of the Department of Labour.

HOSPITALS.

Under the heading of "Hospitals and Charitable Institutions" there was an expenditure of £12,745 on new buildings and additions, principally in connection with the St. Helens Hospital at Wellington. The items on this year's estimates total £17,800, on account of which a vote of £9,500 is required.

It is proposed to provide substantial additions to the St. Helens Hospital, Christchurch, or an entirely new building, the question of which course should be taken not having yet been settled, also an isolation cottage and other additions at St. Helens Hospital, Dunedin. The isolation ward has now been completed and opened. Provision is also made for an infectious-diseases hospital and a cottage hospital at Rotorua, and this work is now well in hand.

There is an item of £2,000 for special cases in general hospitals. This is to provide special accommodation for mental cases which obtain admission to the general hospitals. Such accommodation has already been erected at Palmerston North, Greymouth, Invercargill, Gisborne, and New Plymouth, and other of the larger hospitals are moving in the matter. The Government has undertaken to bear the initial cost incurred by Hospital Boards in providing accommodation of this nature.