

As this section affects the interests not only of the Department and the ordinary consumer but also the interests of other State Departments, of the power-supply authorities, the insurance companies, and the electrical traders, we have under consideration the setting-up of an advisory Board containing representatives of these bodies to act with the Department in framing regulations and taking other steps to see that work is carried out in the most satisfactory way.

RAILWAYS.

RAILWAYS IMPROVEMENT AUTHORIZATION ACT, 1914.

The expenditure under the Railways Improvement Authorization Act, 1914, amounted to £253,874, for new stations and station-yards, goods-sheds, and terminal facilities at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Addington, Lyttelton, Paeroa, and New Plymouth; duplication, Newmarket, New Lynn; grade easements, Penrose-Mercer; new line, Auckland-Westfield; new line in Hutt Valley; deviation, Pelichet Bay; signalling, interlocking, and safety appliances; electric lighting. The proportionate cost of raising the loan was £19,533.

ADDITIONS TO OPEN LINES.

The expenditure out of the Public Works Fund amounted to £742,922, for the provision of additional rolling-stock, tarpaulins, Westinghouse brakes, steam-heating, workshop machinery, improvements and additions to station-buildings, extension of sidings, bridge-works, subways, cranes, weighbridges, additions to workshops: tablet, telegraph, and telephone facilities; additional dwellings; signals and interlocking; and purchase of land.

WAIHOU AND OHINEMURI RIVERS IMPROVEMENTS.

Work on the upper and lower branches of the Waihou River was continued, while the destruction of willows on the Ohinemuri River and Hikutaia Creek was completed. No. 1 dredge was in operation on the Upper Waihou River, and No. 2 electric dredge is almost ready for service. A towing-barge has also been provided, and pontoons erected for the discharge pipe-lines. A considerable amount of survey work has been carried out, the principal being river traverse from Mangaiti to Te Aroha; survey of transmission-line from Ngahina to Netherton; and a contour survey of the lower Waihou area between Ngahina and Wharepoa.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

At Auckland new workshops for Public Works Department were completed and occupied. A site was acquired for the erection of a fumigating-shed for the use of the Public Health and Agriculture Departments, and a suitable building has been erected thereon. A new printing-room was erected in the Departmental Buildings for use of the Draughting Branch of the Public Works Department. At the Law Court Buildings in High Street an automatic fire-alarm system was installed, and provision was made for electrically heating offices in the building. At Penrose a new store building was practically completed, as well as a residence for the storekeeper.

At Taumarunui additions to residences of the District Engineer and the Chief Clerk were completed.

At Napier additions to the Public Works Office were completed.

At Wellington additions were made to an existing building to provide further accommodation for the Land and Income Tax Department. A small building at the back of the main departmental buildings was removed, and a commencement made with a substantial addition to accommodate Government Departments, rendered necessary owing to the expansion of public business. A fire-alarm system was installed in the Government Printing Office. At the State Fire Insurance Building radiators were installed. An addition to the Public Works Department's garage was made.