

With the exception of a few instances in which the circumstances were too urgent to allow of the usual procedure being followed, tenders or quotations were invited for the whole of the stores required. For the requisitioning Departments 9,422 purchase requisitions were dealt with, and 310 departmental contracts were arranged for daily supplies—mostly foodstuffs. These figures do not include the requisitions or contracts dealt with by the three purchasing Departments (Railways, Public Works, and Post and Telegraph) on account of their own Departments. The number of items in a purchase requisition is often considerable, sometimes exceeding 100, and they are additional to the purchases made by Departments under the general contracts arranged by the Board.

GENERAL CONTRACTS.

At the 31st March, 1931, contracts arranged by the Board were in operation for the supply of the undermentioned lines to all Departments :—

Batteries for motor-vehicles.	Motor-lubricating oils.
Bricks, fireclay, earthenware pipes, and fittings.	Motor-spirit and kerosene.
Brushware—painters and general.	Motor-tires.
Candles, soap, and soda.	Non-ferrous metal rods, sheets, tubes, &c.
Cement.	Paints, colours, oils, varnishes, &c.
Chain.	Photographic work.
Coal, coke, and firewood.	Pianos.
Cooking-utensils, cutlery, and hollow-ware.	Plumbers and sanitary stores.
Disinfectant.	Polish—metal, floor, and boot.
Electric lamps.	Rope and twine.
Glass—sheet and plate.	Rubber goods.
Glue and size.	Steam cocks and valves, gauge-glasses, and packings.
Hose, canvas.	Tinware.
Ironmongery.	Typewriters.
Lamps, lanterns, and fittings.	Wire, fencing.
Locks and keys, lock fittings, and furniture.	

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

- Foodstuffs (milk, bread, fish, poultry, hams, and bacon, &c.).
- Fuel oil for Navy.
- Tobacco for Prisons and Mental Hospitals.
- Uniforms for messengers.

The contracts arranged during the year reflect a general downward tendency in prices.

PURCHASES FOR THE SAMOAN ADMINISTRATION.

Since the latter part of 1929 the purchase of stores required by the Samoan Administration has been undertaken by the Board in New Zealand. Owing to the short stay of the G.M.V. "Maui Pomare" at New Zealand ports, special arrangements have been made whereby quotations are invited and orders placed by the Board's Purchasing Officers on behalf of the Administration to ensure prompt delivery to the vessel.

In the case of motor-spirit, kerosene, and motor-lubricating oils, contracts have been arranged with companies operating in New Zealand to supply the requirements of the Administration ex the contractor's depots at Samoa.

CONTRACTORS' SERVICE.

Despite the difficult trading period through which the Dominion is passing, the service rendered by contractors during the year has, in general, been satisfactory and efficient.

It is pleasing to note that instances are on record where contractors have voluntarily reduced their contract prices consequent on the fall in the cost of raw materials or the lower cost of production.

PREFERENCE TO NEW ZEALAND MANUFACTURERS.

During the year the Board's policy of preference to New Zealand manufacturers has been maintained.

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