

ditching, seven culverts, and six bridges, each about 18 feet long, also cutting of approaches of Scamperdown Creek bridge. The work now in progress includes 246 chains of side cutting, 12 feet wide in solid; five small bridges, each 18 feet long; and eleven culverts, of a total length of 212 feet; and of these, 108½ chains of formation are finished, and the timber for bridges has been prepared and hauled to the different sites. The bridge is designed for the Scamperdown Creek, with one centre span of 55 feet, truss, and two side spans of 18 feet each, and tenders will at once be invited for its erection.

The completion of this road will tend greatly to fix the population of the settlements, and its progress so far has induced many to return to their farms, abandoned during the late disturbances.

2. *Bridle Road, Wairoa to Waikare-Moana*.—This branches from the last-described road near Te Kapu, where there is an Armed Constabulary station, about five miles from Clyde; and the distance thence to the lake is estimated at about twenty-four miles.

The route has been carefully examined, and the estimated cost of forming a bridle track along the best elected line by the valleys of the Waiau and Waikare-Tahike is rather more than £1,000; it is proposed to have the work done by Natives resident near the line, which will establish easy communication with the Uriwera country, and be of great importance strategically.

3. *Bridle Road, Wairoa to Poverty Bay, inland*.—The country between these places has been well examined to determine the best line for an inland road. The first line explored lay along the valleys of the Hangaroa and Mangawehi Rivers, but one much to be preferred has been discovered across the Ahimanu Range, which may be travelled safely throughout the year, and will avoid the many dangerous crossings of the streams above mentioned, besides materially shortening the distance, estimated at fifty-three miles, measured from Opoti, the end of the dray road under construction to the Poverty Bay plains. This road will open a considerable extent of pastoral and grazing country, and will be valuable for settlers and military purposes. The estimated cost is £2,000.

4. *Bridle Track, Wairoa to Poverty Bay, by Coast*.—From Wairoa to Maraetaha, south of Poverty Bay, the distance is fifty-eight miles. The worst portions of this line are at Waikokopu, where about one mile of side-cutting is required, and between Mahunga and Maraetaha, where it passes through bush for eighteen miles; this was very much improved in 1870 and 1871 by Native labour, by clearing the bush 12 feet wide for ten miles, and side-cutting some of the steepest places, of which several yet require to be improved. A ferry is about to be established over the Nuhaka River, and a bridge erected over the Waimana, a deep tidal creek: both works are very necessary as the crossings are frequently dangerous.

5. *Gisborne to Ormond*.—The distance between these places is twelve miles, over which a dray-road is being made. The work finished, and in hand, extends over about five miles, from Mahakaraka to Waerenga-a-hika: the finished portion includes about 720 chains of side-ditching; 30 chains of outlet drains; 142 feet of culverts; 15 chains of fascined formation, 16 feet wide; 20 chains of embankment, 2 feet deep; and 23 chains of road metalled, 12 feet wide and 12 inches thick; while the works in hand consist of about 332 chains of formation and embankment 20 feet wide, and 663 chains of side drains, and completing and metalling the approaches to eight culverts. Besides these, it is expected that at least one-half of the whole length of the road will require to be metalled, material for which may be obtained from the Waipaoa River, about one and a half mile distant. This road passes through a very valuable agricultural district.

6. *Mahakaraka to Arai*.—Dray road four miles long, over one and three-quarter miles of which the necessary works are extended. This branches from the Gisborne and Ormond road at Mahakaraka and joins the inland track from Wairoa at the Arai Creek. It is useful in connecting the settlements at the south-west part of the Bay with Gisborne. The works executed are 213 chains of side ditches and two culverts; and those in progress are about 107 chains of formation in open and 30 chains in bush, 20 feet wide; 60 chains of side ditches; 36 chains of outlet drains; 30 chains of bush clearing, 40 feet wide; and 10 chains grubbing and clearing, 16½ feet wide; and two culverts, with other incidental work.

7. *Gisborne to Maraetaha*.—Twelve miles, joining the coast line from Wairoa. This road has been pegged off and surveyed. The only work at present in hand is the erection of a bridge over the Karawa Creek, 65 feet long, in three openings. This, in conjunction with the ferry established by the Highway Board over the Waipaoa, secures very good communication between Gisborne and the settlement at the southern end of the Bay.

SEVENTY-MILE BUSH.

(D. Ross in charge.)

The road work in this district is situated between the Manawatu Gorge and the Ruataniwha Plains, in the Province of Hawke's Bay. The length of the road is 37½ miles, 29½ of which is through bush, and 8 through open land. Through the bush the road has been felled one chain wide, in the centre of which a width of 33 ft. has been cleared of everything close to the ground—one portion of the above road has been formed for 104 chains—viz., that lying within the Gorge, and consists of side cuttings 12 ft. wide; at the Ruataniwha end 16 chains have been formed and metalled over soft ground. Twelve plain pile bridges have been completed, all 16 ft. wide, and of the following respective lengths:—20 ft., 18 ft., 32 ft., 24 ft., 18 ft., 18 ft., 32 ft., 28 ft., 18 ft., 18 ft., 32 ft.—total, 290 ft.; and one is now in progress, 49 feet long, in two spans.

Of culverts 23 have been constructed, averaging 19 feet to 26 feet long, giving a total length of 500 feet, all made of heart of totara, 3 to 4 inches thick. Twenty of these are in the side cuttings in the Gorge, and three in the metalled portion above described. In progress are two chains of road formation, with timber breastwork, in the Gorge; this and the bridge in progress will have been completed since receipt of District Report. The soft and swampy portions of this road have been roughly corduroyed, and the small soft-bottomed streams roughly bridged, so that the road is now in very fair order as a horse track. The work of forming and finishing the road for cart traffic will be reserved for future settlers in the Seventy-Mile Bush.