

WAITARA TO WANGANUI.

The delay in completing the survey of the section between Waitara and New Plymouth has arisen from a survey of two lines having been undertaken. It has however been completed, and the report will receive early attention. A survey of a considerable portion of the line between New Plymouth and Wanganui has been finished.

MANAWATU TO WANGANUI.

The preliminary surveys of this line are completed, and are being mapped. The portion from Palmerston to Rangitikei is through favourable country, but from Rangitikei to Wanganui the line to be ultimately adopted will require careful consideration.

PICTON TO BLENHEIM.

This line has been let to Messrs. Brogden, who are employing on the work some of the railway labourers brought out by them for the purpose.

NELSON TO FOXHILL.

The working survey of this line is completed, and the plans have very lately been received. Designs and working drawings will be at once made, and the necessary data for tender prepared, when no delay will take place in arranging for the construction of the line.

CANTERBURY GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.

The line from Addington to Rangiora will be completed and ready for traffic in the course of two or three months. The portion between Addington and Kaiapoi, a distance of twelve miles, was opened for passenger traffic on the 1st May. The line will be continued at once to the south bank of the Ashley. Plans, sections and specifications, are in preparation for the extension of the line from the Ashley to the south bank of the South Kowai.

CANTERBURY GREAT SOUTHERN RAILWAY.

The line has been formed from Selwyn to the Rakaia and can be finished as soon as the rails and sleepers are delivered. There is reason to hope that it will be opened in time to receive this year's wool.

The working surveys from the Rakaia to Ashburton are finished, and the data prepared to enable this portion of the line to be submitted to tender.

About two-thirds of the formation of the section between Timaru and the Washdyke are completed, and the survey of the country between the latter point and the Orari is now being executed.

CANTERBURY BRANCH RAILWAYS.

These include the Rangiora to Oxford, Kaiapoi to Eyreton, Rolleston to Southbridge, and Rolleston to Malvern. The House will remember that the Province promised a subsidy of £42,000 towards their cost. The whole length of the first has been surveyed and a contract taken for the formation of seven miles, at a cost of £200 per mile. Plans and specifications of the Kaiapoi to Eyreton are being prepared. A deviation in the Southbridge line is required for which authority will be asked of this House. A contract has been entered into for the formation of twelve miles of the Malvern line at a cost of about £90 a mile. A portion of the rails and rolling stock has been ordered.

CANTERBURY RAILWAY BRIDGES.

The Rakaia Bridge advances slowly. This work is considerably endangered from the scouring of the river at both ends of the structure, but more particularly at the north end. Recommendations have been made with a view to protect the banks of the river by erecting groins and planting willows.

The Ashburton Bridge is intended to be constructed upon a plan that will combine a road and a railway bridge—designs are now being prepared.

The precise site of the railway crossing over the Rangitata has not yet been determined, but Messrs. C. N. Bell and T. S. Tancred have recently reported upon the matter. The bridge just completed by the Provincial Government