

line will follow the railway to Helensville; thence to Warkworth, it will pass through Kaukapakapa, Makarau, and Komokoreka, along the general course of existing road lines. From Warkworth to Wangarei, the line will follow the road now in course of construction between Mahurangi and Port Albert, to a point three miles beyond the Hotea River; thence to the head of the navigation of the Mangawai River; thence to Waipu, and through Mangapai to Wangarei. From Wangarei to Kawa Kawa, the line will follow the Government road now being constructed *via* Haikurangi and Ruapekepeke; and from Kawa Kawa to Hokianga the course will be by Waiarui Bridge, Ohiwa, Kaikoe, Taheke, and Waima, to Herd Point, or to Hokianga Heads, as may be found preferable. From Kawa Kawa, the line will follow the general course of the travelling track around the head of the Waikare River, and thence to Point Russell.

NASEBY TO CLYDE.

This line has been pegged out, and about two-thirds of the material required for its construction has been delivered on the ground. The erection has been commenced from Naseby, and the work is progressing favourably. The line in its course to Clyde will pass through the township of Ophir, and St. Bathan will be connected by a short loop-line. Office accommodation is being provided at both those townships.

POVERTY BAY LINE

Is constructed as far as Wairoa, and a station has been opened at that place. The remainder of the line is being pushed on as speedily as possible. Great delay, however, is experienced in getting the material on to the ground, through the great scarcity of water carriage.

SOUTHBRIDGE LINE.

The construction of this line is also being proceeded with, and will doubtless be completed in a few months. It will be about 30 miles long, and will pass through Prebbleton, Lincoln, and Leeston, to Southbridge. A post and telegraph station at Southbridge is being erected.

THIRD WIRE, MASTERTON TO WAIPUKURAU.

The erection of this wire is being rapidly proceeded with, and will probably be finished about the first week in August. There will then be three direct wires to Napier, as the fourth wire about to be erected between Napier and Waipukurau, and between Wellington and Masterton, will take the place of the present third wire for the requirements of the intermediate stations between Napier and Wellington.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS.

BLUFF TO BALCLUTHA.

This section has required no particular attention since the date of the last report. There have been remarkably few accidents or interruptions, and none calling for remark. A lineman's station was opened at Clinton on the 25th October.

BALCLUTHA TO WAITAKI.

Advantage was taken of the erection of the railway wire to Waitaki to give this section an overhaul. That part of the line was improved and strengthened, and about 40 extra poles inserted. Road crossings were also heightened.

TOKOMAIRIRO TO QUEENSTOWN.

On account of the formation of the railway, it has been found necessary to reconstruct two miles of the Tokomairiro to Lawrence section. The whole line has received an overhaul, and a section of about 18 miles, near to Queenstown, has been reconstructed, 265 heart of totara poles being used for the purpose. The whole of this section is now in thorough repair.

CHRISTCHURCH TO HOKITIKA AND GREYMOUTH.

Owing to heavy floods in April, a portion of the line between the Bealey and Hokitika was considerably damaged, necessitating the shifting of the line for about 15 miles in the Teremakau Valley. This is being done, and will shortly be completed.

WELLINGTON TO NAPIER.

This line has received a thorough overhaul. The third wire between Masterton and Waipukurau, to connect with the third wire from Napier, has been rapidly proceeded with, and will be completed in a few weeks. During the running of this wire, the line between Masterton and Waipukurau has been closely examined, strengthened in its weak places, and new poles inserted where necessary. A fourth wire from Wellington to Masterton will shortly be proceeded with, tenders for the cartage of material having been called for.

AUCKLAND LINES.

With the exception of the reconstruction of Cambridge to Alexandra, as before mentioned, the Auckland sections call for no comment.

In February, one of the turrets for carrying the wires across the Thames was accidentally burned down. A turret to supply its place is now nearly completed. The line between Pukorokoro and the Thames River having become endangered by the encroachment of the sea, precautions have been taken, and in places the line has been shifted some chains inland. The Hamilton and Cambridge line, owing to changes in the main line of road, has been considerably altered. The line recently constructed along the Onehunga Railway has also been altered to meet the requirements of Messrs. Brogden and Son in carrying out their contract. On the line between Mercer and Pukorokoro, several new poles have been inserted, and other works performed for the better maintenance of the section.

The clearing of a track to facilitate the examination of the line between Waitakaruru and Piako has been let by contract, and is rapidly approaching completion.

Details as to the cost of maintenance of each section are given in Table F.