

Land Plans.—The completion of the land plans on the Waitaki-Bluff Railway has been prosecuted during the year as opportunity offered. Out of a total length of 392 miles, 110 are finished and about 150 well advanced.

OTAGO CENTRAL RAILWAY.

With the exception of the last cutting, which has been retarded by slips, and general trimming-up, the works on the Wingatui section are complete.

A number of men who could not get employment otherwise were put to work on the Hindon section last winter, chiefly at piecework. They were all paid off in summer, except fifty, whose operations are confined to the first mile, it being desirable to get the formation finished this far to facilitate the construction of the viaduct and tunnel at Mullocky Gully. About £6,400 has, in this way, been expended during the year on the Hindon section, and good value has been got for the money.

The Deep Stream contract, let in February, 1882, has been rather unfortunate. The original contractors, after doing a small portion of the work, came to a standstill. The contract was taken out of their hands and given to their sureties; but they also have failed to make satisfactory progress, and now apply to be relieved of their liability.

The Nenthorn section, which brings the railway on to the commencement of the easy country at the 33rd mile, was let this month, and a vigorous start at once made with the work.

The land plans of the Wingatui section of the Otago Central Railway are finished.

INVERCARGILL-KINGSTON RAILWAY, WITH BRANCH.

A considerable number of minor improvements and additions on the main line have been in progress during the year, the following being the more important: Flood protection-works at various places; general station improvements at Winton; goods-shed and loading-bank at Garston; shelter-shed at Fairlight; cattle-yards at Kingston; converting blind sidings into loops, and platelayers' cottages, at various places.

On the Lumsden-Mararoa Branch an extension of the platelaying, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, has been carried out during the year.

Out of a total of 93, 6 miles of the land plans of the Invercargill-Kingston Railway are finished, and 40 well advanced.

WESTERN RAILWAYS.

Open Lines.—The principal works in progress on these lines during the year are: Additional waterways at various places; cattle-yards at Otautau; goods-sheds at Fairfax and Otautau; additional sidings at Thornbury; water-service at Otautau; and house for guard and engine-driver at Wairoa.

Riverton-Orepuki Line.—The Roundhill section was completed and opened for traffic in September.

The formation contract for the Pahia section, which brings the line to Orepuki, has just been finished. A contract for the platelaying of this section was entered into last month, and a commencement has been made with the works.

Land Plans.—All the land plans for the Western Railways are finished.

ROADS AND BRIDGES.

NELSON DISTRICT.

Pelorus Valley Road.—The formation of the main road between Blenheim and Nelson is finished to the foot of the Rai Saddle, on the Blenheim side of the range, and to the junction of the Collins and Whangamoa Rivers, on the Nelson side. The completion of the gap, which is seven miles in length, and the bridging of the Pelorus River, are now the only obstacles to wheel traffic all the way from Blenheim to Nelson. Both works have been put in hand, and are expected to be finished by the end of the ensuing year.

Lower Moutere Road.—Two contracts are in progress. One, for a bridge over the Moutere, is almost finished; the other, a road diversion, is only commenced, there having been some delay in acquiring the land.

Wairau Cart Bridge.—This work, which was commenced a year ago, has just been finished in a satisfactory manner. The bridge, which carries the Picton-Blenheim Road over the Wairau, is 480 feet long.

Clarence Bridge.—The ironwork having arrived from England, a contract for the erection of this bridge has just been entered into. It is rather an important structure, the river being very difficult to bridge. There are four spans of 120 feet each, and one of 60 feet, all on cylinder foundations. The superstructure is of hardwood with iron lower chord. The bridge is designed for both road and railway traffic.

Road, Clarence to Kaikoura.—The new track round Ohau Hill is now completed. The work was carried out by the County to plans prepared by this Department.

Tophouse and Tarrdale Road.—The pack-track through the Wairau Gorge that was in progress at the beginning of the year has been finished, and a small contract entered into for 23 chains of the dray road.

Nelson-Buller Valley Road.—The principal formation-works in hand during the year are the deviation at Spooner's Range, referred to in my last annual report, and the improvement of the road between Fern Flat and the Eyell. The former was finished in October, and the latter is well advanced.

The bridges over the Matiri River and Granity Creek are completed, and small protective works have been carried out at the Owen.