

Waikaka Siding to Waikaka Township.—Mileage gravelled, &c., $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles; acreage rendered better accessible, say, 5,000 acres. The work done on this road during the year comprises $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles of formation, gravelling, and culverting. The road is formed at banks and cuttings to a width of 20ft., and the gravel is laid down at the rate of 25 cubic yards per chain. The work done begins about three miles from the Waikaka Siding and extends to where the road crosses the Waikaka Creek (near the township), there being, however, a break of some 3 miles near the northern end.

Wyndham, via Mimihaui, to Otaraia.—The work done on this road during the year consists only of the construction of a bridge over the Mimihaui River, which bridge is now in progress. The bridge consists of one span of 40ft. (trussed) on piers of rubble masonry set in cement mortar.

Road through Runs 177, &c.—Mileage formed, &c., during year, 1 mile; acreage rendered better accessible, 5,000 acres. The work done on this road extends from the western boundary of Block III., Waikawa District, to near the head of Waikawa Harbour, and occurs at intervals where formation, side-drains, cuttings, &c., were most required. During the year the following works were executed—viz., 1 mile of light formation, 38 chains side-drains, 17,500 cubic yards of earthwork, and 21 water-openings varying in size from 9in. to 12ft. As this road has only lately come into the Southland Land District, I presume a fuller report will not be expected of me.

Winton Tramway to Winton Forest.—Mileage bush-felling and clearing, 1 mile nearly; acreage rendered better accessible, 500 acres. This work is in continuation of the work done during the previous year, and consists of 76 chains of bush-felling and clearing, and 40 chains ditching. It is designed to tap the Winton Forest from the Forest Hill Tramway.

Wallacetown to Tomoporakau.—Mileage bush-felling and clearing, &c., $\frac{1}{2}$ mile; acreage rendered better accessible, 100 acres. This work is simply an addition to the work done during the previous year, and comprises 40 chains bush-felling and clearing, 74 chains ditching with formation, and 21 chains outfall-drains, also 5 culverts. It is designed to tap the bush land lying south of Wallacetown.

Waikiwi Suburban.—Mileage formation, &c., $\frac{7}{8}$ of a mile; acreage rendered better accessible, 100 acres. This work consists of 32 chains formation and double-ditching, 69 chains of tussocking, three culverts, and one bridge 40ft. long over Waikiwi Stream. This is an extension of the work executed last year running from the Waikiwi Cemetery westward to and across Waikiwi Stream. I think that the diversion of the Waikiwi Stream, the adjacent land being meanwhile a permanent morass, will shortly be found by settlers in the locality to be an urgent necessity; and should steps be taken by private individuals or by the local body to have the stream diverted, I would recommend that any money already allocated, or which may be allocated to this road, be devoted to the purpose of diversion. A speedy outfall for surplus water is the main need in this locality, and nothing else will make the land serviceable.

Seaward Forest to Deferred-payment Block.—Mileage formed, tussocked, &c., $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles; acreage rendered better accessible, 5,000 acres. This work extends from Trig P., Oteramika Hundred, to near the south boundary of Block XII., Oteramika. The work done is simply an addition to what was done during the previous year, and consists of $66\frac{1}{2}$ chains formation, $54\frac{1}{2}$ chains gravelling, 133 chains ditching, 80 chains of tussocking, and 3 bridges. My report of last year shows the position of matters in regard to this road, and to the land opened up by it. Since the road was pushed through the bush, thus connecting the Crown lands south of Seaward Forest with the settled portions of Oteramika, a number of sections have been taken up. A beginning has thus been made in the way of settlement, and as a large extent of land is available between the Seaward Forest and the coast I have no doubt that, poor as the land is in places, it will ultimately be occupied by a good number of settlers. The advantage of having direct communication between Oteramika Bight and the coast was dwelt on in last year's report so I need not allude to the matter further. I may add that the opening up of the road through the bush has induced a large firewood traffic, and thus been a great convenience to some of the older Oteramika settlers. The drawback to this, however, is that the heavy traffic resulting has terribly cut up the gravelled road formed by the Government, and rendered it nearly useless for the new settlers south of the bush, for whom it was intended, the road being, of course, designed to open up Crown lands and induce fresh settlement, not to give bush facilities to settlers already established. It is well when both purposes can be served, but as the gravel in the locality of the road is light it is really unable to stand a heavy kind of traffic for which the road was never intended. Letters have been sent to me by settlers south of the bush complaining of the heavy firewood-traffic alluded to, and, on the other hand, a request has been made by the firewood men to have more money spent in improving the road. I may report on this specially later on.

Road, Appleby to Tisbury.—Mileage formed, &c., $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles nearly. Acreage rendered better accessible, 500 acres. This road runs along Seaward Bush Railway from near McQuarrie Street to a point some 23 chains east of Seaward Bush Township. The work, which is in an advanced state, consists of bush-felling, clearing, forming, and corduroying. The opening up of the road was an absolute necessity to a large number of the Seaward Bush settlers, and it will also ultimately help the settlement of the Crown lands south of Tisbury Siding. The settlers alongside the road supplemented the Government vote by their labour contracts having been taken by them at half the estimated rates. Considering the circumstances the work so far has been carried on well, its success justifying the plan which was adopted by the Government in expending the grant.

General.—All the works were executed under the supervision of Mr. C. H. Howarth, the County Engineer. The competition for the contracts having been considerable the works in nearly all cases were very cheaply done. In respect of gravel, the Engineer made the best of the material available, and showed his usual care and efficiency in carrying the works into effect.

JOHN SPENCE, Chief Surveyor.