

NELSON DISTRICT.

Roads in the Sounds.—A track 2ft. 6in. wide and 3 miles 76 chains long has been made from the Native village, Waikawa, 3 miles from Picton, to Watamonga Bay. The works were completed April, 1887. A desire has been expressed that it should be extended to Port Underwood.

Belgrove-Tophouse.—The usual repairs and maintenance have been executed during the year.

Main Road, Nelson, Westport, and Greymouth.—This road has been effectively maintained. The traffic has been heavier than usual, owing to the carting to the Owen Reefs.

Riwaka-Takaka and Collingwood.—At the beginning of this year the road from Riwaka to Takaka was completed for a distance of 8 miles. The following contracts have since been completed, viz., Banfield, 2 miles; Main Creek, 2 miles; Nikau, 2 miles 72½ chains; Pikikerunga, 2 miles. Since the completion of the several contracts and their specified terms of maintenance, the road has been attended to by the Government: the work has been light. The road is now opened throughout from Riwaka to Takaka Valley.

Motueka-Motupiko Cart-bridge.—This work was satisfactorily completed in April, 1887. It has since been well screwed up, preparatory to its being painted.

Owen Valley Road (9 miles 22 chains).—This has been attended to as well as the limited amount of funds available would permit. If circumstances should require that it should be made into a proper dray-road, it will need a very much larger expenditure.

Upper Buller Bridge.—This work was satisfactorily completed in May, 1887.

WESTLAND DISTRICT.

Buller Road.—Four contracts let during last financial year and four during the present year have been finished. They consisted of improvements to the road in various places between the Nine-mile Ferry and Inangahua Junction, such as building stone retaining-walls (instead of cribbing, which had become decayed), widening the road, and strengthening the bridges. Unfortunately, after heavy rain in February, many very heavy slips occurred between the Nine-mile Ferry and Berlin's, respectively 6 miles and 20 miles from Westport, and the road is closed for wheel-traffic. It will require a considerable expenditure to restore the road, and all that has yet been done in this direction is to clear a passage for horse-traffic.

Lyell Bridge.—The contract for this work was let in July last to Messrs. Anderson, of Christchurch. It is to be finished in March, 1889. The work on the approaches is well advanced, and there is some bridge material delivered on the ground. The foundations of the main or central pier have not turned out so satisfactorily as expected; rock shown on the surface did not turn out solid enough to build on: this will necessitate a modification of the lower part of the piers at an increased cost.

Waitahu Bridge.—This contract was finished in December. It was much needed, and has proved a convenience, as the river is a dangerous one in freshes. The full length of the bridge is 500ft., and that of the approaches, which form part of the work, is 65 chains. The structure will shortly be tarred.

Inangahua Bridge (Reefton).—This was tarred during the year.

Inangahua Bridge, near the junction with the Buller, has been maintained during the year.

Hokitika-Christchurch Road.—The maintenance of this road from the Loop-line Junction to Arthur's Pass, 36½ miles, has been attended to as usual. The slips and damage from river encroachment have been more numerous than usual. Some protective-works have been erected at the Taipo Bridge.

General.—An average of thirty-five men have been employed on day-labour works. The approximate number of men employed during the year, exclusive of contractors' men engaged away from the works, was 122. Good workmen are now obtainable at 8s. per day.

WORK IN WESTLAND FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

Inspections have been made of the following roads for the Mines and Lands Departments:—

Mines Department, Buller County.—Road, Barrytown to Brighton; Mokihinui to Karamea; Promised Land to Karamea; Denniston to Cedar Creek; North Terrace to Oparara (Karamea); Lyell Creek to Low-level Tunnel; Deadman's Creek Road; Ngakawau to Mokihinui; Deadman's Creek to North Beach; Addison's Flat towards the ranges; road south of Brighton towards Charleston.

Inangahua County.—Road from Grey Valley Road to Snowy Creek; Merrigig's to Big River.

Grey County.—Road, Barrytown to Brighton; Notown to Bell Hill; Limestone to Maori Creek; Cobden to Seventeen-mile Beach; German Gully to Arnold Flat; Hatter's Terrace to Haupiri; Baird's Terrace to Lake Brunner; Main Grey Valley Road to Hatter's Terrace.

Lands Department, Westland County.—Grey Valley *via* Bell Hill to Teremakau.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT.

Bridge over the Waiau, Hanmer Plains.—This contract was completed on the 8th August, 1887, and was opened for traffic at same date. The work has been well done, and is a very great convenience to the district. It has been handed over to the Amuri County Council.

Kaikoura-Clarence Road.—The formation of this road was begun in August, 1887, by piece-work, to afford employment to numerous men in want of it. Good progress was made, and the work was completed for about 7 miles (Hapuka River to Clarence River), when the storm at the end of March occurred, doing much damage to the newly-formed work.

Waiau-Hanmer Springs Road (4½ miles).—During the latter part of the year this line of road was surveyed, and in February, 1888, the men then working at the Sandhills and Hagley Park were transferred to this road, and have since been employed in forming a road from the Upper Waiau Bridge to the Hot-springs. About twenty-four men have been thus employed.