

Aorere Valley to Mokihinui.—This is the continuation of a main line of road from Jackson's Bay towards Collingwood. About thirty miles of the Collingwood end are constructed and eighteen miles of the Mokihinui end. The Mokihinui Bridge is also near completion. As soon as the slips are cleared off the track between the Mokihinui and Little Wanganui Rivers and the bridge completed the Karamea settlers will be able to drive their stock to market at Westport. At the present time there is no outlet from this settlement. About ten miles of the track were constructed during the last year, and the bridge across the Mokihinui River is in progress. There still remain about thirty-two miles of track to construct to get through-communication between the Mokihinui River and Collingwood. The total expenditure on this road has been £25,063 13s. 9d., and the liabilities on the 31st March last amounted to £875.

Grey Valley to Teremakau.—The road is now completed between the Grey Valley and the Teremakau River. During the last two years three miles of track have been constructed, and a suspension foot-bridge erected across the Crooked River, at a cost of £900.

Jackson's Bay to Cascade River.—This is a portion of the road leading between the Arawata Valley and the Duncan River. The track is constructed on the south side of the Cascade River; but there was a gap of 9 miles 22 chains between the Arawata Valley and the Cascade River. Of this distance 2 miles 22 chains have been constructed on the southern end, and for 2 miles 8 chains on the northern end the line; has been cleared for 33ft. wide; thus still leaving a gap of 4 miles 72 chains on which no work has been done. The total expenditure on this road amounts to £5,159 10s. 11d., and the present liabilities are £150.

Arthur's Point to Skipper's.—This road is now completed from Arthur's Point to the crossing of the Shotover River about half a mile below the junction of Skipper's Creek. The total cost of the work has been £12,167 4s. 1d.

Lake Wakatipu to Milford Sound.—The survey of this road was commenced last year from both ends, and the road-line is pegged out from Lake Wakatipu towards Lake Howden for a distance of twenty miles. Mr. Holmes, one of the engineers of the Public Works Department, examined the country between Lake Howden and Homer's Saddle, at the head of the Hollyford River, and recommended this route to be continued down the Cleddan Valley to Milford Sound; but on examination it was found to be impracticable, and a reconnaissance survey has recently been completed from Lake Howden towards the mouth of the Clinton River, where a road-line could be got with grades not worse than 1 in 10, the distance from Lake Wakatipu to the Clinton River being about thirty-eight miles, and from the mouth of the Clinton to Milford, over Mackinnon's Pass, the distance is estimated at thirty-three miles. At the Milford end, the road has been laid off for about four miles, and about forty chains of clearing done by prison-labour, and a little formation. The survey at the Milford end is still being carried on up the side of Lake Ada and up the valley of the Arthur River, but all work is stopped on the Wakatipu end. About two miles of a horse-track have been constructed between Lakes Wakatipu and Rere. The expenditure on this work last year was £1,328 17s. 10d.

Garston to Nevis.—A dray-road has been constructed from Garston to P. Cunningham's home-stead, a distance of about two miles and a half. From the end of this road to the upper township, at Nevis, a distance of about twenty miles, there is a pack-track following the natural undulations of the country. A dray-road is now being constructed from P. Cunningham's over the range for a distance of ten miles. This range is about 3,500ft. above sea-level. The road is laid off with gradients of not worse than 1 in 10, and its construction nearly completed. The total cost of this work is estimated at £1,545 18s. 8d. From the end of this ten miles the road passes over a flat valley, where drays can be taken down with very little, if any, expenditure. This road, however, will only be suitable for wheel-traffic for about seven or eight months in the year, as the elevation is so high that the road will be covered to a good depth with snow during the winter months. The expenditure on this work last year amounted to £788 18s. 6d.

WATERWORKS.

Thames Water-mains.—The original water-mains laid down by the County Council for supplying water to drive the various crushing-plants were constructed of rivetted wrought-iron pipes, and had become unserviceable; so that new cast-iron pipes had to be laid down. The cost of laying these pipes, exclusive of their purchase, was £1,479 10s. 5d., of which amount a subsidy was paid to the extent of £739 15s. 2d.

SCHOOLS OF MINES.

The School of Mines at the Thames is becoming a valuable institution, and the number of adults who attend the classes is becoming larger year after year. The average attendance, exclusive of the Saturday classes, last year was forty-five, while the attendance of adults for the previous year was thirty-three. To take the average attendance, including the Saturday classes, last year, namely, 93.5, it is not so large as that of the previous year, which was 96. This shows there has been a falling-off in the attendance of juvenile students who attend Saturdays lectures; but the adult attendance is steadily increasing. The average attendance of miners attending the mining and surveying classes was twenty-four last year, as against eighteen for the previous year. During last year eleven different parcels of ore were treated at the testing-plant, and a fair percentage of bullion was extracted from seven of these parcels. One of the tests proved a complete failure to extract the bullion. This was a parcel of 910lb. of ore from the Gem Mine at Waiomo, which contained a considerable portion of lead chloride. This parcel was run over amalgamated copper plates, and afterwards subjected to treatment by pan-amalgamation; but only 9 per cent. of the assay-value was recovered. The experiments and tests made with the ore from Puhipuhi show that by careful treatment a fair percentage of the bullion can be obtained, and they also go to show that the Puhipuhi field contains ore that is likely to be worked profitably.

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