

and had to be renewed, gravelling was required in many places, water-tables and drains were overgrown and had to be cleared, and the road generally improved.

Stafford-Waimea.—The portion of this road constructed was only 23 chains in length, extending from the Hokitika-Grey Railway up to the Waimea River Crossing. A contract has been let for the bridge over this stream, which will exhaust the present vote. The continuation of the road will require the amount I have mentioned in the estimates. This road, when completed, should constitute another good feeder to the railway.

Kanieri Forks-Kanieri Lake.—This vote has been expended in widening and gravelling portion and repairing the remainder of the road.

Greenstone-Teremakau.—The work carried out on this road was widening the present track in places to a dray-road, and in other portions deviations were made where the grades of the old line were too steep. There still remain 91 chains of new road to complete; the estimate for this has been already supplied.

Bell Hill-Mount Alexander.—This road was widened for a distance of 138 chains from a bridle-track to a dray-road. The remainder of the vote was expended in forming a track from the Bell Hill Road towards Mount Howe. The first part of the expenditure will constitute portion of the road which will ultimately be taken along this route to the Bell Hill diggings, and thence to the upper reaches of the Ahaura and Kopara Rivers.

Woodstock-Mahinapua.—This track has now been surveyed, and as soon as the necessary plans are ready it will be let under the co-operative system. The expenditure shown in schedule is for survey labour.

Whitcombe Valley Track.—The expenditure under this heading is for expenses incurred in exploring this route. My proposals have been embodied in a short report in connection with this proposed track. The photos sent illustrate portions of the fine scenery observable along the valley; for these I am indebted to Mr. Park, who accompanied me. These will show that, from a scenery point of view alone, the Whitcombe and its tributaries would well repay the hardships incidental to an untrodden bush country. A place for these photos in the annual report would advertise this as a good walking overland route—that is, should the track recommended by me be put through.

Dawson's Road.—This road has been undertaken by the settler who is the most interested in its construction, on the principle of contributing an equal amount of labour for the work paid for. I think this subsidised principle might be well carried out in other cases.

Lake Mapourika.—It is intended to use the vote for the erection of a bridge across the Waiho River in the neighbourhood of Lake Mapourika. This road leads up to the bridge-site, and, as the latter is most required, I am consulting the unanimous desire of the residents in undertaking this work instead of the road-widening. I have also consulted the Hon. Mr. Seddon, when he agreed with the proposal, and also sanctioned a further amount of £100 for the work.

Turnbull River Road.—This work has now been undertaken under the co-operative system by the settlers in that locality; portion of it is the extension of the present bridle-track, and the other part is for widening the present track into a dray-road for a certain distance inland.

Wataroa Bluff-Okarito Track.—Overseer Nightingale has been for a short time trying to find a good route for a track over this bluff, and he has succeeded in blazing what is deemed to be the best line, and as soon as Mr. Wither can attend to this he will proceed to see this work carried out under co-operative conditions.

Hokitika Southwards.—This means, practically, the road from Okarito south. Work was commenced in January last on the portion Gillespie's to Karangarua, and it is anticipated that by the middle of June the new track will be finished. This will complete a felt want in southern travelling. The difficulty of crossing the outlet of Cook River and lagoon and rounding the Bluff south of this river will now be avoided by the new track, which has been taken further inland. Another difficulty in travelling—namely, fording the Onetamatea or Saltwater River, one of the most treacherous streams in South Westland—will be no longer required, as a bridge is in course of erection on the line of the new track. I understand these improvements will be much appreciated by storekeepers and others who have to pack along this dangerous portion of the road.

Haast Pass Track.—The expenditure on this track has been considerable. The work required was a new track along what is known as the Clark Bluff. At this point the Rivers Clark and Haast join. The former, being the larger stream, runs with considerable force against the south side, and gradually destroyed the bank, rendering it impossible to pass along the almost precipitous slopes. Across this face a track had to be benched in very hard rock. This, although difficult, was successfully accomplished. Other portions of the road had to be graded, renewed, and improved; and the repairs were so thorough at the time of completion that no difficulty would have been experienced in riding from the mouth of the Haast to Wanaka.

D. BARRON, Chief Surveyor.

CANTERBURY.

Hokitika-Christchurch Road.—The expenditure on this road during the year was £4,833 9s. 10d. The work comprised maintenance, tussocking, and re-forming, removing slips, repairing fords, keeping the cuttings clear and water-tables in order, renewing nine timber culverts, and removing sixteen others and replacing with earthenware drain-pipes, and constructing breastworks at the Waimakariri and Bealey cuttings. A roadman's hut was erected at Castle Hill, a foot-bridge over the Kowai. There were several floods during the year, causing considerable damage. The road was well maintained all through the summer. Several parts of the road, but especially the section between Lake Lyndon and the seventeen-mile peg, requires shingling. I fear that these parts will be in a bad state again this winter.