

Construction of Water-races, Highbank Estate.—This work was also carried out by contract under the supervision of the Ashburton County Engineer, and comprised the construction of 470 chains of water-races, in addition to the laying-down of thirteen pitched fords. All the sections on this settlement are now provided with a water-supply.

Ashley Irrigation-works.—A grant-in-aid of £300 was made to the Board for this work during the year. The Board having expended the amount of its loan in the construction of eight main channels, of a total length of twenty-five miles, which do not touch many of the properties of the small settlers or cottagers, the above vote has been devoted to providing such in the Cooper's Creek subdivision of the district with a water-supply. This entailed the construction of twenty miles of loop-lines, which, on inspection by District Surveyor McClure, were found satisfactorily carried out. A further grant of £900 has been made for the extension of this work, but no proposals for its expenditure have been submitted to me.

Ruapuna Village Settlement Water-supply.—The £75 voted for this work has now been paid over, and I regret that the result of the expenditure has not been more satisfactory. It appears that the source of supply is not a permanent stream, and during the late dry season entirely failed, and the settlers had to drive their stock three miles to the nearest race. The Ashburton County have replied to my communication on the subject that nothing can be done to bring in a supply from the Ashburton or Rangitata Rivers on account of the excessive cost.

Planting Willows and Poplars, Lake Pukaki.—£89 14s. 5d. of the £100 voted for this work has been expended during the year, under the supervision of the Mackenzie County Council, and, so far, about eight thousand willows and a small number of poplars have been planted along the northern shores of the lake and adjoining streams, all of which had to be cut and carted from the Council's plantations, on the Opihi River.

Cliff Road.—The £200 granted to the Waimate County in 1894 in aid of the construction of this road has now been paid over. District Surveyor Brodrick inspected the work last September, and reported it in good order from beginning to end, and open for wheel-traffic. It will always, however, be a rather dangerous road, and expensive to keep open; but, the country being steep and rocky, it could not be much improved, except at considerable cost.

Pukaki-Mount Cook Road.—This work comprised surfacing and making fords, inspections, tents, and repairs to same. The road is now in good order throughout, and should keep so for the remainder of the season. The advantage gained by employing the surfacemen this year has been most marked, and since they were sent up the coaches have never been stopped.

Tracks to Mount Cook and Glaciers.—This work comprised the making of 287 chains of horse-track, remaking and improving 480 chains of old horse-track, widening and improving 75 chains of the old Hooker foot-track, chipping and forming about 80 chains of the new Hooker track, re-forming and widening about 80 chains of the Mount Ollivier track, re-forming 12 chains of the old track near the wire-rope in the Hooker, and improving the approaches to the cage on each side. The improvements and additions to the horse-track from the Hermitage to the Ball Hut have made it a perfectly safe, and for a large portion of the distance pleasant, riding-track, on which the journey of twelve miles can very easily be done in from two and a half to three hours, on horseback. The erection of the new hut on Malte Brun has been deferred till next season. Two of the five men engaged to carry forward the timber took ill and returned home, which left too small a party for the work. All the material now lies in a secure place near the foot of the Tasman Glacier, and early next season will have to be carried forward.

CHEVIOT ROADS AND DRAINAGE.

The Cheviot County Council has expended £2,524 6s. 4d. on the above works, the Government contribution to date being £1,572 19s. 9d. (out of Vote 74, £3,000). The total expenditure is made up as follows:—

Manuka Bay Road.—£130 expended. The work comprised the formation of 43 chains of road, 10 ft. wide.

Gums Road, Leamington.—£121 expended. The work comprised the formation of 55 chains of road, 14 ft. wide.

West Waiiau Road.—£230 expended. The work comprised the formation and shingling of 180 chains of roads.

East Waiiau Road.—£235 expended. The work comprised shingling 160 chains of road, in addition to constructing fords and improving cuttings.

Small Bridges on East Waiiau Road.—£47 expended. The work comprised the construction of six small bridges, to give access to the several holdings.

Parnassus Road.—£450 expended. The work comprised shingling 269 chains of road.

Caverhill Road.—£235 expended. The work comprised shingling 160 chains of road.

Gerrard Road.—£103 expended. The work comprised the shingling of 70 chains of road.

Stewart's Road.—£122 expended. The work comprised shingling 70 chains of road, in addition to the construction of culvert-boxes.

Miller Street.—£50 expended. The work comprised formation and shingling 19 chains of road.

Darroch Road.—£140 expended. The work comprised the shingling of 136 chains of road.

Campbell's Road.—£122 expended. The work comprised shingling 65 chains of road in addition to the construction of fords.

Homestead Willows Road.—£226 expended. The work comprised the shingling of 240 chains of road.

Jed Drainage.

Jed Main Channel.—£202 5s. 8d. expended. The work comprised the construction of 89½ chains of main channel.