

swamps, bridges, &c. From Kaeo to the boundary of the Bay of Islands County the road has been partly formed, but it is far from safe for wheel-traffic. The grant this year is being expended in improving the worst places. A considerable sum will have yet to be expended before the road throughout is available for wheel-traffic.

In Bay of Islands County.—About forty miles passes through the county—from the Whangaroa boundary to Kawakawa. The road ought to go *via* Black Bridge, but, as the settlement is all towards Ohaewai and Waimate, the road has been formed by that route. From the Whangaroa boundary to Waimate very little formation has been done; but, with the exception of the Waipapa, all the big bridges have been erected. This bridge ought to be made at once, as there have been several narrow escapes from drowning by persons attempting to cross the river when there was even a moderate flood. The country being open, and mostly gum-land, a cart can be used; but the tracks are now so water-worn and cut into ruts that even for carts the road is getting impassable. From Kawakawa to the Whangarei boundary the road has been formed, and about three-quarters metalled. The greater part of the grant authorised this year for expenditure is being spent between Kawakawa and the Whangarei boundary in repairing the bridges, metalling, and altering some portions which were several feet under water during floods.

In Whangarei County.—About forty-eight miles of road passes through the county—from the northern boundary to terminus of railway from Whangarei. The road is formed, and in places metalled; it is a good summer road, but in winter becomes almost impassable, and in two places is covered with several feet of water during heavy floods. From the terminus of railway to Whangarei the road is mostly metalled, and in fair order, now that the heavy traffic has been discontinued. In places the metal is now, however, very thin, and ought to be renewed. From Whangarei to Mangapai the road is nearly all metalled, and, beyond the necessary general repairs, in good order. From Mangapai to Waipu the road is only metalled in places, and, though fair in summer, it is during the winter almost impassable, especially through the Ruakaka Valley. From Waipu to Otamatea boundary the road is fairly good, though many of the bridges will require to be rebuilt, and some of the sharp corners taken off. Most of this year's grant is being expended in improving the road towards the railway-line, and in patching up some of the worst places.

In Otamatea County.—About thirty miles of the Great North Road passes through this county. From the Whangarei boundary the road is formed and metalled in a few places, and is in fair condition as far as Maungaturoto. From Maungaturoto to Kaiwaka is where the greater part of this year's vote is being expended, in the repairing of bridges, and metalling some of the worst places, and putting in culverts. From Kaiwaka to Topuni Bridge, the county boundary, the road passes through open gum-land, and, with the exception of the necessary clearing out and rebuilding of some culverts, is in fair order.

In Rodney County.—About forty-four miles of the Great North Road passes through this county. From Topuni Bridge to Wellsford the road is only partly formed; it goes through open gum-land, so that up to the present time carts could get along; but the line is now so cut up by ruts that it is almost unsafe to attempt travelling in a vehicle. A portion of this year's vote is being expended in general repairs to this part of the road, and in improving the worst places. From Wellsford to Mahurangi there is a very fair road, half of which is metalled. As the most of the local traffic is along this portion of the road, a part of the grant is being expended in metalling another half-mile. From Mahurangi to Waiwera the road is very much out of repair, only about one-fourth being metalled, and some of that is much worn and cut up. The grades on this portion of the road are steep. The work done between these two points is the metalling of the hill from Waiwera northwards, about 50 chains, and a few chains of metalling near Puhoi.

In Waitemata County.—From Waiwera to Wade the road is in very bad repair, but the road over the hill immediately behind the springs and a portion of the road towards Orewa is being improved and metalled. The road near the Wade is almost impassable in winter, being made in a sticky clay soil. From the Wade to the Okura is also in a very bad state. Where it has been metalled most of the metal has disappeared, and there are so many springs in the road—the culverts and water-tables being blocked—that it is almost impossible to get through with a light vehicle in winter. From Okura to Takapuna the road generally runs along the top of a range of hills, and, with the exception of a few places where there have been cuttings, is in good order summer and winter. From Takapuna to the North Shore the road is all metalled, and in good order.

MISCELLANEOUS ROADS, BRIDGES, ETC.

Mongonui County Roads.—The expenditure of this vote was carried out by the Mongonui County Council, and consisted chiefly of repairs to the Fairburn Road.

Oruru-Hikurangi.—This vote is for the purpose of giving access to settlers at Hikurangi. There was considerable difficulty in settling the question of compensation, as the road had to be taken through private property. No works have been undertaken as yet, pending the payment of compensation.

Waitangi-Kaikohe.—The Bay of Islands County Council are now expending this vote in improving the road, which, owing to the heavy gum-traffic from Ohaewai and Kaikohe, had got into a very bad state of repair.

Opua-Waimate.—This road has now been formed into a bridle-track from Opua to the Pakaraka-Waitangi Road. The money still available will be expended in cutting off some of the sharp corners, and widening portions which have slipped away.

Hokianga Bridge.—There being some uncertainty as to the exact bridge referred to, the county are holding over the expenditure of this grant, awaiting definite instructions from head office.