

burned or otherwise destroyed. Instructions have been given to open up the drains, fascine the swamps, and rebuild bridges and culverts, but, owing to the heavy rains of the last two months, it has been quite impossible to get near the work. Further, before the work can be proceeded with the question of settlers' drains connected with the road drains will have to be settled. This matter has been submitted for your consideration.

*Rotorua-Te Teko Road.*—During the past year 12 miles 64 chains of 16 ft. dray-road has been constructed, which completes the formation of the road to the Tarawera River. The work, which comprised a good deal of heavy rock work, was done on the co-operative system, twenty-nine culverts have been placed in position, giving a total length of 780 ft., which completes the culverting of the road to the Rotorua Lake; 23,000 ft. of timber, kauri and rimu, are on the ground, which, when wrought, will complete the culverts a distance of seven miles further. As the work has proceeded the road has been maintained for a distance of twenty-one miles. Two huts have been built for stores and roadmen. These works were stopped in December for want of funds. Next season tourists will be able by this road to drive along the shores of Lakes Rotoiti, Roto-e-hu, and Roto-ma, which comprise sights far surpassing anything else in this district. I would suggest that some steps be taken to induce tourists to go there more than they do now, such as getting Messrs. T. Cook and Sons to advertise and run the place in connection with an accommodation-house, which I understand is to be started at Tupunaeharuru next year. Photographs of the lakes might also be published and circulated. It seems a pity that such a place should be so little known and visited, more especially as it is now so accessible.

*Rotorua-Galatea-Waikaremoana Road Surveys.*—On this road very little progress has been made with the engineering surveys, owing to obstructions by the Natives. Mr. C. B. Turner, who was in charge of the work, broke up his party on the 4th June, and it was not until the end of December that the difference with the Natives as to the general route the road should take was settled. This matter entailed several trips into the Urewera-country for me, and the loss of much time and work by Mr. Turner. However, it was settled finally in a satisfactory manner by the Natives conceding everything we wanted, a result doubtless brought about by the firm treatment their deputations received in Wellington. I must here say that, notwithstanding their differences, all negotiations between your officials here and the Natives have been conducted in a friendly way, and we have always met with the best of treatment at their hands. During the year three miles of plans and quantities were completed of surveys done last year; three miles of surveys and plans all done this year, and six miles of surveys not yet plotted have been done: in addition to which four miles of the road has been graded that is not yet surveyed; ten miles explored, but not yet graded; and seven miles of pack-tracks through some very rough country has been made. The distance by the road from Te Whaiti to where we first touch the lake will be about forty miles, and round the lake about another ten miles to the Aniwaniwa Stream. The grades from the Tarapounamu Saddle will be, for the first three miles, from 1 in 22 to 1 in 15, mostly the latter, and the country is rough; after this, with the exception of about 40 chains near the Ruatahuna Stream of 1 in 15, they are easy up to seven miles of the main Huirau Saddle, when there will be about two miles of 1 in 15, the remainder being 1 in 30. From the Saddle to the lake they will be about 1 in 20 and 1 in 30. After the first six miles and a half from Tarapounamu the construction will be comparatively easy; none of the work to be done will be as costly as the first sixteen miles from Te Whaiti. I understand it is your intention to start the work from the lake end as soon as the surveys are through. This will be well, as provisions will be very costly from this end. Owing to Native obstruction, and the consequent delay of surveys, no construction has been done beyond the end of last year's work at the Tarapounamu Saddle; but a considerable amount of work has been done between Galatea and that point, work positively imperative in order to make the road safe for wheel-traffic. Eight contracts have been let for improvement of the road, and four for removal of heavy slips, 15,500 cubic yards of earth- and rock-work having been excavated, materially improving the road for a distance of twenty-two miles by easing grades and taking out dangerous bends. Cuttings along precipitous rock-bluffs which were really only wide enough for horse-traffic have been also widened to a safe width. 45 chains of formation has been done at Galatea, and 53 chains of metalling. 71 box-culverts have been made and put in, having a length of 1,637 ft. 37,000 ft. of timber has been sawn and 500 posts been split for fencing on dangerous parts of the road. The old portion of the road between Rotorua and Galatea has been considerably improved, having been re-formed for ten miles, 26 chains of drains cut, one mile of pumice metalling, and seven culverts being put in, having a total length of 145 ft. As soon as possible the road should be re-located across the Kaingaroa Plains, avoiding the present long gully at Galatea, and coming out on the Rangitaiki River somewhere near the present ford. Mr. A. Cross, who is in charge of the construction-works on this road, as well as its maintenance beyond Galatea, reports that a good bridge-site is obtainable some little distance above the ford on that river. The Waikomuku Stream, near Waiotapu, should also be bridged soon; the present ford is a bad one, and the stream is often unfordable and dangerous, besides being difficult to get in and out of. A bridge is also required across the Manga-whiri Creek, between the Rangitaiki and Te Whaiti, whereby the grades on both sides of the stream, which are now very steep, would be much improved; and as soon as the road is through a bridge should be built over the Whirinaki at Te Whaiti, as the ford is dangerous and likely to scour out. A Government store has been kept open at Te Whaiti throughout the year, but arrangements are now being made for closing it. The total length of the road under maintenance is sixty-nine miles.

*Rotowhero-Wairakei Road.*—Mr. D. Innes Barron has located this road from its crossing of the Waikato River to Wairakei, with branch roads to the springs at Ohaki and to the Aratiatia Rapids, near Wairakei, a distance of 20 miles 40 chains, and has also made an engineering survey of it. Satisfactory explorations have been made for connecting this road with the wonderful sights at Orakikorako. Mr. Barron reports that this route will lessen the distance from Rotorua to Taupo