

About Seals.

1st September.—Coming home along the south coast of Resolution Island, just opposite Detention Cove I saw a round lump floating, about the size of a hat, and sent Dave in the dingey to see what it was. It turned out to be a dead seal, which he towed alongside. It was pretty far gone, but I towed it ashore on to a rock, and took the skin off, all where the fur was not loose. The head was bare of fur, and there were holes in the skin caused either by shot or fighting, but the former I think. I will send you the skin if I can disinfect it sufficiently, and you can see some of the holes in the upper part of the neck. We often see pieces of loose kelp of fantastic shape and various things adrift, yet this was the first time we went to look at anything of the kind; and there is a tidal current just there, running two miles an hour four times a day, and, of course, we never see one ten-thousandth part of the current here, so this was a curious chance considering all I had to say about seal-poaching. This was the first seal I had seen in Dusky Sound, so strictly do they keep to rough water and to difficult places to be got at.

APPENDIX No. 14.

ROADS AND BRIDGES DAMAGED BY THE EASTER FLOODS OF 1897.

HAWKE'S BAY.

BRIDGES.

Ngaruroro River.—The bridge at Omahu was swept away, and the river widened about 60 ft. This bridge was erected in 1875, and half rebuilt in 1895. Its value when destroyed would be about £1,500. Now that the river is widened it will cost about £2,982 to erect a new bridge.

Kuripapanga Bridge.—This bridge was swept away. It was 226 ft. in length, was erected in 1882, and concrete protection to wings, &c., were made in 1885. Its value when destroyed would be about £1,500, and the cost of erecting a new one £1,890.

Tutaekuri River, Redclyffe Bridge.—Four spans of 38 ft. were carried away, which are being replaced with two of 75 ft., on double piers. Damage to bridge, £500; and cost of repairs, £735.

Waitangi Stream.—The Waitangi Bridge was washed away, and a new one has since been built at a cost of £600. About 14 chains of roadway was also destroyed. The value of the old bridge swept away was £500. To re-erect bridge and construct roadway will cost £1,050—viz., bridge, £630; roadway, £420.

Taupo Road.—The first bridge over the Mangapikopiko Stream, at Marshall's Crossing, was swept away, with the exception of three stringers and some decking. Its value when destroyed was £300, and the cost of erecting a new bridge will be about £509 5s. The second bridge over the same stream was one of 50 ft. span, in two spans of 25 ft. The whole bridge has been shifted, and one abutment and centre pier washed away. The superstructure is partly intact. Damage to bridge, £200; cost of re-erection, £336. The third bridge over the same stream has been washed away. The value was £250, and the cost of a new one £375. The fourth bridge over the same stream had its approaches washed away, and an additional 20 ft. span will require to be built, at a cost of £75. The wings of a small bridge have also been washed away, and will cost £20 to replace. Total for Taupo Road: Bridge damage, £750; cost of re-erection of same, £1,315 5s.

Kikowhero Stream.—The bridge over this stream was washed away. The value of the old bridge was £300, and the cost of re-erecting a new bridge £420.

Okawa Stream.—A bridge on the Hastings-Patea Road over this stream of 120 ft. has been washed away, and it is proposed to build a new bridge higher up the stream. The value of the old bridge was £350, and the cost of re-erecting one £525.

Ohiviva Stream.—The bridge over this stream has its approach washed away, and the whole bridge is shaken. Two new spans are necessary, of 38 ft. and 25 ft. The north abutment has sunk about 2 ft., and the damage to bridge will be about £50. To erect the new spans required and strengthen the bridge will cost about £264 12s.

Mangaone River.—The bridge over this river at Rissington was washed away. It was 140 ft. in length, in four spans of 35 ft. Unfortunately, at the time of the flood the bridge was closed for repairs, and was in progress of being raised, the superstructure resting on bottle-jacks, so it was soon swept away. One span of the bridge lies on the river-bank imbedded in silt. The site is not a good one, a much better being obtainable higher up stream. Value of old bridge, £500; and cost of re-erection, £840.

Smaller Bridges.—The information on this subject is very indefinite, and is, we think, covered in the next item.

Replacing and providing New Culverts over 406 Miles of Road.—This item covers so much ground that it is difficult to report on. However, we considered that only about one-third of the length of the road mentioned (406 miles) has been damaged by the floods, so we allow £1,000 for new culverts, &c.

ROADS.

In the Council's estimate of damage done to roads, in a number of cases the damage was not due to the flood, but was caused by the heavy rainfall, and, except in the roads mentioned in