

made to open up some 80,000 acres of good land, and since the end of the year the work of construction has been put in hand. Another important road in this district is the Ohura Road, which has been extended towards Stratford to a small extent, but the principal work on the northern end has been the construction of a bridge over the Ohura River, which was previously a dangerous crossing. The road is now open for vehicles from Poro-o-tarao Tunnel to the Mangaroa River, a distance of forty-four miles. From there onwards to Stratford a good deal of work has yet to be done, the unformed gap being about thirty-two miles.

In the Rotorua Road District one of the most important works we have in hand is the road from Rotorua to Opotiki *via* Te Teko, the opening of which will afford a large number of settlers in the latter district an easy access to Rotorua-Auckland Railway, and which will be largely taken advantage of for stock-driving and for coach traffic. At the end of the year the unformed portion of the road between Te Teko and Rotoma Lake was in hand, and plans preparing for bridging the Tarawera River. On completion of this, and improvements on the part between Te Teko and Whakatane, together with a gap between Whakatane and Ohiwa now in hand by the Whakatane County Council, this road will be open.

Another important road, especially from the tourist's point of view, is that leading from Rotorua to Waikaremoana Lake and onwards to Gisborne. During the year that portion of the road which runs across the Kaingaroa Plains has been nearly completed, and a good deal of clearing in advance has been done near Ruatahuna. There are several miles yet to make to effect a junction with the formed part at Waikare-moana. This work ought to be pushed on, and then the bridle-road from the lake should be widened out towards Hangaroa, thus allowing of wheeled traffic from Gisborne to Rotorua.

Since the end of the year the bridge over the Waikato River, on the road from Wai-o-tapu to Wairakei, has been completed, and this road has become the main line of communication between Rotorua and the south. It is constantly used by coaches and other vehicles, and is a much more attractive route than the old one *via* Ateamuri.

In the Hawke's Bay District the Rotorua-Waikare-moana Road, referred to in the paragraph before last, has been extended for about seven miles and a half along the lake, and clearing in advance of formation has been done also. The continuation of the above road from Waikare-moana towards Gisborne has been completed as a bridle-road, though the culverts are not all in, 25½ miles having been made during the year. On the Napier-Wairoa Road, which is intended to give an overland outlet to the County of Wairoa, about twelve miles have been added to the work done in previous years, leaving twenty-three miles to make before communication is established. The bridge over the Opoiti River, on the road from Wairoa to Gisborne, has been completed, and that over the Mohaka, on the Napier-Taupo Road, is in process of erection.

In Taranaki a number of useful roads have been under construction, amongst which may be mentioned the main road running parallel with the coast north of Mimi, which forms a continuation of the Kuiti-Awakino Road referred to above, on which about three miles and three-quarters have been completed as a dray-road. The road is open for summer traffic now to Tongaporutu, a distance of 39½ miles from Waitara. It is important that this road be pushed on to a junction with the northern end of the road.

The branch from the Main Ohura Road (Stratford to Ongarue), which is intended to connect with the navigable part of the Tangarakau River, has been extended to within four miles of that river. Its completion will afford an outlet for produce from a considerable area of inland country by water-carriage to Wanganui. On the Main Ohura Road itself, contracts for three additional miles of metalling were let, which will make 12½ miles of metalling extending northward from Stratford. This road is now open—part cart- and part bridle-road—to near Tangarakau River, a distance from Stratford of 57½ miles. It is important, in the interests of settlement and of through traffic with Auckland, that this road be pushed on, and the gap of thirty-two miles be completed.

Much work has been done in the Wanganui Road District in the extension and maintenance of a large number of roads, some of them very important ones. On the Pipiriki-Wai-o-uru Road the metalling has been extended about two miles and a half, covering some of the worst parts, but there is still one portion near Mangawhero which is bad in winter. This road requires metalling as far as Ohakune, in order to carry the heavy coach traffic, due to this being one of the favourite tourists routes in connection with the Wanganui River. On the main road from Mangaweka to Tokaanu, which is also one of the principal roads of the country, further metalling has been done, a bridge rebuilt over the Hautapu, and the whole length of road kept in repair. As the traffic is increasing rapidly on this line, the metalling should be pushed on. This road is the main thoroughfare through this part of the North Island, and passes through a district where more new settlement has taken place within the last few years than any other.

The works in the Wellington Road District have consisted principally in what may be termed "settlement roads" rather than main roads, and a very large amount of work has been done in extension of previously formed roads and in the forming of new ones. The generally small size of the holdings in parts of this district entails a very large proportion of road to the total acreage. Much of the country is also subject to slips, which are a constant source of expense. The Alfredton-Weber Road is an example of this. This road is now formed as a cart-road throughout, but requires metalling in places, in order to carry the traffic of a considerable number of settlers. For information as to the large number of roadworks carried out in this district, reference must be made to Captain Turner's report in the Appendix hereto.

In addition to many useful works in connection with settlement roads in the Nelson District, the department has continued to maintain the Belgrove-Westport-Reefton Road, on which many bridges have been repaired and renewed, and, in places, the road widened. The Buller River is being bridged at Mangles, on a branch line from this road, but, owing to difficulties as to obtaining the timber from Australia, the progress has been slow.