

girders. At the second crossing of the Ongarue the bridge-piers are in course of construction, and a start is being made with the pile-driving for the piers of the third bridge.

Taumararui Section (76 m. 55 ch. to 83 m. 23 ch.; length, 6 miles 48 chains).—Considerable progress has been made with the culverts and earthworks. Some difficulty has been experienced in maintaining the service-road. A telephone-line has been carried to Taumararui and Piriaka.

The contractors for the Taumararui Bridge over the Wanganui River have not yet started the erection, but the steelwork is being manufactured.

Whakapapa Section.—This section begins at the junction of the surveys, 83 miles 23 chains from Te Awamutu and 129 miles from Marton. Only a small amount of work has been done in forming service-roads.

South End.

Makohine Section (22 m. 40 ch. to 33 m. 40 ch.; length, 11 miles).—The earthworks have been nearly completed. Wet weather latterly hindered work very much, and delayed the completion of the Mangaweka and Ohingaiti Stations. There is some trimming-work to be done, which could not be undertaken because of the wet. The rails have been laid up to the northern end of Mangaweka Station yard, the sidings have been laid in the Ohingaiti Station yard, and the greater part of the ballasting has been done. A loop line is being constructed around the Makohine workshops to allow of the uninterrupted manufacture of the Mangaweka Viaduct and other bridge-work. A start has been made with the erection of the station buildings at Mangaweka.

Makohine Viaduct.—Staging for this superstructure was erected and the main girders finished during the year. On the 9th instant the first train, consisting of an L engine and twelve loaded ballast-wagons, was taken over the viaduct, and ballast-trains have been running over it ever since. The hand-railings and footways have yet to be finished, and some secondary bracing on the main braces of the piers. A large amount of painting remains to be done as weather permits.

Mangaweka Section (33 m. 40 ch. to 40 m. 40 ch.; length, 7 miles).—The earthworks are finished, with the exception of two small pieces of cutting and some slips. Two of the tunnels on the section have been finished. Some heavy lining and wing walls have been put in at the tunnel entrance at 36 m. 71 ch., and the slipping ground removed. Forty-one chains of excavation to full size and lining and five tunnel-fronts have yet to be done to complete the tunnel-work on the section. All the concrete blocks for arching have been made.

Mangaweka Viaduct.—The concrete-work is nearly finished, abutment A being the only work in hand. The road-diversion to take the road between the first abutment and the first pier has been finished. All the 33 ft. pier-head girders and the 80 ft. span girders have been drilled and are ready for riveting together. All the column-bases are drilled, and a number fitted together. A number of the channels for the columns have been drilled, and a considerable amount of work has been done on the sleeve-nuts for the diagonal bracing.

Paengaroa Section (40 m. 40 ch. to 50 m. 70 ch.; length, 10 miles 30 chains).—The earthworks are nearly completed to Taihape, excepting the heavy banks at 43 m. 50 ch. and 44 m. 23 ch., which are to be partly made up from materials from the adjacent tunnels. The earthworks on the section beyond Taihape are well advanced. Parties have again started to drive the headings of the tunnel from 44 m. to 44 m. 21 ch. No work was done on the section from the end of December till the beginning of May.

Turangarere Section (50 m. 70 ch. to 61 m. 40–50 ch.; length, 10 miles 50½ chains).—Service-roads have been constructed along most of this section, and some spoil-cuttings have been excavated. No culverts have yet been put in owing to the stoppage of work for a time. A cottage for overseer has been built at 58 m. 47 ch.

STRATFORD-WHANGAMOMONA.

The work on this section has been so far completed that a goods-train was run to Toko on the 25th ultimo. There is still some ballasting and metalling to do, and the station buildings are not complete. A contract for their erection is well advanced towards completion.

MIDLAND.

Tadmor Section (30 m. 58 ch. to 41 m. 5 ch.; length, 10 miles 27 chains).—The earthwork has been nearly completed for a length of 7 m. 1 ch. Some of the concrete culverts have yet to be done. 4 miles 55 chains of fencing have been erected. Tenders were called for the erection of platelayers' cottages, but, being too high, all were declined. Tenders for the erection of a combined road and railway bridge over the Motueka River were called for in August of last year, but all were declined as being too high. Fresh tenders were invited on the 13th June for a shorter bridge.

Otira Gorge.—No works were done during the year at this end of the line, except a short service line for the repairs of protective works beyond the opened line.

Mount Torlesse Section (6 m. to 18 m.; length, 12 miles).—The earthworks have been nearly completed on the first three miles and three-quarters of the section. The first two tunnels beyond Patterson's Creek and the tunnel next Staircase are finished, and three others are well advanced. Heavy rains in March last did some damage to an abutment and one pier of Patterson's Creek Viaduct, and necessitated some heavy protective and drainage works being done. No erection work has yet been done on Patterson's Creek Viaduct superstructure contract. The shop-work is completed, and some of the steel-work has been delivered at the site. A considerable amount of earthwork and masonry-work in culverts has been done between 10 m. 10 ch. and 10 m. 50 ch., and about 6½ chains of heading in No. 7 Tunnel has been driven.

Service-roads have been formed up to 13 m. 20 ch., with a break at Broken River.