

Contracts have been let for the station buildings, which are now all being started.

It is expected that the line will be ready for ordinary traffic about the end of this year, or just after.

The survey for the land required is well in hand.

RIVERSDALE—SWITZERS.

The formation of this line has been in hand during the year, and, as it is chiefly shallow bank, is now well forward, extending to Wendonside Station, at 10 m.

The rails have been laid on the original formation from Riversdale Station to the Mataura River at 2 m. Some repairs to the old bridge are being done; and it is then intended to go on platelaying at once, material for which is being delivered on the ground.

Timber is being delivered for the Muddy Creek Bridge; and a further length from 10 m. to Waikaia at 13 m. 70 ch. is being located, and the formation will be put in hand forthwith.

OREPUKI—WAIATU.

Waihoaka Station, at 40 m. 16 ch. from Makarewa Junction, on the Invercargill—Kingston Railway, is the present terminus of the opened line.

Waihoaka—Tuatapere (40 m. 16 ch. to 48 m. 19 ch.; 8 miles 3 chains in length).—During the year an endeavour has been made to push on the formation and platelaying from Te Wae Wae Station at 43 m. 30 ch. to the ballast-pit at 46 m. 30 ch. so as to provide the ballast for the whole length.

The two necessary bridges have been built, and, after great anxiety to the local engineer, the bank across Camp Creek was finished last June, wide enough to carry the rails, which are now laid to 45 m. 65 ch., and will be extended over the bridge and into the ballast-pit at once.

The formation beyond to Tuatapere Station at 48 m. 19 ch. should also be completed, and the whole section ready for opening in about nine months.

Station buildings are being put in hand at Te Tua and Tuatapere; those at Te Wae Wae have already been built.

SURVEYS OF NEW LINES. LAND-PLAN SURVEYS, ETC.

The *permanent survey of the Helensville Northwards Railway* has been extended from near the Topuni Bridge through Kaiwaka, past the quarry on Bald Hill near Pukekaroro (into which a branch line has been located) to 86 m. near the source of the Rock Creek. Beyond this, a trial line down to the Brynderwyn Station on the flat due east, and crossing the ridge at the back, or north-east of Maungaturoto, then running down the next valley to the Golden Stairs and on to within a mile of McCarroll's Gap to 97 m., has been run, and plans of it are now being prepared. Further exploration of the *Bickerstaffe* and *Huarau* routes will also be undertaken. A land-plan survey of the land required for the railway from Wellsford to Kaiwaka is being made.

Paeroa—Pokeno Permanent Survey.—This survey, started last February from Paeroa, has now been pegged and levelled across the Piako Swamp, a distance of 19 miles 55 chains to near Waitakaruru, and is now being continued thence by the Maramarua and Maungatawhiri Valleys to Pokeno. Alternative junctions north and south of Paeroa have been reported on also.

Mamaku—Te Puke Trial Survey.—A trial survey was carried out here, but further exploration must be made. The result arrived at by this survey was not satisfactory, as the endeavour to maintain an easy grade landed it in very broken and heavy country. With a steeper grade a line could be obtained of a fairly easy nature.

Waihi—Tauranga—Opotiki Trial Survey.—Last January this trial survey, started some years ago and then extending some 6 miles from Waihi, was put in hand again, and has now been continued to Katikati, some 20 miles, and exploration has been carried on to Wainui at about 24 m. Plans are being prepared in camp as the survey goes on.

Gisborne—Motu—Opotiki Flying Survey.—Nothing further has been done beyond what was reported last year on the flying survey from Motu to Opotiki, but a party has been employed on the grade up from Karaka to Motu on the east side *via* the Waikohu and Waihuka Valleys, to the east summit at Rakauroa at 41 m. The route to be constructed has been decided on, is now being located, and the work of construction has been started, and is in progress as far as 27½ m.

On the *North Island Main Trunk Railway* a land-plan survey is being made from Horopito to Waimarino.

Auckland—Taranaki Railway.—A trial survey has been made exploring the alternative route for the northern end of this railway starting from Hangatiki or Te Kumi, and going up the Mangapu Valley to the Maraetawa Saddle, thence down a northerly branch to and crossing the main Mokau River, continuing down that valley for some distance, then crossing into the Mokauti, Huioteko, Mangaparo, and Paraheka Valleys, thence southwards into the Mangaroa Valley, and joining there the Ongarue—Stratford route. An excellent line can be obtained this way through good serviceable land of very much better quality and use than the Ongarue—Mangaroa country offers.

Ohakune—Raetihi Trial Survey.—This line—about 7½ miles—is being surveyed in dense bush country. A comparatively easy line will probably be obtained.

Midland Railway, Nelson.—A resurvey of the line as completed from 31 m. to 41 m. 27 ch. (Tadmor) has been made to obtain correct plans of what has been done; also the land-plan survey from 41½ m. to 49½ m. is in hand.