

STREETS AND ROADS.

The expenditure on the maintenance and improvement of the streets and roads during the year has been £4,240, the largest of any year hitherto. The greater part of this has been done on works of a permanent nature. In the autumn of last year special attention was first paid to the three main roads giving access to Rotorua from the surrounding districts—viz., Maketu, Taupo, and Tauranga Roads. All three were heavily sheeted with pumice, which lasted well throughout the year, and remained in perfect order up to the end of the summer. The Taupo Road was also graded, and an embankment made at the second mile peg, which has constituted a great improvement. Vehicles were formerly frequently bogged in the thermal clay here, whereas it is now a first-class piece of road. The grading of the Whakarewarewa Road, between the town and Whakarewarewa, which had been commenced during the previous year, but abandoned pending the completion of the waterworks, was energetically taken up, and so far completed that the roadway has been formed on the new permanent level. In grading this road the old 8 in. cast-iron water-main had to be lowered in one place for a length of 6 chains to a depth of 4 ft., and in another for a length of 12 chains to a depth of 6 ft. This was most successfully accomplished without interfering with the supply of water to the town through the pipe. This main road has also been repaired constantly, but is very difficult to maintain pending its being thoroughly metalled for its whole length, which will be completed during the current year. During the current year 1,369 cubic yards of a good hard quality of local stone has been quarried on the banks of the Puarenga ready for ballasting this road as soon as the opportunity offers for proceeding with the work. Of the other roads, in addition to these, the following were recrowned, pumiced, and put into good order: Cemetery Road, 60 chains; Old Taupo Road, 30 chains; Mal-froy Road, 5 chains; Slaughterhouse Road, 3 chains; Tarewa Road, 40 chains; Postmaster Bath Road, 35 chains. Within the central portion of the town the great difficulty which has always been encountered hitherto has been that of finding a suitable material for standing the heavier traffic. Pumice gravel forms excellent foot- or buggy-traffic roads, and in dry weather will stand a fair amount of heavy traffic. But in wet weather it breaks up very rapidly under heavy traffic, and it is only its very low cost—1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per cubic yard—that justifies its use. The late Council had used a great deal of soft rock from the Koutu quarries, for which the Natives charged 4s. 6d. per cubic yard broken at the quarry. As it cost as much again to cart it into the town, the cost was quite beyond its value, being only a third-class material in any case. Tenders were therefore called in May, 1907, for 1,000 cubic yards of first-class metal, and a very satisfactory range of samples was submitted. The metal selected was Te Kuiti limestone, costing 4s. per cubic yard at the quarry, and 4s. 9d. per cubic yard for freight, bringing the total cost of a first-class limestone to practically the same as was formerly paid for the soft Koutu rock. Tutanekai Street (33 chains) and Arawa Street (10 chains) have been sheeted with this Te Kuiti limestone with very satisfactory results, and this work is being pushed on very energetically during the current year. A very successful experiment was tried in Arawa Street of finishing off with tarred limestone screenings, which has formed a surface as good as that of a full-tarred metal road at about one-half the cost. The total quantities of metal purchased during the year were as follows: Te Kuiti limestone, 782 cubic yards, at an average cost of 8s. 9d. per cubic yard; Puarenga metal, 1,369 cubic yards, at an average cost of 3s. per cubic yard: total cost of metal and freight, £545.

In addition to this metalling, the active policy of kerbing and channelling initiated by the late Town Council has been carried on, the following streets being dealt with during the year: Tutanekai Street, 8 chains; Hinemoa Street, 10 chains; Haupapa Street, 42 chains; Pukuatua Street, 22 chains; Amohia Street, 4 chains: total, 86 chains: at a total cost of £400, or £4 10s. per chain.

The trees in the streets have been trimmed and pruned as required, and additional planting is being put in hand.

PARADE IMPROVEMENTS.

The value of the lake-shore as a recreation-ground has not been taken advantage of by the former authorities, and even now its possibilities are only partially realised. A rowing club was formed during the year, and the old boatshed on the parade repaired and enlarged, at a cost of £300, to give accommodation to the four-oared racing-boats. It was at the same time moved to a more convenient situation nearer the wharf, thus leaving an uninterrupted view of the lake from Fenton Street. The whole parade was also cleaned up, the fencing repaired, and new gates put up when required. The total expenditure on these improvements amounted to £147 19s. 5d. As a result the ground was in excellent condition for the Citizens' Carnival, which was held in it from the 19th February to the 13th March.

BRIDGES.

The bridges in the town have been regularly inspected, and the Puarenga bridges at Whakarewarewa and on the Whakarewarewa Road were redecked.

NIGHTSOIL SERVICE.

The nightsoil service has been carried on satisfactorily by the town staff at a cost of £485 for the year. The excellent work done in this connection as compared with other towns conducting a similar service may be judged from the fact that not a single complaint has been received from householders.