

LAWRENCE—ROXBURGH.

I stated last year that it was proposed to complete this railway as far as Big Hill, and to hand the section over to the Railway Department for regular working. This has since been done.

The question of continuing the line beyond Big Hill has received the careful consideration of the Government. It has been decided to recommend the House to proceed with the work as far as Beaumont, an additional seven miles. The Government consider that it is necessary to take in hand the additional work proposed, in order that the country may derive a return on the expenditure already incurred.

Last year's expenditure amounted to £14,065, and for the current year a vote of £15,000 is proposed. If this vote is duly passed by Parliament, arrangements will be made for construction operations to be resumed as early as practicable.

CATLIN'S—WAIMAHAKA.

The section between Catlin's River and Houipapa—2 m. 30 ch.—was handed over to the Railway Department in December last. The next section, to Papatupu, has also been completed, but is being retained by the Public Works Department for the present, as the ballast-pit for use on the Puketiro section is situated on this length of the line. The earthworks on the section to Puketiro are well in hand, but, as they are of a heavy and difficult character, it will take some little time yet to complete the section. A large number of men has been employed on the line throughout the year—the numbers having ranged generally between three and four hundred, and a considerable amount of work has been accomplished.

At the Waimahaka end of the line a good deal of work has been done, and the laying of the rails is now in hand.

The expenditure on the whole railway during the last financial year amounted to £64,413, which is a considerable increase on the amount expended during the previous year. For the current year a vote of £80,000 is proposed.

RIVERSDALE—SWITZERS.

This line was handed over to the Railway Department in October, 1909. The expenditure during last year amounted to £18,489, but, as a few liabilities connected with station-buildings and other matters remained at the end of the year, a vote of £3,000 is asked for to cover the same.

OREPUKI—WAI AU.

This railway, like the last, was completed in October, 1909, the expenditure during the year having amounted to £11,322. A few liabilities remained at the close of the year, however, and a vote of £2,000 has accordingly been provided to cover them.

SURVEYS.

A fair amount of survey-work in connection with projected new lines was undertaken during the year, the expenditure having amounted to £1,195.

For the current year a vote of £1,500 is proposed.

TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR RAILWAY-CONSTRUCTION.

In addition to the votes already mentioned, the sum of £100,000 is provided in the estimates for permanent-way materials for all lines; also £2,500 to meet land-claims and other contingent items, thus bringing the total of the proposed vote for railway-construction purposes up to £1,000,000.

OTHER RAILWAY-WORKS.

The sum of £228,332 was charged during the year in respect of rolling-stock and workshops machinery for the Working Railways Department, and £89,758 in respect of additions to station accommodation, signals and interlocking-gear, telegraph and telephone facilities, improving lighting of stations, fencing, stone-crushing and excavating machine, &c., making the total charge under the heading of "Additions to Open Lines" £318,090. The cash disbursements