

DRAINS IN OPERATION.

The total mileage of drains in operation is now 302 miles, and includes stop-bank drains, subdivisional drains, road-drains, service-drains, and outlets of all descriptions. This is an increase of 26 miles during the year. At Waitoa and Waikaka very heavy timber was met with while constructing the main drains, and consequently the work was slow and costly.

SNAGGING.

The work carried out under this heading has been confined solely to the Waitoa River, the total distance snagged to date being 18 miles 17 chains, of which 2 miles 22 chains has been covered during the past year. Of this a distance of 1 mile 22 chains was snagged by day labour, which completed the clearing of the river as far as the Piranui Stream. From this point onwards to the Waihekau Stream, a distance of 3 miles 45 chains, a contract was let in December, and up to date a distance of 1 mile has been completed. The balance of this work will be completed during the coming year.

At present the Department's punt is being utilized in weeding the river from the Ohine Stream southwards to the junction with the Piako River. This work will be an ever-recurring one, as, owing to the sluggish nature of the stream, the growth of weeds and water-lilies in a season is prolific.

No work of this nature has been carried out on the Piako River during the year.

All the above work has been done by special vote. The expenditure for the year was £523 2s. 4d.

WHARVES.

The total number of wharves constructed to date is fourteen, none having been constructed during the year.

The Patetonga Wharf, which was purchased in the previous year, was redecked and strengthened.

Various small improvements and repairs to the wharves were attended to as required.

A small wharf will be erected at the south end of the Puhanga spillway.

FLOOD-GATES.

The total number of gates now in use is fifty-four, three having been removed during the year owing to their being no longer necessary. This was due to the water that was formerly sent down certain outlets being diverted into fresh channels, so as to endeavour to keep a continuous flow of water and so keep the outlets for the gates free from silt.

At the outlets of five of the gates flumings were erected, which have the effect of rendering the gates more efficient and not so liable to damage from erosion.

As usual, all gates have been inspected regularly and repairs effected.

BRIDGES, CULVERTS, ETC.

The total number of sill bridges to date is ninety-two, small bridges on piles eight, one two-span bridge, and five culverts.

During this coming year it is intended to construct a permanent bridge across the Waitakaruru-Maukoro Canal at Waitakaruru.

PRIVATE TELEPHONE-LINE TO WORKS.

As usual, this line has been of great assistance in facilitating the progress of the works, as it saves an unnecessary amount of travelling. The total distance of this line, which extends from Kerepehi to Waitakaruru, is 14 miles.

BUILDINGS.

The total number of buildings on the works is thirty-eight, which are used as quarters, stores, wharf-sheds, &c.

One wharf-shed was erected during the year, whilst additions were made to the foreman's hut at Waikaka.

All buildings are in very fair order.

FLOATING PLANT.

This plant consists of the following: Two Priestman grab dredgers complete, one steamer, three oil-launches, six pontoons, and sundry small punts. Since last report one launch has been transferred to the Rangitaiki drainage-works, whilst three pontoons have been procured in order to carry out the metalling scheme for the plains. All have been kept in good repair.

ARTESIAN BORING PLANT.

During the year twenty-three bores were sunk by the Department's plant, bringing the total up to eighty-two. The flows of water obtained have varied from 1,680 gallons to 96,000 gallons per diem. No unmineralized water has been struck, nevertheless the mineralized water does not seem to have any detrimental effect on stock.

All bores have been sunk for the settlers on very easy terms, extending over periods suitable to themselves, whilst in case of a transfer of section arrangements have been made so that the cost is refunded before the transfer is obtained.

The total cost of the bores sunk to date, including wages, material, &c., is £1,707 19s. 7d., whilst the sum repaid so far is £474 1s. 6d., some £263 14s. 10d. of this being repaid during the current year.

Schedules of all bores sunk during the year are attached, and disclose the fact that the country in each locality has its peculiar strata.