

The completion of the Manorburn Dam, Moa Creek and Poolburn Weirs, three main races, and some of the distributing-races during the current year will carry the scheme appreciably nearer completion.

The scheme designed to irrigate several suitable areas of Government land between Alexandra and Clyde, at present not very productive, by means of water taken from the Manuherikia River has been advanced a stage. A tender has been accepted for the construction of the first section of the water-race in the Manuherikia Gorge, and tenders for further sections have been received.

A supplementary scheme to serve a portion of the Galloway Flat from the above-mentioned race at Chatto Creek has been investigated and has turned out very well, and its construction will be commenced in due course.

The expenditure out of last year's vote during the financial year was £33,602, and for the current year a vote of £40,000 is proposed.

WAIHOU AND OHINEMURI RIVERS IMPROVEMENT.

Steady progress is being made with protective works designed in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission. The Ngararahi Cut, to divert a portion of the flow of the Waihou to a more direct course, has been completed under contract, and, although it has not been excavated down to the level of the river-bed, is already carrying an appreciable portion of the flow of the river, which is likely to increase as the new channel scours out to a greater depth. The smaller Koutou Cut in the same river has also been completed, and flood-gates constructed to drain adjacent land. The long stop-bank along the Paeroa River front has been completed, and it is now proposed to undertake a 25-chain cut at Pereniki's Bend, also the extension of the Paeroa Bank, the construction of which is expected to ensure the safety of the township and the lands along the river-banks in this locality. Much work in the shape of stop-bank construction still remains to be done, and will be carried out by the powerful dredge now being built for the purpose and approaching completion. The occupiers of the lands along the rivers are already experiencing the benefit of these improvement-works, and are able to cultivate areas which for years past have been liable to frequent inundation. Although the Commission recommended the taking by the Government of the areas of land required for stop-banks, the Department is in most instances securing easements from the owners over the areas required, thus reducing the initial cost and not interfering to any great extent with the owners' enjoyment and profitable cultivation of their farms. Many miles of surveys have been made in connection with these works.

Last year's expenditure in connection with these river-improvement works amounted to £9,632, and for the current year a vote of £20,000 is proposed.

TOURIST AND HEALTH RESORTS.

The expenditure under this heading for the year amounted to £14,989, the principal part being used in the erection and furnishing of the new hostel at the Hermitage, Mount Cook. There was a moderate expenditure at Rotorua on works and improvements, and smaller sums were absorbed in improvements at Waitomo Caves and in the development of the Helensville Hot Springs.

It is intended to re-erect the Hanmer Springs Sanatorium recently destroyed by fire; replace by cast-iron or steel pipes a portion of the wooden pipes originally laid down in connection with the water-supply system at Rotorua; to further improve the electrical supply system at Rotorua; make additions to the Rotorua Sanatorium rendered necessary by the increased number of patients; to increase the accommodation at the Waitomo Caves Hostel, which has at times been greatly overcrowded, and sundry minor works.

A vote is also provided for assistance to the development of the Maruia Springs on the west coast of the South Island.

The work provided for in the estimates will involve an expenditure of nearly £30,000, on account of which a vote of £20,000 is proposed for the current year.