

MAINTENANCE.

Mr. J. Burnett, Chief Engineer, reports as follows:—

Permanent-way.—The track has been maintained in good condition. Relaying as follows has been done during the financial year:—

	Miles.
Main lines, 53 lb. and 56 lb. relaid with 70 lb. steel material	80 $\frac{3}{4}$
Branch lines, 40 lb. relaid with new 55 lb. steel material	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Branch lines, 40 lb. relaid with second-hand 53 lb., &c., steel material removed from main lines	17

Total relaying for the year	108 $\frac{1}{4}$
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The improvement of the alignment near Turakina has been completed. The whole cost has been charged to working-expenses. Check-railing of sharp curves to lessen wear on outer rail has been continued.

Sleepers.—256,054 sleepers were put into the track during the year. Respacing to strengthen the track has been continued.

Tunnels.—Two tunnels in the Dunedin district have had to be partially relined.

Slips and Floods.—In the Ohakune district slips and a washout occurred between Utiku and Ohingaiti in October, blocking the line for four days. In the Dunedin district conditions were exceptionally bad in August, train delays occurring in most parts of the district. On the Otago Central Railway traffic was suspended from the 23rd August to the 9th September. The district staffs concerned met these difficulties in a creditable manner.

Ballasting.—395,712 cubic yards of ballast has been used on the track during the year, a considerable improvement on the preceding year's work. A new mechanical ballast-loader is being installed at Mount Egmont pit.

Bridges, &c.—Bridge structures have been maintained in a safe condition. The renewal of timber superstructures in steel is being continued.

New steel-girder bridges over the new North Road; Morningside, and Park Road, Auckland, and the new steel viaduct at Manawapou, Wanganui district, have been completed.

Contracts have been let for a number of steel girders, and further contracts will be necessary during the ensuing year.

Water-services.—Improvements to a number of locomotive water-services have been carried out, including the provision of several 6,000-gallon vats. A 50,000-gallon reinforced-concrete vat is being erected at Linwood (Christchurch), and one of timber of similar capacity at Invercargill.

Wharves.—Lake Wakatipu: Patent slip in hand. Port Chalmers: Extensive repairs in hand. Picton: The new reinforced-concrete wharf is in regular use. The old timber wharf will shortly be pulled down. Nelson: Wharf-extension, &c., completed.

Buildings, &c.—New engine-depot at Linwood (Christchurch): The buildings are approaching completion. Reinforced-concrete tank, water-supply, siding accommodation, &c., are well advanced. New foundry and blacksmith's shop erected at loco. shops, Newmarket. Social hall erected at Hawera. Maintenance works depot has been shifted from Newmarket to Penrose. The maintenance works depot at Kaiwarra was damaged by fire: re-erection of the portion destroyed is in hand. Albert Bond building at Christchurch has been converted to district offices, and is now occupied by the staff. New station building and yard in hand at Picton, also new goods-shed and station-yard rearrangement at Invercargill. A number of new houses have been provided, and a fair percentage of dwellings have been added to and supplied with additional conveniences.

Miscellaneous Works.—Additions and improvements were carried out during the year amounting to £27,053, which was charged to working-expenses. The principal works were—Additions and improvements at Newmarket, Rotorua, Papatoetoe, Te Kuiti, Ohakune, Nelson, Christchurch (part), and Irwell; siding additions and alterations at Auckland, Te Aroha, Te Kuiti, Horopito, Feilding, Timaru, Windsor, and Ohakune (sawmills), (part); additions to houses at Ohakune, Rangataua, Mina, Hinuera, and Toiro; new houses at Dargaville and Glenomaru; social halls at Frankton (completion) and Hawera; new goods-shed at Ngongotaha removed from Onehunga Port; new stockyards and improvements at Horrelville; additions to water-services at Towai, Arahui, Helensville, Taihape, Marton, Makotuku, and Wanganui; erection of turntables at Little River and Napier; drainage improvements at Pelichet Bay and Dunedin; workshop improvements at Napier (completion), Petone, and Addington; refreshment-room additions at Marton; shelter-shed for watersiders at Timaru; engine-shed improvements at Tokanui; fencing line at Mercer; deviation of line at Bonny Glen—Turakina (part); purchase of land at Gropers and Switzers; reclamation at Thorndon (Wellington); fire-prevention water-service at Dunedin (part); foot-warmer furnaces at Picton and Ward; overhead bridge at Timaru (Caroline Bay); terminal facilities at Tokorahi and Ngapara (part); barracks for cleaners at Taihape; lighting-station at Pahiatua (gas); extension of loading-accommodation at Wairuna and Te Aroha; station approaches at Thornbury and Kaukapakapa; footways on bridges on Kaipara Branch; verandas and platform extensions at Bucklands and Kaukapakapa; power-house additions at Greymouth.

Additions to Open Lines.—£199,442 was spent on these works and charged to capital account, the principal items being the following: Signalling, interlocking, block-working, &c.; additions to station buildings, yards, and sidings at Morrinsville, Frankton Junction, Mercer (completion), Papatoetoe, Auckland (Quay Street) (completion), Kirikiriroa, Whangarei, Huntly (part), Penrose (part), Otahuhu (part), Hamilton (part), Palmerston North, Hastings (part), Halcombe and Feilding (part), Thorndon, Tawa Flat, Paraparaumu, Waipukurau (completion), Waipawa, Manakau, Poukawa, Otane (part), Picton, Christchurch (completion), Stirling (completion), Leeston, Belfast, and Matura; additions to water-services at Hukerenui, New Lynn,