

to one mile past the Okaihau—Ohacawai Road crossing. A new road from Okaihau to Kaikohe to give access to the railway was formed during the year and partly metalled.

WHANGAREI—NORTH AUCKLAND.

The first four miles of formation-work on this line is being carried out under contract, but the contract time, which expires in January next, is likely to be exceeded. The next length of nearly four miles to Oakleigh is being formed by co-operative labour, and machinery will be used to take out one or two big cuttings. A contract has been let for erecting a railway wharf at Mangapai and dredging the river alongside. Lighter formation-work on the next seven miles to Tauraroa is well in hand, and rails will be laid over this section as early as possible in order to utilize a ballast-pit at its far end. The line has been located for its whole length from Kioreroa to the point where it joins the North Auckland Main Trunk Railway, and formation-work will shortly be commenced from the junction northwards.

WAIPU BRANCH.

This line was authorized last year, but no sum was appropriated for it. The survey will shortly be completed, and £2,000 is asked for it to provide for initial expenditure.

NORTH AUCKLAND MAIN TRUNK.

Formation has been completed, rails laid, and the line partly ballasted from Otamatea, through the Bickerstaffe and Maungaturoto tunnels, to a point half a mile past Maungaturoto Station. The country traversed is liable to slip, and gives a good deal of trouble before stability is secured in the larger cuttings and banks. A temporary goods and passenger service is carried on between Otamatea and Maungaturoto pending the final completion and opening of the section. Earthworks are finished for one mile past the railhead, and are in progress up to the next station at Huarau, but a mile farther on a tunnel $13\frac{1}{2}$ chains in length, which has just been commenced, will delay further platelaying for some time.

Construction-work on a new section of this line, starting from Kirikopuni, on the Wairoa River, and working southwards, was commenced in April last, and is being steadily pushed on over a length of three miles and a half, of which a tunnel 25 chains long is the only heavy feature.

HUNTLY—AWAROA.

An important section of this railway, from Huntly to the point where the coal from the Pukemiro Collieries will come in for transport by rail, is practically finished, and the survey of a farther three miles of the route to Burnt Bridge has been undertaken. An addition to the combined bridge over the Waikato River at Huntly was completed early in the year.

WAIUKU BRANCH.

Formation-work at Paerata Junction and along the first seven miles of the branch line has been in progress throughout the year, under three small contracts and on the co-operative system. Satisfactory progress has been made, and earthworks over the first three miles are approaching completion.

EAST COAST MAIN TRUNK.

The Public Works Department still retains control of the completed length of over thirteen miles between Maunganui and Te Puke, on which a regular train service is run, carrying passengers, goods, and metal for the Department's own purposes and for use by local bodies in the district. There has, as was anticipated, been considerable subsidence in the pumice banks which constitute much of the formation along the length, and maintenance parties using steam navvy, locomotive, and earth-wagons are kept busy building up the banks where required. Earthworks between Te Puke and Paengaroa have been finished, but the large steel bridge over the Kaituna River, which is being built under contract, will not be finished