

of steel and concrete have been brought to the site, and good progress has been made with the pile-driving. At the end of the year six 50 ft. spans and one 25 ft. span were completely finished.

No further work has been done by the Napier Harbour Board on the North Embankment. In April of last year the dredge was moved to the South Embankment and worked for about eight months of the year, the rest of the time being occupied in removal, overhaul, and repairs.

STRATFORD — MAIN TRUNK.

At the western end a limited number of men have been employed throughout the year on the varied classes of work necessary to carry the line from Whangamomona to Tahora. Heavy slips occurred, but have been removed. Two tunnels of about 24 chains each have been excavated and lined, and cuttings and banks up to Tahora Station are approaching completion. Rails are laid and ballasting completed up to Kohuratahi, four miles and a half beyond the terminus, and a temporary tramway service to Tahora is still in operation. Another twelve months should see the line completed to Tahora, where the terminus will probably remain for some years.

At the eastern end earthworks have been in progress over a length of $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The reinforced-concrete piers for the bridge over the Ongarue River have been completed. Progress on the Okahu Tunnel contract has been very slow. The total length of tunnel lined at the end of last March was 19 chains, leaving $55\frac{1}{2}$ chains yet to be done.

The contract let last year for the tunnels at 7 miles 55 chains and 8 miles 35 chains was determined in August last owing to the inability of the contractor to carry out the contract. The bottom headings and 2 chains of lining in brick were completed when the contract was determined.

OPUNAKE BRANCH.

Formation-work during the year has been restricted to the seven-mile section from Te Roti junction to Kapuni Station, on which banks and cuttings are nearly completed. Concrete piers for the bridge which will carry the line over the Waingonoro River are well in hand, but the construction of this and two other bridges on the first section will occupy the available staff for another year at least. The route of the branch line to serve Manaia has been cleared, several culverts put in, and road-deviations formed and metalled.

RAETIHI BRANCH.

The earthwork and platelaying is practically completed, and good progress has been made with the ballasting. Three bridges have been completed and a water-supply installed at Raetihi Station yard.

A goods service which is run by the Public Works Department was inaugurated in August last between Ohakune and Makaranui Stations, and has been well patronized, timber comprising the principal freight.

SOUTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK.

Beyond the terminus at Wharanui Station formation-work, platelaying, and ballasting is completed for a distance of three miles and a quarter, but it was quite impossible during the year just closed to make any progress with the construction of two small steel bridges on this length. Formation-work on the line is practically suspended owing to shortage of labour.

WESTPORT—INANGAHUA.

No work has been done on this line during the past year.

NELSON—WESTLAND.

At the Nelson end construction-works were continued with a limited number of men until the end of February last, when all work was suspended.