

Priestman No. 4 proceeded with the Omeheu outfall, but progress was slow, owing primarily to hard country full of timber, and latterly to scarcity of coal. Altogether a distance of 88½ chains was covered, representing a total of 72,722 cubic yards excavated.

The following table shows the total amount excavated, with the cost per cubic yard, for the past eight years:—

				Cubic Yards.	Cost per Cubic Yard.
1912-13	...	...	...	31,486	4.12d.
1913-14	...	...	...	272,370	3.07d.
1914-15	...	...	...	268,760	3.48d.
1915-16	...	...	...	224,740	4.54d.
1916-17	...	...	...	261,751	4.36d.
1917-18	...	...	...	320,614	3.72d.
1918-19	...	...	...	229,659	5.70d.
1919-20	...	...	...	176,672	6.62d.

The cost per cubic yard for this year is rather high, but this is accounted for by the great increase in costs of coal, freights, repairs, material, and wages, the depth of dredging, and slack time during overhauls.

WESTERN DRAIN OUTFALL.

Priestman No. 3 commenced this work about the beginning of the period, but, although dredging was hard, fair progress was made. On the dredge tapping the Kopeopeo Canal about 3 ft. more fall was available in the Western drain, and this was taken up by hand labour. The dredge then proceeded down the Kopeopeo Canal towards the Western drain, but slow progress was made owing to a hard belt of very fine sand on the bottom of the cut.

OMEHEU OUTFALL.

Comparatively slow progress was made by dredge No. 4 during the year, owing primarily to the hard dredging experienced, and latterly to the scarcity of coal and the poorness of that amount supplied. For the first half of the period a great deal of timber was encountered, entailing the free use of explosives, but the dredge is now in fair country, and should make good progress when coal-supplies are to hand. To give the dredge enough water to float, a dam was erected at the western corner of Section 74, but as soon as the dredge is out in more solid country this dam will be removed, and the lagoon in Section 134A will then disappear.

ROADS.

The Rangitaiki River East Bank Road has now been completely formed from the Matata Inland Road to the Whakatane—Te Teko Road, and is open to traffic. Feist's Road has been completed, and there is now a through road from the Rangitaiki River to Awakeri, which is of great service to the settlers, as it is a very short route to the dairy factory.

Side drains have been cut on the Eastern Drain Road from the Kopeopeo Canal, and this road is now half completed.

The road from Section 30G to boundary Sections 38 and 31 has had spoil from drains on either side thrown on to the centre, and now has only to be graded to be ready for traffic.

The length of roads formed, exclusive of the main East Coast Road, is one and three-quarter miles.

RAILWAY ROAD.

The Main East Coast Road has been formed and thrown open for traffic from the Awaite Road to the Rangitaiki River, and the formation of the portion from the Tarawera River to the Awaite-Paku Stream has been commenced. As regards the portion from the Awakaponga drain to the Tarawera River, this is very soft and wet, and a good deal of sand will be needed for filling in order to secure a solid foundation. The Public Works Department have been approached in this connection, as they have a steam-shovel and a ballast-train working on the railway alongside, and an endeavour is being made to obtain spoil in this manner.

From the Rangitaiki River eastwards drains have been cut on either side of the road and the spoil thrown in the centre for a distance of about 57 chains.

Fencing has been completed from the Tarawera River to the Rangitaiki River, and from the Western drain to Awakeri. The remainder will be done as soon as the necessary material is to hand. This work has been undertaken out of special grant.

BRIDGES AND CULVERTS.

The bridge gang has been busily employed during the year, though hampered during the past few months by lack of suitable material. The obtaining of timber is attended with great difficulty. Two pile bridges were erected, one over Seccombe's drain on the Thornton—Matata Road, and the other over the Omeheu outfall on the line of Gow's Road. Five large sill bridges, 16 ft. long, have been erected over various drains, and in addition some thirteen smaller bridges have been erected. Two concrete and three wooden culverts have been made on various roads, and a timber flood-gate with approaches was made on Seccombe's drain.