

ABSTRACT—continued.

Name of Railway.	Total Length of Railway or Section.	Open for Traffic.	Expenditure to 31st March, 1920.
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LINES, ETC.	M. ch.	M. ch.	£
Canterbury (lengths included above)	..	..	731,759
Otago and Southland	..	..	372,522
Gisborne to Ormond Tramway	..	..	4,975
Midland Railway, valuation of works constructed by company ..	..	..	*683,460
Grand total	4,158 52	3,006 3	39,544,945

* Includes value for £150,000 paid to debenture-holders under the Midland Railway Petitions Settlement Act Amendment Act, 1903.

KAIHU VALLEY RAILWAY EXTENSION.

(19 m. 17 ch. to 23 m. 71 ch. ; length, 4 miles 54 chains.)

Good progress has been made on this railway, and the formation is complete with the exception of a few small cuttings which will shortly be finished. Flood damage which occurred during the winter months has been repaired. Three temporary bridges have been erected pending the building of permanent structures. Rails have been laid from 19 m. 40 ch. to 21 m., and all the permanent-way material is on the site ; ballast has been run out to 21 m., and the first lift of ballasting completed from 19 m. 17 ch. to 20 m. 70 ch. It is anticipated that with favourable weather the ballasting will be completed about April next.

NORTH AUCKLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.

Ngapuhi Northwards—Okaihau Section (16 m. 25 ch. to 24 m. 45 ch. ; length, 8 miles 20 chains).—The formation of this section is practically complete. At 19 m. 68 ch. a large cutting was excavated ; at 19 m. 53 ch. a difficult bank was completed ; and at 24 m. 27 ch. the Okaihau station-yard was formed, though bad slips which occurred on the upper side will not be removed until the summer months. Although the prodigious slips experienced on other lines have not been met with on this section, those which have taken place have greatly increased the ratio of work done to that originally estimated. Rails have been laid to 19 m. 50 ch., and a 40 lb. track from 19 m. 50 ch. across a bad bank to 19 m. 60 ch. It is estimated that in three or four months the platelaying will be completed to Okaihau. A platelayer's cottage was erected at Kaikohe. In order to obtain broken stone ballast, which is necessary owing to the difficulty in running scoria ballast over the open railways, a quarry of good basalt rock was opened up on the Utakura Stream, necessitating the laying-down of a branch line, the formation of which has been completed. The laying of a 40 lb. track from the main line at 21 m. 35 ch. to the quarry has been commenced. Up-to-date plant—i.e., steam-driven stone crushing and screening plant, air-drills, steam-navvy, &c.—has been made use of on this line, and very satisfactory progress has been made.

Okoro Section (24 m. 45 ch. to 34 m. 18 ch. ; length, 9 miles 53 chains).—Owing to the shortage of labour, progress on the formation work on this section has been delayed, and the rate of progress is not what was hoped earlier in the year. Formation has been completed from 24 m. 45 ch. to 24 m. 79 ch., and from 24 m. 79 ch. to 27 m. The earthworks are about one-third completed. Twelve cuttings between 25 m. and 27 m. were in hand, but owing to insufficiency of labour only two could be manned. Slips which occurred in the cuttings have all been removed. A deviation of the Okaihau-Rangiahua Road, 63 chains in length, had to be fenced, formed, metalled, and blinded with quarry-chips, while 3 miles of fencing were erected along the railway reserves. Unfavourable weather conditions have retarded progress during the last three months, but in the circumstances the greatest possible amount of work has been carried out.

WHANGAREI BRANCH RAILWAY.

Oakleigh Section (0 m. to 7 m. 60 ch. ; length, 7 miles 60 chains).—A length of 5 miles 23 chains of this section was maintained and worked by the Public Works Department up till the end of the financial year, when it was handed over to the Railway Department. From 5 m. 23 ch. to 7 m. 60 ch. earthworks have been in progress throughout the year, while formation to 5 m. 72 ch. has been completed, and thence to 7 m. 60 ch. two-thirds completed. Up-to-date plant has been utilized and the cutting at 6 m. 20 ch. is well advanced, leaving one other cutting at 7 m. 15 ch. It is hoped to complete formation of this section in about four months' time if circumstances are favourable. At 5 m. 74 ch. a concrete subway was necessary to carry a private tramway under the rail. A platelayer's cottage (concrete) is being erected at Oakleigh station-yard.

Tauraroa Section (7 m. 60 ch. to 15 m. ; length, 7 miles 20 chains).—Earthwork on this section has been completed with the exception of clearing slips and lifting subsiding banks. The approach roads to the station were metalled during the year, and ballasting is now practically complete. An overbridge was erected at 11 m. 45 ch. This section was maintained during the year for goods and material to Waiotira Junction and the North Auckland Main Trunk line. The Tauraroa quarry has been worked during the year, but considerable delays have been occasioned owing to the necessity of utilizing the services of the quarrymen to clear slips occurring on the line before stone could be transported to the places required. About forty workmen's huts have been erected on this and the Waiotira Section, and a dining-room has been erected for the use of the men employed near the ballast-quarry.