

Tauranga Eastwards—Matapihi Section (41 m. 5 ch. to 45 m. ; length, 3 miles 75 chains).—Little work was done on this section until May, when sinking of cylinders at pier E of the Tauranga Bridge was completed. Later cylinders at pier F were commenced, and other cylinders up to and including K were put in hand and are now well advanced. Work on cylinders at pier L has been started, and concreting and reinforcing commenced, but the shortage of suitable labour has caused difficulty in this direction.

Mount Branch (0 m. to 4 m. 7 ch. ; length, 4 miles 7 chains).—Ordinary maintenance has been carried out on this section and a very satisfactory goods and passenger service is in operation. The old workshops were destroyed by fire in June, 1919, but erection of the new shops was immediately put in hand and the work is now almost complete. A good proportion of the new machinery has been delivered and erected, and further plant is on order. Ironwork for nine different bridges has been manufactured, as also that for fourteen tip trucks and a travelling crane.

Te Puke Section (45 m. to 54 m. ; length, 9 miles).—Ordinary maintenance has been carried out during the year.

Paengaroa, Pongakawa, Otamarakau, and Matata Sections (54 m. to 79 m. 16 ch. ; length, 25 miles 16 chains).—On these sections the usual maintenance work incidental to traffic-working has been carried out, whilst the time-table now in force has met with great public approval. Between Otamarakau and Matata some of the bridges are of a temporary nature and ballasting is incomplete.

Rangitaiki Section (79 m. 16 ch. to 87 m. 71 ch. ; length, 8 miles 55 chains).—Platelaying was commenced in June, but progress has been slow as formation had first to be completed. Rails are laid to 84 m. 47 ch. The bank on the Rangitaiki Swamp has been built to a low level, and is being raised to its correct level by material obtained from a borrow-pit at Awakaponga by means of a steam-shovel, the output of which has averaged so far 280 cubic yards per day.

Awakiri Section (87 m. 71 ch. to 96 m. ; length, 8 miles 9 chains).—From 87 m. 71 ch. onwards earthworks and fencing are in progress. A length of 5 m. 40 ch. of service road was completed to the foot of the saddle at 97 m.

General: At the Te Puke Quarry the shortage of locomotives precluded more extensive work, but 12,200 yards of metal was distributed to local bodies.

Gisborne-Napier (North End).

Ngatapa Section (0 m. to 10 m. 29 ch. ; length, 11 miles 18 chains).—Ordinary maintenance has been carried out, and the traffic over the section includes passenger and goods trains. A number of banks have been widened. Ballast-crushing has been intermittently carried on at the Repongaere quarry, from which 614 tons of pulverized agricultural lime has been supplied to farmers.

Waikura Section (10 m. 29 ch. onwards).—The centre-line between 11 m. 64 ch. and 13 m. 64 ch. was repegged and levelled and cross-sectioned, access roads near 13 m. 30 ch. were re-formed, and earthworks at various points commenced. On this line, too, difficulty has been experienced owing to the inferior quality of the labour offering.

Frasertown Section (0 m. onwards).—The work on this section was put in hand in September, 1919. The fencing of the first 1½ miles, in addition to that for a length of 1 m. 15 ch. on the right-hand side of the deviation, is practically completed. A number of temporary buildings have been erected. Progress had been hindered by the shortage of cement and, in the early part of the work, scarcity of labour.

Waikokopu Branch—Nuhaka Section (0 m. to 17 m. 12 ch. ; length, 17 miles 12 chains).—In March last co-operative contracts were let for works from 8 m. 30 ch. Between forty and fifty scoops have been employed, and formation is now being done between 0 m. and 9 m. and at 14 m. 55 ch.

Gisborne-Napier (South End).

Eskdale Section (0 m. to 10 m. 51 ch. ; length, 11 miles 51 chains).—The line has been cleared, fenced, and culverted for a considerable length. Fair progress has been made during the year, and between 1 m. 69 ch. and 6 m. 20 ch. formation is almost ready for platelaying. From 8 m. 69 ch. to 10 m. 38 ch. a new bank has been constructed and a considerable amount of widening done. Fifty workmen's huts and three cookhouses have been erected, and a platelayer's concrete cottage is under construction.

Tutira Section (10 m. 51 ch. onwards).—The line has been cleared for its whole length, and 70 chains of fencing on both sides of the railway has been erected. Earthworks are being vigorously proceeded with and the permanent survey is now up to 14 m.

STRATFORD—MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.

West End.

Tahora Section (42 m. 26 ch. to 47 m. 40 ch. ; length, 5 miles 14 chains).—Good progress has been made during the year, and the track has been extended into the Tahora yard. A passenger- and goods train service operated on this section, connecting with the Railway Department's service at Kohuratahi. The Tahora station-yard work received a great amount of attention and is very well advanced. Bridges at 47 m. 22.50 ch., 49 m. 1 ch., 47 m. 10 ch. have been completed, and a large amount of culvert, fencing, &c., work has been carried out.

Raekohu Section (47 m. 40 ch. onwards).—Work on this section has been principally confined to service and main-road formation and railway formation to 47 m. 63 ch. 3 m. 25 ch. of telephone-wire was erected, fencing completed, and at 49 m. 16 ch. a bridge constructed. A deposit of gravel near Tangarakau River crossing has been prospected, and indications are very good. A trial survey was made of the Haco length (50 m. 60 ch. to 57 m.).