

Bridges.—These have been maintained in good condition. Considerable renewals and repairs have been effected. The amount of bridge-strengthening carried out has been very limited.

Water-services.—These have been maintained in good order.

Wharves.—The wharves belonging to the Department have been maintained in good order.

A new wharf has been provided at Half-way Bay, Lake Wakatipu.

The dredging at the Nelson wharves referred to in last annual report has been carried out to the satisfaction of the Nelson Harbour Board. One of the dredges belonging to the Lyttelton Harbour Board was employed for this work.

Buildings.—Extensive renewals and repairs have been effected. One station building, one engine-shed, one shelter-shed, and one house, which were destroyed by fire, have been reinstated. One station building which was past repair was replaced by a new building.

Station-yards.—Siding extensions and rearrangements, and additional accommodation, have been carried out at a number of stations.

Railway Improvements.—Further portions of the Auckland-Mercer grade easements and station rearrangements in connection therewith have been executed. This extensive work is now approaching completion.

The total expenditure under Railways Improvement Account during the year was £78,818.

Additions to Open Lines.—The expenditure under this heading for the year was £51,225, the principal works being—Signalling and interlocking, block working, telegraph, and telephone facilities, &c., rearrangements, Ohakune (completion), Christchurch engine-depot (completion); additional refreshment-room accommodation and bakery, &c., at Marton (completion); additional storage accommodation and refreshment-rooms, Paekakariki; improved drainage, &c., Invercargill (part), Featherston, Mercer, Morrinsville, Frankton Junction; engine-pits, &c., Frankton Junction, Cross Creek (completion), Oamaru, Paekakariki; engine-depot additions, Taihape, Greymouth; additions to locomotive offices, Addington, Newmarket (completion), Petone (completion); locomotive workshops additions, Greymouth; goods-shed additions, Hawera (completion), Turakina; additions and improvements to station buildings, &c., Ngongotaha, Matamata, Matangi, Ruatangata, Teschemaker's Siding, Invercargill; siding alterations and extensions, Whangarei (part), Otahuhu (part), Ngongotaha (completion), Te Aroha, Waioura, Taumarunui, Hunterville, Wanganui, Wangahu, Turakina (part), Te Kauwhata, Patea, Lambton (part), Sockburn (part), Timaru, Tinwald, Lumsden, Longlands, Edendale, Hinuera (part), Invercargill; improved access, Auckland and Remuera; additional platform accommodation, Taumarunui (completion), Walton; storeroom and removal of Inspector Permanent-way's office, Frankton Junction; lining of Spiral tunnel at 200 m., North Island Main Trunk; provision of ash-pits, Frankton Junction, Paekakariki, Oamaru; workshops for lineman and signal-adjuster at Ohakune, Aramoho, New Plymouth, Timaru; stockyards, Greytown, Greenpark, Hukanui; new goods-shed, Christchurch (part); watering facilities, Frankton Junction, Cross Creek, Oio, Whangarei; purchase of land, Frankton Junction, Taumarunui, Featherston, Para; house and land, Templeton; house on railway land, Cave; erection of houses, Frankton Junction, Ngongotaha, Mamaku (completion), Mercer (2), Waimauku, Matamata, Te Kuiti, Taumarunui (2), Ohakune (3), Taihape (2), Patea, Lepperton, Featherston (3), Waipawa, Waipara, Hakataramea, Para; electric lighting, &c., Auckland, New Plymouth, Christchurch; goods-yard, Riccarton, Rangiora; works at Brunner, Stillwater, Kaimata, Moana, &c.; telegraph, telephone, and tablet facilities in progress in connection with opening Oira Tunnel; office accommodation for Advertising and Architectural Branch, Wellington.

Miscellaneous Works.—Additions and improvements amounting to £10,240 and charged to working-expenses were carried out. The works include additions and improvements to station buildings, sidings, &c., Auckland, Paekakariki, Napier, Woodville, Waipukurau, Heriot, Puketiro; improved lighting (electric), station buildings, cottages, &c., Whangarei, New Plymouth, Thorndon; provision of and improvements to stockyards, &c., Kai Iwi, Wharanui, Koromiko, Arthur's Pass; workshop improvements, Frankton Junction; water-service improvements, Morrinsville, Palmerston North; loading-banks, Woodend, Moana; accommodation for trainmen, Ashburton; hot-water services installed in fifty-eight houses; improvements and additions to twenty-four houses; purchase of quarry and plant, Sawyer's Bay; removal of terminal facilities from Maclennan to Tahakopa; lavatory accommodation, drainage, &c., Palmerston North, Culverden, Puketiro, Masterton, East Town Workshops.

Expenditure.—The expenditure for the year was as follows:—

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Maintenance (charged to working-expenses)	837,910
New works (charged to capital)	130,043
Other Government Departments, public bodies, and private parties	40,907
Total expenditure	£1,008,860

The maintenance expenditure charged to working expenses amounted to £280 per mile, compared with £252 per mile in 1918–19, £240 in 1917–18, £243 in 1916–17, £251 in 1915–16, and £254 in 1914–15. The increase in expenditure is due to the increase in wages and in the cost of materials.

Mileage.—The mileage open for traffic on the 31st March, 1920, was 3,005 miles 71 chains. During the year 12 miles 75 chains additional lines were opened for traffic.

Land and Leases.—Number of leases registered during year, 470; aggregate rental of same, £8,442 9s. 2d. Total number of leases current at 31st March, 1920, 5,596; aggregate rental of same, £37,252 0s. 10d. Private siding agreements registered during year, 87; aggregate rental of same,