

Lake Waikare.—This work has been undertaken so as to ascertain the possibility of lowering the permanent level of Lake Waikare and so benefitting the adjoining low-lying country. Operations were commenced in September and the survey is well in hand. The lake, comprising an area of approximately 5,000 acres, has been thoroughly sounded throughout so that the effect of any lowering can be accurately forecasted. The proposed canal route from the north-eastern corner of the lake to Whangamarino Stream (a distance of 5 miles) has been located and surveyed. To the north and south of the lake the adjoining swamp areas have been defined mainly by magnetic survey. Levels for the location of stop-bank have been taken along the Waikato River from Rangiriri to the pumice-reducing works. A theodolite survey has been made of the western edge of lake for a distance of $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles. During the period the following work has been done: 20 miles levelling, $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles theodolite traverse, and 9 miles magnetic traverse. The actual field-work should be completed soon, and plans, &c., will be thereafter prepared. The expenditure during the year was £379 15s. 6d.

Waimana Protective Works.—At Waimana the work carried out consisted of scooping bad bends with a view to diverting the river to its original course. Willowing has been found a most effective way of dealing with bank-erosion, because if the willows are properly laid down and a proper growth takes place the work gives the best possible result. Several groynes were erected, and in one instance a bank was widened and lengthened to divert the river, and, judging by its present appearance, will give the desired result. In several instances settlers have done the willowing, and this method of carrying out the work has proved most satisfactory. The expenditure for the year was £1,591 5s. 10d.

Whangamarino Swamp.—The field-work for this work was undertaken in February, but the party was shifted on to more urgent work before the job was completed. Some 6 miles of line was cut and levelled, and in addition the watersheds of the Whangamarino and Maramarua Rivers and Waikare Lake were fixed. The expenditure during the year was £59 0s. 2d.

Waitakaruru Stream Improvements.—This work has comprised cutting a new canal and forming road-banks on either side. The work is practically complete, and will effect a great improvement in the surrounding district. The total distance is 2 miles 60 chains. Expenditure during the year was £980 1s.

Waitakaruru-Pokeno Road.—The work done chiefly comprised easing grades and making through cuttings. Expenditure during the year was £246 16s. 9d.

Reparoa Settlement.—An inspection was made in November and an estimate given for improving the drainage of the above settlement, but it was late in March before any work was commenced. A party is now engaged on the engineering survey, and contracts for draining are in course of preparation. In addition to draining, the road-formation is to be undertaken, and plant for that purpose is now being acquired. Owing to the isolated position of this settlement it is anticipated that difficulty will be experienced in procuring labour at the rates now ruling.

General.—The following particulars show the principal works carried out in the various localities during the year:—

Cleaning drains	...	...	...	...	273 miles 42 chains.
Widening drains	...	...	...	...	160 " 66 "
Constructing new drains	...	...	...	...	150 " 39 "
Reforming roads	...	...	...	...	11 " 60 "
New roads	...	...	...	...	23 " 63 "
Disking roads	...	...	...	...	8 " 40 "
Gravelling roads	...	...	...	...	0 " 16 "
Regravelling Roads	...	...	...	...	1 " 10 "
Metalling roads	...	...	...	...	4 " 18 "
Fencing roads	...	...	...	...	10 " 41 "
New stop-banks	...	...	...	...	6 " 54 "
Repairing stop-banks	...	...	...	...	2 " 55 "
Levels taken	...	...	...	...	255 " 0 "
Artesian wells sunk	...	...	...	...	23 (number).
Flood-gates built	...	...	...	...	12 "
Concrete and earthenware culverts built	...	...	...	...	69 "
Creek-diversions	...	...	...	...	14 "
Pile bridges	...	...	...	...	2 "
Sill bridges	...	...	...	...	5 "
Sleepers	...	...	...	...	3,700 "
Metal for roads	...	...	...	...	12,078 cubic yards.
Facines	...	...	...	...	7,440 bundles.
Spoil dredged	...	...	...	...	380,432 cubic yards.

Office.—The total expenditure certified for payment during the year was £218,935 13s. 9d., an increase of £111,532 19s. 10d. over the expenditure for the preceding twelve months. Direct Treasury payments amounted to £44,931 11s. 1d., and payments through Post Office to £921 0s. 10d. The amount of £162,736 2s., representing wages, piecework contracts, &c., was paid out of the Thames, Whakatane, and Kaitia Imprints. The amount of £1,219 6s. 4d. was collected by the branch for various services exclusive of rates. Some 576 piecework contracts were let during the year. A total of 3,574 vouchers were prepared and passed through the books, an increase of 1,281 over last year's figures. Inward correspondence numbered 4,722, outward 5,026.

Collection of Rates.—On the 1st October, 1919, the collection of rates levied over the lands in the Hauraki and Rangitaiki Special-rating Districts was placed under the control of this branch. This departure is in the best interests of the Department, and the work in connection with the collection