

HAWERA NEW STATION.

The present location of this station has been the source of strong complaints. Hawera is an important subterminal station, and there is no doubt that the general layout and accommodation are short of requirements. The whole question, however, of improvements at this station must be contingent upon the rearranging of the system of subterminal facilities, which is at present engaging the attention of the departmental engineering and traffic officers. The use of more powerful locomotives, with a much wider sphere of operating, has so increased the length and size of trains as to render it exceedingly difficult, with the present accommodation at subterminals, to handle the larger trains. It has been the policy to arrange subterminals about every forty miles of railway, and that distance was no doubt the maximum, having regard to the coal and water requirements of the smaller locomotives and the shorter trains which they could haul, but with the class of locomotives now in use it is considered that the distance between terminal stations could be doubled, thus enabling the provision of increased accommodation without adding very materially to cost of operating. Some provision has, however, been made for improvements at Hawera, but the amount indicated in the schedule will be subject to revision in accordance with the final decision on the policy of subterminal stations.

TAWA FLAT DEVIATION.

An essential part of the improvement in terminal facilities at Wellington is the construction of a deviation of the railway from a point about three miles beyond Ngahauranga to the vicinity of Tawa Flat, involving a tunnel 2 miles 47 chains long. This work is included in the schedule for immediate attention.

It has been recommended by the Engineer-in-Chief, Public Works Department, in a report published on page 16, and its railway operating advantages are fully described in the attached report of the Chief Engineer of Railways on proposed new works. This shows that the estimated cost is £950,000, and that the expenditure would be immediately reproductive. The saving in working costs if the deviation was in existence to-day would be £40,000 per annum, an economy which would progressively increase with development of traffic. The Tawa Flat deviation would pay interest and show a profit immediately it is constructed.

RIMUTAKA DEVIATION.

This work has been inserted by the Government, the route accepted being that recommended by the Engineer-in-Chief of the Public Works Department and included in my Public Works Statement for 1923.

An extract from the report referred to, which fully explains the Government's proposals, appears in an appendix to this paper.

The schedule of proposed new works attached hereto indicates the approximate yearly expenditure for eight years, which would be sufficient to complete the programme within that time. Provision has been made for the carrying-out of small works that may be required urgently during the period, and a miscellaneous item of £60,000 has been included in the programme to meet such cases.

By setting an objective which is within financial resources, and concentrating upon a well-defined programme, it is possible to secure the maximum of benefit from the initial works, and also to show real progress at each yearly survey of results. This principle was applied to new railways construction in 1920, and has undoubtedly resulted in more effective planning and prosecution of the most necessary works. The proposed programme, extending over a period of eight years, is as follows :—