

cope with the increased shipping. During the year fifty-one boats worked the harbour, and 3,000 tons of outward cargo and 3,400 tons of inward cargo were handled at the wharf, most of the latter being railed to Wairoa.

Waikokopu Harbour.—During the year two leading beacons were erected, and the erection of two anchorage beacons is in hand for the Wairoa Harbour Board at Waikokopu. A 6 ft. track, about 25 chains long, leading to the front anchorage beacon is completed.

All the meat exported by the Wairoa Farmers' Co-operative Company was railed to Waikokopu and lightered on to Home boats, which anchored in the Waikokopu roadstead. Flax from the Wairoa Flax-mill was similarly lightered. Sand has been shipped regularly to Gisborne, and sheep have been shipped to Lyttelton (two boats) and Napier (two boats).

Goods traffic was maintained between Wairoa and Waikokopu, in conjunction with the construction work, and sheep were entrained along the line for the local meat-works.

STRATFORD MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY (EAST END).

Matiere Section (0 m. to 10 m. 23 ch.; length, 10 m. 23 ch.).—The formation of this section was practically complete last year, but slips have been cleared and banks widened between 0 m. and 2 m. 20 ch. Cutting batters have also been completed, and bank-widening between 7 m. and 7 m. 40 ch. Cattle-stops were erected at 9 m. 40 ch. and 9 m. 69 ch., and road-deviations have been constructed and metalled where necessary.

The platelaying and ballasting at the Tuhua station-yard were completed on main line and sidings, and the station-buildings there, as well as those at Matiere, are approaching completion.

Extensive damage was caused by the heavy downpours on the 15th and 22nd May last, principally at the Okahukura Tunnel. The two entrances to this tunnel are located in gullies, and vast accumulations of timber and slurry were brought down from the steep log-littered hillsides overhanging the portals, and completely blocked the approach cuttings for traffic for over a week.

The construction of this section is now complete with the exception of permanent track on bridges, the final trimming lift of ballast, and the renovation of the Okahukura station-buildings. The staff headquarters and temporary buildings, &c., have been moved from Okahukura to Matiere. Goods and passenger traffic were run on this line during the year, and a large amount of timber was carried.

Ohura Section (10 m. 23 ch. to 19 m. 10 ch.; length, 8 m. 67 ch.).—The formation is complete to 15 m. 40 ch. with the exception of 2 chains of cutting. A steam-shovel is working in a cutting at 15 m. 20-30 ch. with locomotive and earth-wagons. Between 15 m. 40 ch. and 16 m. 70 ch. 45,000 cubic yards will have to be excavated to complete fillings, of which 11,000 cubic yards will be for filling between 15 m. 40 ch. and 15 m. 67 ch., and the balance principally at the Ryan Road station-yard. The formation work is well in hand between 16 m. 70 ch. and the end of the section.

The road-deviation and traffic-bridge at 11 m. 26-50 ch. are completed, and surveys are being made for road-deviations and overhead bridge-crossings at 12 m. 76 ch. and 17 m. 23 ch.

The formation of the Nihoniho station-yard is nearly complete, and a temporary loop has been laid. The earthwork at the Ohura station-yard is in hand.

Four miles of fencing was erected, and 448 linear feet of culverts, ranging from 1 ft. to 3 ft., constructed. Stream-diversions at 13 m. 15 ch. and 18 m. 12 ch. have been constructed as far as is possible at present.

The bridges at 11 m. 39 ch. and 13 m. 15 ch. have been completed with the exception, in the latter case, of the decking, which is being laid. The concrete piers of the Ohura River Bridge at 14 m. 64 ch. are complete, and the steel girder spans are riveted ready for launching. The foundations for the concrete piers of the bridge at 15 m. 47 ch. have been laid, and the timber piers of the bridge at 15 m. 68 ch. are complete and the three concrete piers are in course of erection. The piles, &c., for the Waitewhena River bridges at 17 m. 36 ch. and 18 m. 12 ch. have been received, and the manufacture of concrete piles for the Mangaroa River Bridge at 18 m. 30 ch. is proceeding.

No permanent platelaying has been undertaken this year, but the temporary service-line to Toi Toi (16 m.) has been completed, and has been in use for traffic for the greater part of the year. The first lift of ballast has been completed to 14 m. 50 ch. and the second lift to 13 m. 48 ch.

The floods of the 15th and 22nd May last considerably retarded construction on permanent bridges, and temporary bridges had to be guarded day and night to protect them from drifting logs and timber jams.

Accommodation for workers has received constant attention. At present forty single huts and forty married men's quarters (aggregating the equivalent of 177 single huts) are on the works, and more are under construction.

Freight and passengers have been carried since the 21st July, 1924, to Toi Toi, via the temporary tramway.

STRATFORD MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY (WEST END).

Tahora Section (42 m. 26 ch. to 47 m. 40 ch.; length, 5 m. 14 ch.).—As mentioned in last year's report, men were transferred from this section and Te Wera quarry to assist with the repair of damage caused to the open line by the heavy flood of April, 1924. The No. 3 bridge was repaired on the 7th July, 1924, and the Public Works train then worked the Whangamomona Tunnel, which was cleared by the 16th of that month, when the first train since the 5th April, 1924, was run through to Whangamomona. The repair to the open line was completed by the 2nd August, and the men were then transferred to repair flood damage on the unopened portion of the line and back to the quarry. The damage to fences on the unopened section was extensive, and 150 posts had to be replaced. The unopened section was fettled throughout, and 536 cubic yards of extra ballast placed. Passenger and goods service over the unopened line was recommenced on the 5th August.