

The deviation of Watino Road at Punehu Station has been formed and metalled, and the excavation for the widening of the station-yard is progressing. The widening of the Opunake station-yard has been completed, as well as the formation of the approach road on the right, and one platelayer's cottage was erected.

Concrete piers were built and girders placed on the Punehu bridge at 17 m. 52 ch.; the Taungatara River Bridge, at 18 m. 48 ch.; and the Mangahume Stream Bridge, at 20 m. 75 ch. The remaining four piers of the Waiau Stream Bridge, at 22 m. 8 ch., were also completed during the year and girders placed in position.

The platelaying of the main line was completed from 16 m. 40 ch. to 22 m. 55 ch., and the first lift of ballast was also completed over that length. Goods traffic was run over this section from the 1st June last. Fourteen 8 ft. by 10 ft. huts were erected during the year for employees.

WELLINGTON - TAWA FLAT RAILWAY DEVIATION.

The centre-line proclamation of this deviation was gazetted on the 22nd December, 1924, and the permanent survey, which was commenced in March last, is nearly finished. Tenders were recently called for the necessary stonework along the harbour-front from Kaiwarra Railway-station to the turn-off near Ngahauranga. Until this stone is placed it is practically impossible to make a start on the tunnel into which the line will enter immediately it crosses the Hutt Road.

HUTT VALLEY RAILWAY DUPLICATION.

This line was authorized last session. The survey was commenced on the 30th September, 1924, and the centre-line proclamation gazetted on the 11th December last. Preparatory work, clearing, &c., was commenced on the first mile in March, and the first sod turned by yourself on the 16th April, 1925.

Ten chains of embankment has been formed between 7 m. 10 ch. and 7 m. 20 ch. by removing a portion of the old Petone stop-bank. Bores have been sunk and test piles driven at the site of the proposed bridge over the Hutt River at 8 m. 30 ch., and a commencement made with the erection of a temporary low-level bridge, in order that earthworks may proceed while the permanent bridge is under construction. The necessary plant for vigorously prosecuting the work, including a drag-line excavator, is being procured.

MIDLAND RAILWAY.

Kawatiri Section (59 m. 17 ch. to 63 m. 10 ch.; length, 3 m. 73 ch.).—The earthwork on this section is practically completed. The work undertaken during the year has consisted of formation of banks at subway, 61 m. 50 ch., and construction of road-diversions between 61 m. 50 ch. and 62 m. 40 ch., and between 62 m. 60 ch. and 62 m. 69 ch. The abutments of the 35 ft. plate-girder-span railway-bridge over Sandy Creek at 6 m. 36.6 ch. have been completed, and the span is riveted ready for placing in position. A road-bridge of similar construction and span over the same water-course is complete with the exception of the handrails. The piers are erected of the Hope River Bridge at 62 m. 41.13 ch., and the three spans, each 51 ft. in length, have been placed in position and are now being fastened down. The subway bridge at 61 m. 50 ch., consisting of three spans of plate girders on pile piers, has also been completed. Rails have been laid to 61 m. 10 ch., and the first lift of ballast completed to 60 m. 60 ch.

Murchison Section.—The formation on this section has been almost completed to 64 m. 20 ch., and clearing, &c., to 65 m. 65 ch. A large 10 ft. arched culvert has been completed at 64 m. 22 ch. The permanent-line section has been completed and plans prepared to 73 m., and trial line survey is in hand to 81 m.

Otira - Arthur's Pass Section.—A few items which were uncompleted when this section was handed over to the Railways Department on the 26th May, 1924, have since received attention. The principal ones were an auxiliary intake at the 1,660 ft. level for the pipe-line at Goat Creek; completion of a coal-ramp at Arthur's Pass, and laying of tracks to the ramp, and electric-locomotives shed; and installation at Otira of an engine and pump to return condenser-water to the lower reservoir in case of shortage of supply from Goat Creek.

WESTPORT-INANGAHUA RAILWAY.

Cascade Section (5 m. 70 ch. to 9 m.; length, 3 m. 10 ch.).—The formation on this section had, with the exception of the portion between 8 m. 70 ch. and 8 m. 74 ch., been completed some years ago. The principal work to be done in this direction, therefore, consisted of removing slips and trimming the formation ready for platelaying. The portion of new formation mentioned above will be completed shortly. A stone diversion drive, 90 ft. long, has been completed, and culverts and pipes placed.

No bridges had been erected, and, as several of these are fairly large, it has been necessary to erect staging so that the platelaying might proceed without delay while the actual bridge-work was being carried out.

The bridge at 6 m. 37 ch., consisting of five 20 ft. steel spans on hardwood pile piers and abutments, has been finished. Excavation for the foundations of piers and abutments of the bridge at 7 m. 65 ch. has been completed with the exception of abutment A, where difficulty is being experienced in getting a foundation, and the concreting of the centre pier is in progress. A start has been made with the foundation work for the piers and abutments of the bridge at 8 m. 7 ch., and also for the bridge over Little Cascade Creek at 8 m. 40 ch. Suitable aggregate for the concrete piers of the latter bridge is being hauled to the site. Piers D and F are in hand, and the necessary pumping plant installed to deal with the water.