

*Dargaville Branch Railway.*—The purpose of this branch railway is to give Dargaville and the Kaihu Valley, so far served by an isolated section of railway, a connection with the trunk system at Kirikopuni. Plant off the recently completed Kirikopuni Section of the North Auckland Main Trunk Railway has been moved forward on to the Tangowahine Section of the branch, and earthwork, culverting, and other construction work is in hand over a length of 7 miles.

*Auckland-Westfield Deviation.*—Substantial progress has again been made during the past year on this work. The earthwork, which has been particularly heavy, has progressed so far that it has been possible to lay a service track from Campbell's Point to Westfield, and this track will facilitate transport and the completion of the formation. The construction of the Auckland Waterfront Road by my Department on behalf of the Auckland City Council is being carried out in conjunction with the railway-deviation works, and these two works have fitted in well together, to the advantage of both.

The Purewa Tunnel, nearly 2,000 ft. in length, is now complete. In a double-track tunnel such as this the quantity of work is approximately three times the amount of work in a similar length standard single-track tunnel. The work was successfully carried through to programme.

The extensive bridge programme, including railway-bridges across openings in the embankments across the harbour, and many overhead road-bridges of substantial design, is well advanced, and the work done is of first-class standard.

*East Coast Main Trunk Railway: Waihi Eastwards.*—This important section of railway, as far as Taneatua (distant 59 miles from Tauranga), was complete by the end of June last, with the exception of some minor works between Tauranga and Taneatua.

Messrs. Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Co., completed their contract for the construction of 19 miles of the railway in March last. The work required under the contract, involving heavy railway-construction, was satisfactorily completed, and the section of railway was taken over by the Department at the end of the maintenance period without hitch.

The Department has carried out a substantial programme of works required to complete the balance of the railway between Tahawai and Taneatua, including formation, ballasting, completion of bridges, and station buildings, and at the same time maintained a suitable passenger and goods service. The big increase in goods traffic that took place as soon as through railway traffic was inaugurated affords ample indication of the importance of this railway connection to the whole of the Bay of Plenty district.

*Gisborne-Napier Railway.*—Work on this railway was, as last year, vigorously pushed on between Eskdale, the present terminus of the opened line, and Wairoa. A feature of the work at the southern end is the building of the Waikoau and Matahoura Viaducts. The former, of total length of 490 ft., with a main span of 250 ft., is complete, while at the latter the concrete piers and abutments are complete and the building of the scaffolding for the erection of the main span is in hand.

The associated works at the south end, including earthwork, platelaying, and ballasting, have been pushed energetically on, so as to afford facilities for the transport of steel to the viaduct-sites.

At the northern end, on the Wairoa Section, the Wairoa Bridge, 458 ft. in length, is in hand. A start has been made with the concrete-cylinder piers, and the steel trusses are now on site ready for erection on completion of piers. On this section a very important feature is the tunnelling programme. It is necessary to push on with the driving of these tunnels to give access to three important viaduct-sites, to which the steel, when fabricated, will have to be transported by rail. Work has been carried on in four of these tunnels, in which satisfactory progress has been made.

At the Waikare, Mohaka, and Maungaturanga Viaduct sites preliminary investigations and borings to test foundations have been made with the object of commencing foundation and pier work during the current year.

*Stratford Main Trunk Railway.*—On the eastern end a daily goods and passenger service has been maintained between Okahukura and Ohura, and this