

Lawrence-Roxburgh Railway.—A certain amount of platelaying, ballasting, bridge-erection, and station-building erection had to be completed on the Miller's Flat-Roxburgh Section to complete this railway to its terminus at Roxburgh. This was successfully done, and after goods traffic was run by the Public Works Department for a few months the section was taken over by the Working Railways in April last.

RAILWAYS.

ADDITIONS TO OPEN LINES.

The expenditure out of the Public Works Fund amounted to £233,153 1s. 7d., for the provision of additional rolling-stock, motor-vehicles for road services, improvements and additions to station buildings, extension of sidings, water-services, cranes, weighbridges, capstans, and turntables, train-control lines and instruments, additional dwellings, and purchase of land.

RAILWAYS IMPROVEMENT AUTHORIZATION ACT, 1914.

The expenditure under the Railways Improvement Authorization Act, 1914, amounted to £1,135,393, including the sum of £44,222, proportion of the cost of raising the loan. The works included in this expenditure were new stations and yards, goods-sheds, and terminal facilities at Auckland and Wellington; Addington-Middleton marshalling-yards; duplication, Penrose-Papakura; grade-easements Frankton Junction-Te Kuiti; new lines, Hutt Valley, Auckland-Westfield, and Auckland-Morningside; new locomotive-depot at Greymouth; deviations, Ravensbourne-Burke's, Pelichet Bay, Palmerston North, and Tawa Flat; workshops and locomotive workshops equipment; bridge-strengthening; electrification of railway between Lyttelton and Middleton; signalling, interlocking, telegraph and telephones, safety appliances, and electric-lighting.

IRRIGATION AND WATER-SUPPLY.

In respect to new works, activities have been confined to the pushing-on with the Hawkdun and Arrow schemes, and to the commencement of a small extension to the Teviot River scheme. On the Hawkdun scheme work has mainly consisted of race-construction, and it is anticipated that most of the area will be supplied with water during the coming season. On the Arrow scheme contracts have been let for the supply of pipes and fittings for the long pipe-line and extensive siphons required for the completion of the scheme. It is anticipated that water will be supplied to the district in the 1929-30 season.

The irrigation season just passed was a record dry one, and all streams and rivers were exceptionally low, and in respect to some of the schemes that have no water-storage the supply was for a while below requirements. However, taking the season as a whole, all irrigators were supplied with a full complement of water, and that fact, viewed in the light of the record dry season, is regarded as an indication that the basis of the design of these schemes is sound, in that the greatest possible use of the water available is being made. It, of course, would be possible to restrict the area to be irrigated under any scheme to such an extent that there would be a full supply available at all times in the record dry season. The disadvantage of this would be that in all other seasons there would be water flowing to waste that otherwise could be used to great advantage. The loss under this latter condition would many times outweigh any inconvenience under the former condition.

During the year the existing schemes were maintained in good order, and a supply of water given to all lands requiring it. The total area irrigated under all Government schemes was 32,949 acres, the number of irrigators being 288. The graph appearing below shows the growth of irrigation under the Government schemes during the past nine years.