

Waihou and Ohinemuri Rivers: Important progress on the Lower Waihou River was made with the works of stop-bank construction, clearing of the river-banks, and of improving the river itself by dredging, a complete and efficient mechanical plant being utilized on the work. A fine bridge over the Ohinemuri River at Paeroa has been completed in concrete and steel. Construction work on this scheme is drawing to a conclusion.

Taieri River: The greater part of the stop-bank system on this scheme for protection of the Taieri Plain against floods is now complete, and good progress has also been made with the construction of the pumping-station, the function of this latter being to dewater the plain, if subjected to flooding, and to provide for getting rid of ordinary drainage-water. It is anticipated that in a few months time the main stop-bank and the pumping-station will be complete, leaving only some minor works to complete the scheme.

DEFENCE WORKS.

TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS.

Very satisfactory progress has been made with the development of the mobilization base and training-camp at Waikato Camp, Ngaruawahia. The large Ordnance Store building, Ordnance Office, oil-store, vehicle-shed, loading-bank, forage-store, two high-explosive magazines, two married quarters, extensions to railway-siding, permanent latrines, and septic tanks have been completed and are in use. The S.A.A. magazine is in course of erection. Drainage, roading, and noxious weeds have received attention, and the camp generally maintained. The erection of drying-room, shower-baths, three high-explosive magazines, and laboratory, which are now in hand, together with provision of up-to-date fire-fighting facilities and hutment for hospital, will complete this camp.

Trentham and Burnham Camps have been maintained, and a hut for camp equipment erected at the latter.

New drill-halls at Hamilton and Ponsonby have been erected and are in use.

Numerous additions and improvements to drill-halls, offices, and storerooms throughout the Dominion have been made, and the buildings generally maintained.

The development of Hobsonville Aerodrome for land-planes and sea-planes is now in hand. The engineering survey has been completed, and the plans and estimates for the various works are receiving attention.

This major work, together with the completion of Waikato Camp, prevents much progress being made with the additional drill-hall accommodation required in various localities. A new drill-hall at Petone to serve the populous Hutt Valley is the only work in this category which it is proposed to complete during the present financial year.

MOTOR - VEHICLE LAW.

The most important developments in the law affecting motor-vehicles since the last Statement are (1) the imposition of a Customs duty of 4d. per gallon on motor-spirits, and (2) the issue of the Motor-vehicle Regulations.

The administration of these measures is proceeding smoothly, although the work involved in the system of refunds of the duty on motor-spirits is, as anticipated, fairly considerable. Certain anomalies in connection with the refunds have been discovered, as was almost inevitable, and it is proposed to bring forward amendments to the law during the present session with a view to rectification in certain cases.

The steps taken by the local bodies and the police to enforce the Motor-vehicle Regulations have so far not been very active, but now that motorists have had time to become conversant with the requirements more stringent enforcement may be anticipated shortly.

The report of the Commission set up to investigate the transport position in the Auckland district has now been received by the Government. Although the problems placed before the Commission were, in general, local, it is noteworthy