

Mount Workshops.—150 tons of steel was fabricated into girders for the Auckland–Westfield Railway, and 160 tons for the Waikare Bridge on the Napier–Wairoa line. The Te Puke quarry plant was overhauled, boiler retubed, and 150 elevator buckets made, and the whole transferred to Dunedin. Ten locomotives were overhauled, and nine of these sent to other districts. One locomotive was dismantled. Rolling-stock repairs were attended to, seven passenger-cars, three vans, and 261 wagons being overhauled and repaired.

ROTORUA–TAUPO RAILWAY.

On the completion of the East Coast Main Trunk Railway men and materials were transferred to Rotorua, and a start made on the construction of the Rotorua–Taupo Railway. Erection of hutments commenced on the 10th July, 1928, and construction work was continued until the 18th March, 1929, when instructions were received to close down the works and transfer men and plant to the Gisborne–Wairoa Railway. Two stores were erected—one at Rotorua and one at 7 m. 131 double huts, 219 single huts, and 171 washhouses were transferred from the East Coast line and erected between 3 m. and 8 m. The store at 7 m. and the best of the huts were dismantled and transferred to the Wairoa–Gisborne line after the works closed down.

Hemo Section (0 m. to 3 m. 60 ch.).—Clearing, culverting main-road deviations, and formation were put in hand, but not much has been done.

Ohinewai Section (3 m. 60 ch. to 7 m. 20 ch.).—Work was put in hand over the whole of this section. Service roads were formed, and nine temporary bridges erected to give access to cuttings. Two miles of formation in all have been completed, and 1,161 ft. of culverting laid, varying from 30 in. to 12 in. diameter.

Pareheru Section (7 m. 20 ch. to 8 m. 40 ch.).—The whole of the section was cleared and five cuttings opened up. 229 ft. of culverting was installed.

GISBORNE–NAPIER RAILWAY.

Putorino Section (10 m. 56 ch. to 37 m. 35 ch.; length, 26 m. 59 ch.).—This section adjoins the opened line at Eskdale, and as far as Tutira the section has been open for goods and passenger traffic for the whole of the year, and for several months traffic facilities have been extended to Matahaura Station.

The year's work generally has comprised completion of the earthwork to Putorino; the completion of the Matahaura Viaduct, Sandy Creek Bridge, and subway at 34 m. 10 ch.; the laying of permanent track to Putorino Station; and the ballasting of the whole line up to the Matahaura Viaduct.

The formation is practically complete throughout the section with the exception of cleaning up and widening certain portions, and muck-trains have been employed completing narrow cuttings and filling along narrow banks.

After the completion of the Matahaura Viaduct the cutting on the north side was completed and the material delivered to the embankment on the south side, the permanent-way in the meantime being carried on a trestle over the filling. The cuttings between Matahaura Viaduct and Putorino have also been completed during the year, extra shifts being worked at any point where delay in the progress of the rail-head was likely.

All road-deviations in connection with the railway have been completed and metalled, and the access road to Putorino station-yard has also been completed and is in use.

A grade-elimination proposal for the highway crossing the railway at 32 m. 44 ch. has been prepared, and the work of forming the approaches and erecting the overbridge is in hand.

The fencing on this section is now practically complete, 124 ch. of fencing having been erected during the year.

Five pipe culverts and one 4 ft. and one 6 ft. arched culverts were constructed and a retaining-wall at 20 m. 6 ch. built during the year.

At the Waikoau Viaduct, at 26 m. 60 ch. the footways, inspection platform, and wind-screen have been completed and the whole structure painted throughout.

The Sandy Creek Bridge, at 29 m. 10 ch., consisting of three 60 ft. spans on steel trestles and concrete foundations, was completed and painted.

The construction of the Matahaura Viaduct, at 33 m. 42 ch., consisting of two 60 ft., two 40 ft., and one 250 ft. span on steel trestles, with concrete foundations and concrete abutments, was the most important bridge-work of the year. It stands 208 ft. above the level of the stream and is very similar to the recently erected Waikoau Viaduct, so that the staging and cableway used for the former was dismantled and worked in very satisfactorily for the Matahaura. The erection of the steelwork proceeded without a hitch, and the work throughout was carried out efficiently and in quick time.

The structure has now been painted and is complete except for guard-rails, while the workers' accommodation and most of the equipment has been moved ahead to the Waikare Viaduct, at 38 m. 15 ch.

The concrete-work for subway at 34 m. 10 ch. was completed early in the year, and traffic was carried over a temporary trestle until the steel arrived a few months ago. This has now been erected and the work is practically complete.

Permanent-way has been laid to the end of the section, at 37 m. 35 ch., 4 m. having been laid during the year, and sidings have been completed at Matahaura station and are in hand in Putorino yard.

Platelaying is now proceeding northward to Waikare Viaduct to facilitate delivery of steel to that work. The line is completely ballasted to Tutira Station, at 28 m. 5 ch., and partially to the end of the section, approximately 20,000 cub. yd. of ballast being placed during the year.