

APPENDIX B.

ANNUAL REPORT ON PUBLIC WORKS BY THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF.

The ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF to the Hon. the MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report upon the various works under my control completed and in progress throughout the Dominion during the period 1st July, 1936, to 30th June, 1937.

Table No. 3 (pages 9–11) shows the expenditure on Government Railways in New Zealand up to 31st March, 1937, and also the mileage opened for traffic.

RAILWAYS.

NORTH AUCKLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.—OKAIHAU NORTHWARDS.

Rangiahua Section.—Work was mostly confined to the disposal of surplus stocks, buildings, &c., which were on hand when construction was suspended in 1931. Maintenance work was confined to the repairs of fences where rain had caused formation to slip.

DARGAVILLE BRANCH RAILWAY.

Tauraroa Section.—Work was restricted to the operation of goods and passenger service with the necessary maintenance of the permanent-way. Flood damage was also repaired. The workshop was employed in running repairs as required, and the store in issuing tools and material as required. Traffic handled during the period comprised the following: Passengers, 5,913; lambs, 8,424; sleepers, 7,173; pigs, 14,077; cattle, 2,898; calves, 14,224; timber, 363,127 superficial feet; sleepers, 195; bicycles, 55; horses, 240; wool, 539 bales; fencing-posts, 325; goods, 3,858 tons.

Dargaville Section.—Information relating to the Government's intention to complete this line was received during the year, and, with a view to being ready to commence work at the appropriate time, resurveys of the completed section have been made. The Government's decision to eliminate level-crossings has made it necessary to review the question of the route of the unformed section in and adjacent to Dargaville Borough, and surveys of various alternatives are receiving attention.

Tauraroa Quarry.—This quarry was active for a total of three months, during which time the average output per month was 3,585 cubic yards. The total amount of crushed metal was 10,617 $\frac{3}{4}$ cubic yards, in addition to which 139 cubic yards of spalls were produced. Of the above amounts 3,392 $\frac{1}{2}$ cubic yards were used on roads and highways metalled by the Department, 4,760 cubic yards were used by the Railway Department, 2,345 cubic yards by local bodies, and 312 $\frac{3}{4}$ cubic yards were sold to farmers, &c., in the adjoining district. Maintenance of the quarry plant and buildings was carried out throughout the year, and, in addition, a new crusher was installed to increase the production of fines. Alterations to accommodation to improve the standard have been in progress and will be completed during the current year.

NAPIER-GISBORNE RAILWAY.

Work on this railway has been vigorously prosecuted during the year, the number of men employed at the beginning of the period being 500, increasing to about 1,300 at the end of the period. In addition, considerable plant was in operation at various points on the line. The total expenditure on this railway over the period from 30th June, 1936, to 30th June, 1937, was £442,011.

Details of the work carried out on the various sections of the railway are as follows:—

Napier-Putorino Section (Length 38 m. 62 ch.).—Work on this section consisted of the restoration of the existing track, which had been badly damaged by the 1931 earthquake, and left neglected for five years. This has entailed the clearing of weeds and growth, reballasting and lifting throughout, clearing slips, restoring damage to culverts, retaining-walls, bridges, and buildings.

The existing pit at Bayview was used to obtain beach shingle for ballast, which was transported for use as far north as Kotemaori. A considerable amount of shingle was also used for formation work. The total quantity obtained from the pit was 67,250 cubic yards.

Owing to the effects of the earthquake of February, 1931, the banks were considerably out of shape, and a large amount of lifting and regrading had to be done. The whole section has now been lifted and put into good running-condition.

The earthquake of 1931 did a considerable amount of damage to the bridges and culverts on this section of the line. These have been reconstructed or repaired where necessary.