

TRAVEL FACILITIES FOR SPORTING AND PLEASURE PARTIES.

The special travel facilities provided to meet the requirements of all branches of sport naturally cover a wide range and every endeavour has been made to bring about the position where these facilities will be availed of to the fullest extent. On the occasions of the more important sports fixtures the provision of special trains and cheap fares has encouraged the movement of large numbers of followers between distant points. An example of the potentialities of this business is found in the results achieved on the occasion of the 1936 Ranfurly Shield football match, Otago versus Southland, at Dunedin, when 3,764 passengers were conveyed to Dunedin from Invercargill and intermediate stations. Of this number over three thousand arrived on the morning of the match by ordinary trains augmented by nine special services.

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH.

The following are the principal features connected with the operations of the Way and Works Branch during the year :—

<i>Permanent-way.</i> —The relaying carried out during the year was as follows :—	M. ch.
Main line and branches, 53 lb., 55 lb., 56 lb., and 70 lb. rails, relaid with new 70 lb. rails	37 35
55 lb. rails relaid with new 55 lb. rails	0 1
Main line and branches relaid with second-hand 53 lb., 55 lb., 56 lb., and 70 lb. rails ..	7 07
Total	44 43

A deviation of the main line so as to obviate the use of the Puketeraki Tunnel in the South Island was completed, and traffic diverted on to the new line on 30th December, 1936.

Good progress was made during the year on the work connected with the deviation of the main line between Greatford and Kakariki in the North Island.

A start was made during the year in duplicating the line between Papakura and Horotiu in the North Island. This work, when completed, will provide a double line from Auckland to Frankton Junction, a distance of 85 miles.

Sleepers and Ballast.—During the year 248,654 new sleepers and 174,305 cubic yards of ballast were laid.

Bridges.—The matter of renewing and strengthening several bridges is in hand, the principal works being as follows, the stage of completion being as stated opposite each :—

Whakatu bridge	Foundations completed by contractor.
Waitangi bridge	Foundations being erected by contractor.
Waitangi washout bridge	Bridge reconstructed on new alignment.
Rangitikei bridge	Foundations being erected by contractor.
Rakaia bridge	Foundations being erected by contractor.

Roads and Level Crossings.—A number of level crossings were tar-sealed during the year. Welded rails were laid at a number of crossings in order to eliminate rail joints on the roadways. The Department, in co-operation with the Public Works Department, is eliminating a number of level crossings throughout the Dominion by the provision of subways and overbridges.

Fences and Cattle-stops.—In pursuance of the policy that the Department should undertake the repair and maintenance of boundary fences paralleling the railway-line in order to ensure an adequate standard of safety against straying stock, several fencing gangs have been employed during the year.

Some old cattle-stops have been replaced with surface cattle-stops of the latest design.

Protective Works.—During the year considerable quantities of concrete and stone were placed on the foreshore between Kaiwarra and Petone, also at Oamaru, in order to prevent sea-erosion.

Platforms and Cattle-yards.—Platforms and cattle-yards have been maintained in good order. Several cattle-yards were enlarged and improved, and new loading facilities were provided at different stations.

Buildings.—All buildings have been maintained in satisfactory condition. A coal-shed was shifted from Kaikohe and re-erected at Tahekeroa as a goods-shed. The engine-shed at Hukerenui was shifted to Helensville. The engine-shed at Springfield and the shelter shed at Howe were destroyed by fire during the year. A dwelling at Cust, one at Timaru, a hut at Taumarunui, and a hut at Rangataua were also burnt down. The following structures were damaged by fire during the year : Signal and Electrical Engineer's office at Wellington, engine-shed at Whangarei, weighbridge-shed at Auckland, dwelling at Wiri (washhouse destroyed), dwelling at Turakina, shunter's shed at Christchurch, and the engine-shed at Southbridge.

Dwellings.—All dwellings have been maintained in good order. A considerable number of dwellings have been painted and renovated under contract. A programme for providing hot-water services and porches at all houses where necessary has been commenced.

Wellington New Station and Yard.—The new station at Wellington was opened for business on 19th June, 1937. In order to facilitate the change-over arrangements were made in July, 1936, to bring four platforms at the new station into use and to discontinue the working of trains from the then existing platforms at Lambton. Goods traffic has been worked from and to Wellington via the Tawa Flat deviation since 22nd July, 1935, but coincident with the opening of the new station all traffic for stations north of Johnsonville was transferred to the deviation.