

bring the piles. These, in order to secure durability, are specified to be of jarrah. Meanwhile the contractor is proceeding with the embankments and the framing of the trusses, in readiness for the arrival of the piles.

The value of the work already executed amounts to £9,637 13s., the contract sum being £14,997.

WAIKATO DISTRICT.

GREAT SOUTH ROAD.

(W. H. CLARKE in charge.)

Great South Road.—Contracts No. 1 and 3 have been completed, and turn-outs made in No. 2 contract. Contract No. 1 was for forming and metalling 1 mile 2 chains of road, and replacing four culverts with stone; also, making small cutting to improve grade—of this 1 mile and 2 chains forming and metalling, and 3 culverts, were done during this year.

Contract No. 2.—Bank across the flat from Whangamarino to Meremere, 800 cubic yards of earthwork in turn-outs, completed.

Contract No. 3 was to provide and cart 1,600 yards of broken metal, greatest lead 100 chains. This has been completed; 50 chains of road metalled, and the remainder of the metal carted to convenient places for spreading when required. Two sideling roads have been cut through Taupiri Gorge to avoid hills in the old road, and also to make room for the railway, and the whole road formed throughout. An average number of four men has been employed maintaining the road, over a length of about thirty-eight miles.

About 16 chains of fascining and forming have been completed at Hopu Hopu, and about 10 chains without fascining.

Other works have been executed, as follows, viz.,—Karapera Bridge, one abutment was carried away by a flood, and a 20-foot span was added, and sheet piling driven to protect the new abutment.

Alexandra Bridge.—A new floor has been laid on, the abutments renewed, and a pier, which had given way, backed.

Tamawhere Bridge.—The old bridge was renewed, a service-road and bridge made, two creeks diverted which threatened the road, and a new bridge consisting of six spans of 20 feet each has been built.

The punt at Newcastle has been repaired, and new pulleys, gates, supports for landing stages, and crabs for adjusting them, taken from Rangiriri Bridge, were supplied and fixed.

The works required, and some of which now in hand, are the Great South Road repairs, wharf at Newcastle, bridges over Mangapiko, and earthwork across Moana-tua-tua Swamp.

Surveys.—A survey is at present being made of a road from Raglan to Aotea, on the West Coast, and of another from the Waipa Road to Alexandra. A frontier road has been laid out, and is in process of construction by military labour; and a set of levels was taken across the Paikuku Swamp for the purpose of preparing an estimate of the cost of a road across it.

The roads in this district not otherwise described, are generally in the same state as reported on last year—the Road Boards not having funds to make permanent improvements on them.

BAY OF PLENTY.

(A. C. TURNER in charge.)

Tauranga to Taupo—Sixty-six and a half miles, formed 18 feet wide. In last year's report this road was stated to be open for traffic, and since that time the following improvements have been made:—

Bridges have been tarred and painted, of a total length of 875 lineal feet. Rock excavations to the extent of 940 cubic yards have been executed by Native Contingent at the Ateamuri Bridge approach (Waikato River); and 401 cubic yards in reducing angles on the side cuttings, and 2,564 cubic yards of earth have also been excavated in improving the turns. Culverts, 179 in number, have been built by the bridge carpenter, chiefly in the side cuttings. In the Mangorewa Forest, 36½ chains of metalling have been executed, 15 feet wide; and this work is now proceeding, as well as the removal of stumps, over a great length, to give greater width.

Over the whole length of this road have been executed since its commencement 1,005 lineal feet of truss and plain bridging, 281 culverts, and 21,289 cubic yards of rock removed.

Until very lately the road has been in good order, but since the wet season has commenced, that part of it through the forest has been much cut up with the traffic, and it will be necessary to metal the whole length through the forest, as well as to fell the bush to a greater width to let in the sun and wind. The remaining portion of the road is in very fair order, notwithstanding that the traffic is considerable, mostly of drays with very narrow wheels. The road is maintained by contract, partly by Europeans, and partly by Natives, excepting five miles at Ateamuri, which is maintained by the Native Contingent under Captain Mair.

Tauranga and Kati Kati.—In last year's report this was described as having been opened for nineteen and a half miles to Aongatete, and formed to a width of 6 feet only; the greater part has now been widened 10 feet, a work which was found to be absolutely necessary. Twenty-eight additional culverts have been fixed in the side cuttings, 197 cubic yards of rock excavated, also 22,089 cubic yards of earth from side cuttings, and 11,899 cubic yards from face cuttings and pits to form embankments over the deep swamps. Of this work 6,107 cubic yards were excavated by the Armed Constabulary, who are still at work widening the remainder of the road. The whole of the bridges were tarred and painted 254 lineal feet. A bridge is being built over the Wairoa, in twelve spans, of a total length of 425 feet, which, when complete, will open this line of road for dray traffic nineteen and a half miles.