

HAWERA TO NEW PLYMOUTH (RECONSTRUCTION).

About 13 miles of this line will have to be re-erected on the Mountain Road, and about three miles of bush felled; after these works have been completed faults on this section ought to be greatly reduced.

MOTUEKA TO COLLINGWOOD.

The first section, 33 miles in length—viz., from Motueka to Lower Takaka—was commenced in February last. This line will follow the new bridle-track over the Pikikirunga Range into the Takaka Valley, and thence down the east road to Lower Takaka. Tenders have been accepted for the delivery of the poles, and for clearing 10 miles of bush. From Lower Takaka it is proposed to extend the line by the inland track to Collingwood.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS.

RIVERTON TO BALCLUTHA.

This section, which includes the Bluff, Kingston, Waikaia, Wyndham, Palmerston, and Clyde lines, has worked well, and has not required any special repairs during the year.

BALCLUTHA TO WAITAKI.

Two miles of this line, between North-East Valley and junction of Port Chalmers Road, have been shifted from private property to the main district road. About six miles, from Dunedin to Port Chalmers junction, the poles have been fitted with long arms, each capable of carrying four wires. This was found necessary to give height for running extra wires. The whole of the line has been partially overhauled, and in places strengthened; other improvements and repairs are still required, and are now in progress.

OTAGO HEADS LINE AND PORTOBELLO LINE.

These lines have received a thorough overhaul; new wires have been run at the long spans, and the lines generally put into good working order.

TOKOMAIRIRO TO QUEENSTOWN.

This section, which, previous to last report, had suffered considerable damage from floods and landslips, and had been repaired, has worked well, and required no special repairs since.

CHRISTCHURCH TO HOKITIKA AND GREYMOUTH.

A portion of this line between Rolleston and Darfield was diverted, and from the latter place to Bealey a few alterations have been made, and the line has worked well. From Bealey to Arahura Junction, fully 20 miles of new poles will have to be erected, and the line diverted, early next summer. The rivers on this section are very troublesome, and for some miles the lines can never be really considered safe.

CANTERBURY LINES.

The portion between Christchurch and Waitaki is now receiving a thorough overhaul; all spans will be shortened to 4 chains, angles strengthened, and the line in several places diverted. A sixth wire, for railway work, has been erected between Timaru and Waitaki, and loops run into Winchester and Makikihi railway-stations. The line between Christchurch and Lyttelton is in excellent condition; it has been diverted through the town, thus lightening the south lines and improving the working of private lines. Between Christchurch and Akaroa and Southbridge, the lines have been examined and strengthened; a slight deviation was made at the Southbridge end; and they are now in good order. Upon the Christchurch and Cheviot section, the repairs, which were very extensive, were completed in the early part of the year, and the whole line has worked excellently ever since.

CHEVIOT TO NELSON.

This portion, which on date of last report was undergoing very considerable repairs and reconstruction, has now been put into good working order, and is not likely for some time to cause much trouble in maintenance.

NELSON TO HOKITIKA AND ROSS, INCLUDING BLENHEIM TO TOPHOUSE LINE.

The whole of this section is in good order, and no repairs outside the limits of ordinary maintenance have been required during the past year. On the West Coast, where the line passes through bush, the undergrowth has been cut down and a few slight repairs made.

WELLINGTON TO NEW PLYMOUTH.

This line, having undergone considerable renovation whilst running the fourth wire, Wellington to Wanganui, and the third wire, Wanganui to Hawera, is now in thorough working order. Some further works are still required to be done between Hawera and Inglewood, which, when complete, will render this line free from faults.

WELLINGTON TO NAPIER, AND NAPIER TO GRAHAMSTOWN.

This line, during the running of the fourth wire, had in places between Masterton and Wainui received considerable attention, and had undergone large repairs; but during the heavy floods at the beginning of March a good deal of damage was done to the line, and a portion of it, between Taueru and Tenui, will have to be reconstructed as soon as the weather is sufficiently favourable. The Castle-point line will also require attention. Between Napier and Grahamstown, many of the old poles are showing signs of decay, and will have to be renewed. It is intended, as soon as Native opposition is removed, to erect a line from Katikati to Hamilton *via* Ohinemuri. This will give another wire to Auckland over a tolerably easy and open country, and obviate the exceedingly broken and wooded country between Grahamstown and Katikati.