

£433 12s. 4. This includes cost of inspection, 25 chains new formation, extensive repairs over 4 miles of old formation, 880 lineal feet of new culverts, about 6 miles of tussocking, and the erection of fourteen sign-boards at junctions and other necessary places. The road was in good repair at the beginning of June, but during the winter it will require occasional repairs, especially on the newly-formed parts. The traffic on this road is heavy, and, being mostly bullock-dray traffic, is very severe on the formation. The ford at the Moawhango, though included in one of the completed contracts, could not be made right owing to Native obstruction. This difficulty will have to be arranged before next wool season. About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the road through patches of bush near Turangarere urgently require metalling and a bridge across the Hautapu ought to be erected. When the Hunterville, Turangarere, and Tokaanu-Karioi contracts are completed, this will be the only water not bridged between Taupo and Hunterville.

3. *Hunterville-Turangarere Road*.—This important road-line closely follows the route of the Main Trunk Railway throughout the greater part of its length. The new road commenced at the foot of Vinegar Hill, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Hunterville (the old road *via* Pokiore being abandoned on account of its being $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles longer, and over wetter ground), and extends up the valley of the Rangitikei for 21 miles, crossing the Makohine ravine at $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. From 21m. to 30m. the road follows up the Hautapu River, thence to the junction with the Kuripapanga-Karioi Road at 35m. 47c. (altitude 1,800ft.); it keeps along the watershed between the Moawhanga and Hautapu Rivers. Except about 5 miles, it is all through bush country. Up to 11m. the land is already alienated from the Crown, but from there to the end at 35m. 47c., the road for its entire length runs through the Awarua Block. This track was constructed by the Public Works Department about four years ago, but in the course of my engineering survey I had to make several large deviations in order to obtain easier grades, and for the last $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles the road pursues an entirely new course. I have already had the honour to report fully on this change of route. By doing this a saving was effected of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of actual distance and about 8 miles of construction, besides avoiding unnecessary ascents and descents. Taking all the deviations and trial-lines, I made complete engineering surveys of about 50 miles, at a cost of £435.

Since last November 21 miles have been let by contract for a total sum of £9,138 7s. 6d. Fifteen and a half miles are already completed, and the balance will be done in about six weeks, except certain parts, that will have to be postponed till next summer. The road is of standard coach-road widths, and complete in everything except metal, which is only being done where the material would otherwise be wasted. Mr. J. Barron is Inspector, and, under his supervision, the contractors are doing some very creditable work.

There is not the slightest doubt but that this will some day be a very important arterial road. Plans and specifications are already prepared for the remaining $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond what is at present under construction. In order to get the road open for through traffic by next April, it is most urgently to be desired that tenders should be called for this $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles, at the very latest by the 1st September, as well as for metalling the most necessary parts of the road already done. The most expensive part is already completed. The day-party, under Mr. C. Field till October and since then under Mr. J. Barron, has cost £433; this includes, besides inspection, repairs, slips, &c., five new culverts, 40 chains of new formation, sign-boards erected at all junctions, &c. No return of traffic has been kept, but the amount of packing, &c., done is very large. When this work is completed the wool from 120,000 sheep, besides cattle, &c., will come down this way; there is also likely to be a certain amount of industry in timber, and when the coaches start this ought to be the favourite tourist route between Wellington and Auckland.

4. *Ohakune-Pipiriki Road*.—This road is a continuation of the Kuripapanga-Karioi and Karioi-Ohakune Roads, and is intended in future to be carried westwards to join the Stratford Road system. It is also designed to establish communication between the Murimotu country and the Wanganui River, which in turn will afford, when improved, a fine connection with Wanganui.

From Pipiriki the road runs westerly for 8 miles over heavily-timbered flats, thence across the Mangaetoroa Valley, draining into the Mangawhero; at 13m., from Ohakune the Wanganui watershed is reached; thence for 5 miles the road runs along the basin of the Mangoihi, a tributary of the Wanganui; finally reaching Pipiriki at 25m. by a long descent down the Kaukore Creek. The altitude of Ohakune is 1,970ft., while that of Pipiriki is only 1,100ft. This road passes through the Rangataua Block (Government) for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and through the Atuahae Block (Government) for about 6 miles; branch roads have already been laid off which are intended to tap the Waimarino country northwards, and to join Field's Track to the south. There is a considerable area of good grazing land throughout the extent of this road, but for the first 8 miles or so from Ohakune the forest is especially heavy, and, from its great altitude as well as from its proximity to the snows of Ruapehu, the cold in winter is too severe to allow of sufficient grass for stock. The timber for 15 miles from Pipiriki is almost worthless, but near Ohakune there is abundance of excellent milling material. The road is constructed dray-road-width in patches for about 2 miles from Pipiriki, the rest of the distance there is a 6ft. trenching on sidelings with 1 chain wide of clearing throughout.

The flood which devastated the whole of the Wanganui basin in February caused a great part of the Kaukore Creek sideling to slip; two bridges and many culverts were also washed away; to effect all the repairs necessary to re-establish through traffic, cost nearly £200. Much of the corduroying on the flats is also in a bad state. D. Nicoll, who had been overseer on this road for over three years, was quite unable to keep the road in even fair order. He has resigned and been succeeded by C. Field. The cost of the day-party for the year ending 30th June has been £461 14s. The February slips caused a great increase in the total sum above what was anticipated.