

length of twelve miles of formation is almost completed. The vote asked for this year will provide for the steady prosecution of the work throughout the year, and a vote for a moderate sum next year will complete this section of the line.

PUTARURU—ROTORUA.

The Kaponga Contract, which, as mentioned in my Statement last year, brings this line to a point about $13\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Rotorua Township, was duly completed in December last, and the Tarukenga Contract, which carries the line $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles further towards Rotorua, was let in January. The works are being vigorously pushed on, and will probably be completed well before this time next year.

As there will only be a distance of about 9 miles between the end of the completed railway and the Township of Rotorua when this contract is finished, and as the bulk of the formation-work of about 6 miles of the Rotorua end of this distance has already been completed, as explained in last year's Statement, the Government considers that the completion of the railway is a work of the first importance, and we therefore propose to take a vote this year sufficient to complete it accordingly. A vote of £48,000 has therefore been provided, but only £35,000 of the amount will be required for actual expenditure within the present financial year.

NORTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.

At the northern end of this railway the Mokau Section, which is the connecting link between the completed railway from Auckland and the Poro-o-tarao tunnel (which has been completed for some time) has been put in hand. The work has all been done under the co-operative system, and has progressed very satisfactorily. The vote provided for this year is for the purpose of continuing the work on this section.

At the southern end of the line the works on the Mangaonoho Section—the contract for which was let in December, 1890—have progressed fairly satisfactorily, and the Makohine and Pawhakarua Sections have been put in hand on the co-operative principle.

EKETAHUNA—WOODYVILLE.

In accordance with the proposals made last year the construction of this railway has been commenced at both ends, the work being done on the co-operative principle, but only a comparatively small sum was expended during the late financial year. The works are still progressing slowly, but will be pushed on more vigorously if the vote which has now been placed on the estimates for the work is passed. A total authorisation of £25,000 is asked for, of which £15,000 is proposed to be voted for actual expenditure within the year.

WELLINGTON—EKETAHUNA (TE ARO EXTENSION).

The extension of the Wellington-Napier Railway to Te Aro, authorised by "The Railways Authorisation and Management Act, 1891," has been put in hand during the year, and the formation-works are now nearly completed. The laying of the permanent-way, which forms part of the present contract, will be proceeded with immediately, and tenders for the necessary station-buildings will be invited at an early date.

Practically, no part of last year's vote was expended within the late financial year, and a vote for the whole cost of the work, including provision for a goods-station of moderate size, is therefore included in this year's estimates.

BLENHEIM—AWATERE.

The Utawai Contract of this railway has been finished during the year. A contract called the Omaka Contract has also been let, providing for the laying of the permanent-way for a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the southward of Blenheim, and is now nearly completed. The vote provided for this railway this year is to cover the liabilities existing on the 31st March last, and any minor contingencies that may arise in bringing the works to completion.