

WESTPORT—NGAKAWAU—MOKIHINUI.

The extension of the Westport—Ngakawau Railway to Mokihinui is now practically completed, and the line will shortly be available for traffic. The formation-works, including large concrete retaining-walls and culverts, were carried out under the co-operative system, but the Ngakawau and Patten's Bridges Contracts and the platelaying were let in the ordinary way by public tender.

The line is 7 miles 12 chains in length, and has cost £28,696 up to the 31st August last, including £5,669 for permanent-way materials. The whole of the funds have been found by the Westport Harbour Board, as provided by "The Westport—Ngakawau Railway Extension Act, 1890."

GREYMOUTH—HOKITIKA.

The whole of the formation-works on this railway are practically completed, and the balance of the bridge-work is now in hand, a great deal of the work having been done on the co-operative principle. The platelaying, station buildings, and sundry minor finishing works are all that remain to be undertaken, and these works are provided for in the amount which the House is asked to authorise this year. The total amount expended upon this railway up to the 31st March last was £117,748, of which amount £17,137 was expended during the late financial year, and liabilities to the amount of £7,850 existed at its close.

OTAGO CENTRAL.

At the time that I made my Public Works Statement last year the works on this railway were almost entirely suspended, owing to the loan allocation for the same being exhausted, the line being then open to Middlemarch, and the rails laid to a distance of 2 miles beyond that point. As quickly as possible after our proposals of last year were approved by Parliament the work of construction was resumed, and the formation of the line has now progressed to within a short distance of Hyde, 16 miles from Middlemarch, the work being done on the co-operative principle.

The Government regards this line as the most important railway work now under construction in the Middle Island, and therefore proposes to push on with it vigorously. An authorisation of a substantial sum—namely, £36,000—is asked for accordingly, of which amount £30,000 will be required for expenditure within the current financial year. The authorisation asked for will complete the formation- and bridge-works between Middlemarch and Hyde, and carry the platelaying as far as it will be practicable to take it this year.

As soon as the construction of the bridges between Middlemarch and Hyde has progressed sufficiently to admit of it, the work of laying the rails between these two places will be put in hand and energetically proceeded with.

CATLIN'S RIVER RAILWAY.

The works on the Catlin's Section of this railway (a short section only half a mile in length, but including a tunnel $12\frac{1}{4}$ chains long), are now on the verge of completion. A considerable amount of work was also done under the co-operative principle during the early part of the financial year on a section of the line beyond the tunnel contract, but the work had to be discontinued or the vote for the railway would have been exceeded. The total amount expended on the line during last year was £17,658, and liabilities to the amount of £4,721 existed at the close of the year. The vote proposed for this year is to cover these liabilities, and to provide for the resumption of the works on the section beyond the tunnel towards the end of the financial year. In the further extension of this railway it is intended to follow the "direct" route already surveyed, as this route is the shortest, the cheapest, and the best.

SEAWARD BUSH RAILWAY

Shortly after our public-works proposals of last session were agreed to, the Waituna Section of this line was put in hand on the co-operative principle. The