

24,100 blocks ready, and the work of lining the tunnel will be commenced immediately from the southern end. The rails have been laid but not ballasted from 22 miles 40 chains to 23 miles 48 chains, and preparations are being made to continue the platelaying and have the line ballasted up about 24 miles 37 chains for the conveyance of materials for the Makohine Viaduct. The line has been fenced on both sides from 22 miles 40 chains to 24 miles, 24 miles 67 chains to 25 miles 65 chains, and 26 miles 20 chains to 30 miles 70 chains, and partly on both sides from 31 miles 15 chains to 32 miles—a total length on both sides of about 7 miles 70 chains.

*Mangaweka Section (being a continuation of the Makohine Section from 33 miles 40 chains).*—The work of bushfelling and clearing on this section was begun in May last, and is in progress and well advanced from the commencement of the section at 33 miles 40 chains to 40 miles 40 chains—a length of 7 miles.

*Makohine Viaduct.*—Tenders were invited and received for this work, but they were considered too high and all declined by your direction. Preparations are now being made to have the viaduct erected on the co-operative principle.

A survey of a deviation of the line near Mangaweka was made during the year with the object of improving the permanent location of the railway at this place.

A contract has been entered into for completing the land-plans survey of the Makohine Section, and the work will probably be done by the end of August next.

An average number of ninety-six men were employed on the railway-works during the year, and 140 men are now at work. All the works except the surveys are being carried out on the co-operative principle.

#### WELLINGTON-WOODVILLE RAILWAY.

*Eketahuna-Woodville Section (26 miles 55 chains in length).*—The whole of the formation-works have been completed, except some bridging and about 10½ chains of bridge-approaches; and the line has been fenced on both sides for a length of 16½ miles. The line was opened for traffic to Newman Station (about two miles from Eketahuna) on 16th March last, and the platelaying and ballasting were completed for a further distance of about 2½ miles to the Mangatainoka River. The contract for the erection of the Mangatainoka Bridge was completed in May last, and the laying of the permanent-way beyond it is now in progress.

The bridging of five minor streams is in hand, one of the bridges being completed, and the materials for the others are being obtained. These bridges comprise in the aggregate ten 11ft., eighteen 13ft., and four 40ft. spans.

The station-buildings at Newman are in course of erection, and preparations are being made for putting in hand the buildings at the other stations on the line.

An average of 113 men were employed during the year, and forty-six men are now at work. The whole of the works on this section except the ironwork for the Makakahi Bridge, and the construction and erection of the Mangatainoka Bridge, have been carried out on the co-operative principle.

*Mangahao Reserve Timber-cutting Contract.*—This is a contract for the supply and delivery at Scarborough Station of 20,000 sleepers and 288,000 superficial feet of bridge and other timber from the totara timber reserve at Mangahao. About 12,000 sleepers and 184,000ft. of timber have been delivered, and the delivery of the remainder is in progress.

*Mangaoni Reserve Timber-cutting Contract.*—This is a contract for the supply and delivery at the railway-line of 40,000 sleepers and 70,000ft. of other timber from the totara timber reserve at Mangaone. About 24,000 sleepers and most of the other timber have been delivered, and the supply of the balance is progressing.

#### GREYMOUTH-HOKITIKA RAILWAY.

As previously reported, the permanent-way of this railway was opened for public traffic in December, 1893, some of the station and other works being still incomplete. The following works have been in hand and completed during the year, viz.: At Hokitika Station, the asphaltting of passenger-platform, erection of verandah over street frontage of station building, erection of stationmaster's house, and relaying the curve near Gibson's Quay. At Kumara, stationmaster's house erected and metalling of approach road to station completed. At Cameron's and Waimea Stations, four linemen's cottages erected; and flag-stations at Elmer's Lane, Karoro, Nelson Creek, Cameron's, Teremakau, Chesterfield, Stafford, Maori Pa, Arahura, and Ho Ho completed. A water-tank and stand for water-supply for locomotives were also erected at Waimea. All the works on this line are now completed.

#### MIDLAND RAILWAY.

*Otira Section.*—After the Midland Railway was taken possession of in May, 1895, a portion of the line between Jackson's and Kelly's Creek was examined, the survey lines cleared, and plans and specifications prepared with the view of carrying on the construction of the railway. Accordingly, a commencement was made with the work of construction on 16th September last, and further work was put in hand in January and June, 1896, the total length now under construction being 5 miles 38 chains, and the works are making good progress on the whole. Fourteen parties have been at work, four of which have finished their contracts. An average number of ninety-nine men were employed since the commencement of the work, and there are 103 men now employed. Some small buildings have also been erected on this section for use of officers, stores, smithy, &c. The whole of the works are being carried out on the co-operative principle.

*Belgrove Section.*—Preparatory works were put in hand in November last, clearing out water-tables, widening cuttings and banks, forming a road into the ballast pit at Wai-iti River, and getting the formation ready for platelaying; and the work of platelaying and ballasting was commenced on 18th March. The platelaying has been finished to Spooner's Range Station, at 26 miles 65 chains