

(a length of about $5\frac{1}{4}$ miles), and the ballasting finished for a length of 2 miles, the remainder of the distance being partially ballasted. The earthworks on the Motupiko Section, which carries the line to the Motueka River, are being put in hand. All the works are being carried out on the co-operative principle, and forty men are employed.

OTAGO CENTRAL RAILWAY.

Hyde-Kyeburn Section (56 miles 20 chains to 73 miles 20 chains ; 17 miles in length).—The formation-works throughout are well advanced and should be practically completed in a few months hence. The excavation and lining of the tunnel (165 yards long) were finished in November last, and the tunnel fronts by the end of February. The timber and ironwork for the Coal Creek (56 miles 35 chains), Hyde Creek (57 miles 10 chains), Price's Creek (59 miles 63 chains), and Capburn (61 miles 10 chains) Bridges are on the ground, and the work of erecting the bridges is proceeding. A contract for the erection of the Taieri Bridge was let in January last, but work on the ground has not commenced yet; amount of contract, £7,716. On the average 200 men were employed during the year, and there are 180 men now at work. All the works are being carried out on the co-operative principle, except the Taieri Bridge and the manufacture of iron girders for some of the smaller bridges, which was done by ordinary contract.

CATLIN'S RIVER RAILWAY.

Section from 13 miles 43 chains to 18 miles 22 chains ; 4 miles 59 chains in length.—The portion of this section from the commencement (at 13 miles 43 chains) to the Owaka River (at 17 miles 11 chains), a length of 3 miles 48 chains, was completed and opened for public traffic on 16th December, 1895; and the remaining portion to the terminus at Owaka Station (18 miles 22 chains), a length of 1 mile 11 chains, was opened for traffic on the 22nd ultimo. The latter portion was opened for the convenience of the public, the station buildings at Owaka being still incomplete. The timber for these buildings was obtained by tender, and their erection is now in progress under the co-operative system. All the other works on this line were also carried out on that principle. The average number of men employed during the year was forty-seven, and twenty men are now at work.

SEAWARD BUSH RAILWAY.

Tiitiroa Section (18 miles to 23 miles 26 chains).—The works on this section consist of earthwork, bridging, flood-openings, bridge over the Mataura River, and fencing. The earthwork is nearly completed from 18 miles to 22 miles 6 chains. There are five flood-openings in hand up to the Mataura Bridge, consisting altogether of fifty-two 20ft. spans. Two of these bridges are completed, a third is in progress, and the piles and other timber for the remainder are on the ground. The line has been fenced on both sides from 20 miles 22 chains to 21 miles, and from 21 miles 23 chains to 22 miles 36 chains. A contract for the manufacture and erection of the bridge over the Mataura River was let to Messrs. J. and A. Anderson on the 16th March, 1895. A large portion of the ironwork has been manufactured, and the contractors are now preparing to get the material on to the site, and commence the erection of the bridge. All the works on the line, with the exception of this bridge, are being carried out on the co-operative system. An average of sixty-two men were employed during the year, and sixty men are now at work.

FOREST HILL TRAMWAY.

The extension of this tramway has been surveyed from the terminus of the working portion, at 9 miles 76 chains, to 12 miles 70 chains, on the east side of the Makarewa River; and the formation-works have been completed up to 11 miles 19 chains, with the exception of a flood-opening of four 20ft. spans at 10 miles 45 chains, which is not commenced yet. The combined road- and tramway-bridge over the Makarewa River was completed in March last. Fourteen men are employed, and all the works except the bridge, which was let by contract, are being carried out on the co-operative principle.

SURVEYS OF NEW LINES.

Railway Deviation, Otakuhu.—A trial survey of a proposed deviation of the Auckland-Waikato line through the Otakuhu Township, was made in August last.

North Island Main Trunk Railway, Central Route.—All trial-surveys have been executed between Turangarere (at 61 miles 40 chains) and Makatote River (about 99 miles 10 chains), and the plan, longitudinal section and cross-sections of same have been plotted and the position of the permanent line determined up to 81 miles. The line has also been explored up to 101 miles 55 chains.

Blenheim-Awatere Railway.—A reconnaissance survey of the Lower Awatere River was made in April last, with the view of ascertaining the best site or sites for erecting a combined road and railway-bridge or two separate bridges, and separate sites were located.

Waipahi-Heriot Burn Railway extension to Roxburgh.—This survey commences at the end of the constructed line about $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles beyond Heriot. The work was put in hand in January last, and the line has been permanently located for a length of about 11 miles. The survey will probably be completed in about three months hence.

Inch Valley to Lime Quarry Railway.—This survey was put in hand with the view of ascertaining the cost of constructing a railway for the conveyance of lime from a Government property, a short distance to the eastward from the Palmerston-Waihemo line. The line commences near Inch Valley Station on the latter railway, and is about 2 miles 27 chains long. The survey has been completed, and the plans and estimates are nearly ready.

SLEEPERS.

Auckland.—13,000 puriri sleepers were taken over from the Railway Department for the Mokau Section of the North Island Main Trunk Railway, and about 1,800 totara sleepers were