

The following is a brief review of the works carried out during the year:—

DREDGES AND EXCAVATORS.

The earth-moving plant on the Hauraki Plains was increased during the year by the transfer of *No. 31 Ruston Bucyrus Excavator* from Rangitaiki in October. Three drag-line excavators have been continuously employed throughout the year, and one Priestman dredge and one mechanical shovel intermittently.

No. 15 Bucyrus Excavator completed the construction of the stop-bank along the Kaihere Road between the Piako River and Kaihere Stream Bridge and, after dredging the landing-bays of the Kaihere Ferry and some flood-gate outlets, was overhauled at Kerepehi Depot. In September the machine was moved by pontoon to Waitakaruru, and after dredging the mouth of the Waitakaruru Stream was again moved by pontoon to Pipiroa, and on the 12th November commenced raising the stop-banks on the left bank of the Piako River. Working down-stream from Marshall's Flood-gate, 64 chains of stop-bank reconstruction had been completed by the end of March. In 190 working-days this plant excavated 28,759 cubic yards of material at unit cost of 1s. 6d. About half this quantity was under-water excavation carried out with machine afloat and operating a grab.

No. 16 Bucyrus Excavator has been working on the Maukoro Canal throughout the year. It completed the eastern side road embankment between 3 miles and 3 miles 50 chains and 3 miles 75 chains and 4 miles 25 chains, and widened and deepened the canal between 3 miles 50 chains and 3 miles 75 chains. Using a half-cubic-yard bucket on 50 ft. boom this machine handled 46,179 cubic yards of material in 226 working-days at unit cost of 10-8d.

No. 29 Light Bay City Excavator was at the end of the previous financial year under overhaul at the Kerepehi Depot. The repairs were completed and the machine was shipped to Torehape Landing and travelled by road to Waitakaruru, and on the 23rd April commenced deepening the road drain on the eastern side of the Maukoro Canal between Hopai Road and the Railway Canal. During the period July to December the machine was employed deepening the Maukoro Canal between 3 miles 50 chains and 3 miles 75 chains. Then after constructing a new spillway from the dam in the Maukoro Canal it crossed the dam and widened and deepened the road drain on the western side of the canal for a distance of 62 chains southwards from Gubbs Outlet. The output of this plant for 202 working-days was 41,654 cubic yards and the unit cost was 6d. per cubic yard.

No. 31 Ruston Bucyrus Excavator arrived by rail at Kopu from Rangitaiki in October. This is a Diesel-engined 17-ton caterpillar-mounted machine operating a half-yard drag-line bucket on a 40 ft. boom. The plant commenced work at Orongo enlarging the stop-bank on the Waihou River for a distance of 38 chains between the old Ferry Landing and the Hauraki Bridge. The machine was then moved by road to the Piako River mouth and has repaired 82 chains of weak stop-bank around the Maioro Block that had been damaged by tidal overflow. Working ninety-nine days in the Hauraki Plains district, this machine excavated and placed in stop-banks 24,819 cubic yards of material at cost of 7-6d. per cubic yard, including moving expenses.

No. 28 Bay City Shovel and Drag-line Excavator.—This machine was employed loading ballast trucks in the Torehape Pit during the period May to November, when 12,619 cubic yards of clay ballast was loaded into dump trucks for delivery by tramway on to peat roads in the Pouarua Area. Operating with drag-line equipment, the machine commenced reconditioning the large drain on the north side of the Torehape Road. Working westwards from the Maukoro Canal, 9,814 cubic yards of material was excavated from 111 chains of drain. Loading ballast trucks cost 7d. per cubic yard and drain excavation 6-8d.

No. 11 Priestman Dredge has been used for removing willows from the banks of the Piako River. Working down-stream from the Waitoa Stream junction, a total distance of 9 miles 27 chains of river has been cleared of snags and bank willows by the dredge, which reached the 16 mile 48 chains peg on the 31st March, 1942. Near the old Mangawhero Landing at the 17-mile peg the river channel was deepened for a distance of 21 chains. This dredge was in commission for eight months of the year (May to October and February and March), and during this time cleared of willows 2 miles 27 chains of river and removed 4,800 cubic yards of material in deepening the channel.

TOREHAPE AND WAITAKARURU DISTRICT.

Activities in this district have been chiefly connected with Maukoro Canal construction, road-formation, and land-development.

The Maukoro Canal, which extends inland for seven miles from the Hauraki Gulf, has been under construction for several years. It collects and discharges directly into the sea the flow from the hill-fed streams of the Pataroa Range that originally spread over 25,000 acres of flat land on the western side of the Piako River. Subsidence of the land through which this canal is being constructed of 1 ft. to 20 ft. is to be expected, and work on the canal must be carried out so that this subsidence and consolidation of the land is brought about gradually.

The roadwork comprised spreading 1,735 cubic yards of metal on the Maukoro Canal Road (eastern side), where the metal surface is being extended a distance of 74 chains along the frontage of Sections 40, 42, 44, and 46 and part 48, Block IV, Piako Survey District. Also the spreading of 12,619 cubic yards of clay ballast along the peat sub-grade of Torehape Road. The clay was hauled an average distance of five miles by light railway.

Land-development work carried out on the Pouarua Block included the excavation by manual labour of 16,707 cubic yards of material in the reconstruction of 12 miles 66 chains of drain, cleaning 53 miles 33 chains of drains, erecting 31 miles 61 chains of fence, clearing 526 acres, and sowing 813 acres of land.