

The constructed roads, with the exception of the Napier-Wairoa, twenty-one miles, are generally in forest country, which is felled 1 chain wide on the line of road. There have been 264 contracts prepared and executed, and 1,531 vouchers have been passed through, covering an expenditure of £40,157 4s.

One Road Surveyor (Mr. Marshall), three Road Inspectors, and seven Road Overseers have been permanently employed, and the staff surveyors have generally inspected any works convenient to their camps.

The District Surveyor at Gisborne has generally had charge of the works in the Poverty Bay portion of the district.

ERIC C. GOLD SMITH, Chief Surveyor.

#### TARANAKI.

*Mimi-Mokau.*—This name now distinguishes the main road between Urenui and Mokau River, from where it leaves the metal at North Road to Mokau Ferry. During the past year 5 miles 78 chains of engineering survey, and plans, has been made; 11 miles 72 chains of dray-road formed; 6 miles 63 chains of large drains cut; 93 chains of bushfelling, stumping, and clearing done; three bridges, totalling 174 lineal feet, erected; ninety-eight culverts of various sizes, from 1 ft. to 4 ft. square inside, and in total length 3,241 ft., made and fixed; 5 chains has been sanded in lieu of metal; 1,110 cubic yards of papa-rock has been excavated and removed in improving curves at sharp points on Mount Messenger ridge; and 3,320 cubic yards of slips removed from off the road. Twenty-five miles of road has been maintained and improved. The bridge is still in course of construction over Kuatahi Creek, but will be completed in April, and a bridge is urgently needed over Tongaporutu River. With these exceptions the road is now open for dray or coach traffic during the summer months from New Plymouth to Mokau, fifty-eight miles. A small party of surfacemen is kept on the twenty-five miles under maintenance, for removing slips, dressing up the road, and putting in extra culverts for escape of storm-water. As this part of the road is a portion of the future coach-road between railway at Waitara and at Te Kuiti, I think the whole length of over a hundred miles should be distinguished by one name. I would suggest the whole be named "Mokau Road."

*Putiki.*—This is a connecting road between Mimi-Mokau Road and Okau Improved-farm Settlement. Work for the year consisted of 30 chains engineering survey; 22 chains dray-road formation; two culverts, 50 ft. total length; erection of dray-bridge of 50 ft. span, total length 55 ft., over Mangaonga Stream; cutting 6 chains of large drain; removal of 795 cubic yards of slips; and maintenance of 2 miles 19 chains of road. This road will be the main outlet for Okau Improved-farm Settlement and Mangatawa Block on one side, and Greenlands Improved-farm Settlement with part of Putiki Block on the other side, Okau Road and Tooi Road branching off from Putiki Road at Putiki clearing.

*Moanatairi Special Settlement.*—The felling, stumping, and clearing of 2 miles 78 chains of Tooi Road leading to Greenlands Improved-farm Settlement, also the formation of 7 chains of dray-road and 36 chains of bridle-road, have been charged to this item. The maintenance of six miles of pack-track leading to above settlement has also been charged.

*Uruti Road.*—This vote is being granted to Clifton County Council for the continuance of dray-road formation from Mimi-Mokau Road to settlement lands in Block II., Upper Waitara. The settlers interested are raising a loan to supplement the vote, and the work will shortly be proceeded with.

*Moki Junction.*—A dray-bridge 64 ft. long, 40 ft. main span, is being erected over Uruti Stream at the entrance to settlement in Block II., Upper Waitara, and will be completed in April. The timber and ironwork could not be carted to site of bridge before January, 1900, in consequence of bad state of road, or the bridge would have been erected at an earlier date.

*Moki Road.*—Where this road branches off from Uruti Road a bridge 72 ft. long has been erected over Uruti Stream, the main span of bridge (44 ft.) being of iron girders. Bridge consists of three spans, and was erected on driven piles. 1 mile 24 chains of road was felled, stumped, and cleared; 13 chains of dray-road and 75 chains of bridle-road constructed; 9 chains of drains cut; and 1 mile of road maintained. Work was suspended on the road in January last, and has not been resumed; but we hope soon again to start the work, not only from the Uruti end, to open up lands being surveyed in Waitara, Moki, and other valleys, but also at Ohura Road end, to give access to lands in Waingarara and Moanatairi districts. This road, being a main arterial one, and the outlet for a large extent of country, should be constructed as soon as possible.

*Mangatawa.*—This block was surveyed for sale about two years since, but has not yet been offered. A road in continuation of Okau Road will be needed to give access to the block, and should be started as soon as possible. Provision is being made on the estimates for roading the block.

*Mimi-Mangaroa (Metalling), £1 for £1.*—Under control of Clifton County Council, who last year let a contract for metalling one mile of Mimi-Mokau Road, of which contract 35 chains was completed on the 31st March, 1899. During the past year a further length of 39 chains has been laid, the metal or gravel being put on 12 ft. wide by 12 in. deep. Specifications for the work had to be approved and the final testing and inspection made by this department.

*Otaraoa Road.*—Arrangements were made for expending this vote in continuing the dray-road formation of Tikorangi-Tarata Road from the Tikorangi end. The Clifton County Council, however, wished to make some deviations from present line of road, and the expenditure of the vote had to be deferred until these deviations were laid off. Settlers at Tarata end subsequently claimed that the money should be expended in opening up a portion of Otaraoa Road near Tarata. It is now intended to do this latter work.