

*Waimarino Section, part of (10½ m. to 96 m.; length, 8 miles).*—A start has been made with the bush-work on this section.

The service-road has been completed up to the Makatote Stream and puniced up to the viaduct-site. The road has also been continued beyond the Makatote to Manganui-a-te-ao bridge, but is not yet complete, and the new bridge over the Makatote is not begun.

*Makatote Viaduct.*—The contractors have erected a workshop at the viaduct-site, and have now an excellent plant in working-order for the manufacture of the steelwork, a start at which has been made. Some work has been done on the foundation-excavations.

The contract for the manufacture of small steel bridges between Taumarunui and Makatote has been finished.

A contract for constructing two large locomotives for hauling ballast has been nearly completed. One locomotive is in use at the north end, and the other is being sent to the south end of the line. Messrs. A. and G. Price, of the Thames, were the contractors.

A large quantity of timber has been supplied to the line from the Public Works Sawmill at Kakahi, and a considerable quantity has been sold.

A considerable goods traffic has been carried over the completed portion of the line from Taumarunui southwards.

#### Central.

*Central Section (7½ m. to 96 m., Marton chainage; length, 22 miles).*—A start was made with the works on this section in November last. The bush-work has been completed from Waione to 91½ m., a length of about 11½ miles, and over the remaining 5 miles good progress has been made with the bush-work. The earthworks have been begun at various places from 74 m. to 89 m., but want of plant has prevented much being done. A service-road has been formed from Ohakune for a length of 6½ miles, and about one-third of this has been metalled. The formation and metalling of about 7½ miles of road from Manganui-a-te-ao is also in hand, and the formation of branch service-roads to give access to the works at various points is also in progress. The bridges on the road from Pipiriki to Waiouru have been strengthened to carry traction-engines; the Pipiriki Road has been widened at the Dress Circle, and some metalling has been done. The summer has been too wet to allow of the traction-engines provided for haulage being used to any advantage; the roads have been too bad to allow of much plant being got on to the ground, and very little cement. Using Pipiriki as a base, about 60 miles of main or service-road has to be kept in good order to enable full supplies of material being kept up. Latterly there has been difficulty in getting in sufficient food.

#### South End.

*Paengaroa Section (40 m. 40 ch. to 50 m. 70 ch.).*—All the earthworks on the last portion of this section from 45 m. onwards have been finished. The Mataroa tunnel is completed, and the Mataroa Station and its approach-roads, and the rails have been laid and the line ballasted. A contract is in progress for the erection of the Mataroa Station buildings, and is well advanced.

*Turangarere Section (50 m. 70 ch. to 61 m. 40 ch.; length, 10 miles 50 chains).*—Great efforts were made to complete the heavy cuttings on this section: double shifts were worked for a long period, and three shifts on one cutting for a short time. The earthworks are now for the most part finished, and can be completed in advance of the platelaying and ballasting. The bridge over the Hautupu River at 51 m. 33 ch. has been finished, and the rails are now laid to about 54½ m., and the ballasting is done up to 51½ m. The tunnel at 58 m. is approaching completion. The piers for the bridge over the Hautupu at 59 m. 17 ch. are complete, and the plate-girders will be put in place as soon as the rails reach the bridge-site. It is hoped to have the rails laid into Turangarere Station in a short time, when they will be continued beyond to 62 m. 40 ch. as quickly as possible, and a depot formed to forward materials and stores.

*Waiouru Section (61 m. 40 ch. to 69 m.; length, 7 miles 40 chains).*—A considerable amount of earthwork has been done on this section, and some progress has been made with the bridges; but this part of the work has been delayed by the bad condition of the roads during the summer.

*Murimutu Section, part of (69 m. to 7½ m.; length, 5 miles).*—Some work has been done on culverts, and some of the large cuttings have been started.

A large amount of work has been done in keeping the service-road from rail-head to Turangarere and the main road from there to Waiouru open for light cart traffic during the past few months.

The Makohine workshops started work on the 14th May last to manufacture the steel and iron work for the bridges and viaducts from 87 m. to 90 m., and good progress has so far been made. All the material is now under order for these structures.

A contract has been let to Messrs. J. and A. Anderson for the erection of the steel superstructure of the Mangaturuturu and Manganui-a-te-ao bridges, and some smaller ones.

The rail-heads are now about 61½ miles apart, but during the coming year this distance should be very materially reduced. Work is now in progress over the whole length of the line between rail-heads.

The past year has been an exceptionally unfavourable one, and the construction of the line has been materially hindered by wet weather preventing men working to advantage; and delay has been caused further on the central and southern divisions by the almost continuously unpracticable state of the roads. This has prevented materials being got to the works, and has delayed starting culverts and bridge-piers, and limited the carriage of the plant necessary for starting all the earthworks.

#### STRATFORD—WHANGAMOMONA.

*Huiroa Section (11 m. 18 ch. to 15 m. 68 ch.; length, 4 miles 50 chains).*—The formation-works have been finished on the first 2¾ miles, and the heavier works on the remainder of the section