

## WAIHOU AND OHINEMURI RIVERS IMPROVEMENT.

Detail works in accordance with the authorized scheme for the improvement of these two rivers and of the adjacent land have been vigorously pushed on. The destruction of growing willows along the banks of the Waihou and Komata tributary and the removal of boughs and snags from the streams has proceeded over a distance of eight miles on either bank. A contract, let in January, 1912, for straightening the courses of the Waihou and Ohinemuri rivers by means of the Ngararahi and Koutou cuts, designed to lessen the risk of damage by overflow, is approaching completion. Another contract—for constructing a stop-bank along the right bank of the Ohinemuri alongside the town of Paeroa—was let in February last, and the contractor is making fair progress with his work. A site for a flood-gate on Cooper's Creek near its confluence with the Ohinemuri River has been selected, and the construction of the gate is in hand. Extensive surveys are necessary in connection with these river-improvement works and have been in progress throughout the year whenever weather-conditions were favourable. Surveys have also been made of lands injured or destroyed by silt for the guidance of the Commission appointed under the Act of 1910 to assess the amount of compensation payable for damaged land to be taken in accordance with the provisions of the special Act authorizing the improvement schemes. A contract was placed in April last with the Stevenson and Cook Company, of Dunedin, for the manufacture of a suction-dredge for use in carrying out the improvement scheme, the time fixed for its completion being the middle of April next, and the machinery required for its equipment has also been ordered.

Last year's expenditure in connection with these river-improvement works amounted to £9,555. For the current year a vote of £30,000 is asked for.

## TOURIST AND HEALTH RESORTS.

The expenditure under this heading for the year amounted to £12,906, the principal part being in connection with the erection of the new hostel at the Hermitage.

At Hanmer Springs boring for a further supply of hot mineral water was undertaken and was rewarded with success. The water is now laid on to the bath buildings and swimming-pools.

At Rotorua further improvements were made to the reserves and buildings, also to the drainage and water-supply and electrical works.

It is stated that a practicable track can be made from Milford Sound to the head of Lake Wakatipu via the Cleddau Valley. In the event of this turning out to be correct, steps will at once be taken to survey and form the track.

For the current year a vote of £16,000 is provided, with which it is intended to complete and equip the new hostel at the Hermitage, make much-needed extension to Waitomo Caves hostel, and further develop and improve other scenic districts and resorts.

## TELEGRAPH-EXTENSION.

The expenditure on telegraph and telephone extension during the year amounted to £251,375.

Among the larger works undertaken may be mentioned the construction of the following land lines: Ohakune-Raurimu, Napier-Waipawa, Wellington-Palmerston North, Masterton-Alfredton, Christchurch-Kaikoura, Christchurch-Rakaia, Christchurch-Timaru, and Invercargill-Lumsden, while high-power wireless stations at Awanui and Awarua and a low-power station at Wellington have been completed and opened for business.

The vote for the current year amounts to £376,000, made up as under:—

New telegraph and telephone lines	....	....	£	75,000
New telephone-exchange connections	....	....		220,000
Wireless installations	....	....		30,000
Submarine cables	....	....		10,000
Automatic-telephone installations	....	....		41,000
				£376,000