

ABSTRACT—continued.

Name of Railway.	Total Length of Railway or Section.	Open for Traffic.	Expenditure to 31st March, 1917.	Liabilities on 31st March, 1917.
	M. ch.	M. ch.	£	£
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LINES, ETC.				
Canterbury (lengths included above) .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	731,759	.. .. .
Otago and Southland .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	372,522	.. .. .
Gisborne to Ormond Tramway .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	4,975	.. .. .
Midland Railway, valuation of works constructed by company .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	*683,460	.. .. .
Grand total	4,116 48	2,970 46	37,738,742	330,567

* Includes value for £150,000 paid to debenture-holders under the Midland Railway Petitions Settlement Act Amendment Act, 1903.

No sections of railway have been handed over to the Railway Department during the year, though several are approaching completion, and in some cases the Public Works Department is handling goods and passenger traffic.

KAIHU VALLEY RAILWAY.

No work has been done on this line during the year, with the exception of a few small repairs to river-protection works.

KAWAKAWA-HOKIANGA RAILWAY.

Omapere Section, 16 m. 25 ch. (Kaikohe) to 24 m. 42 ch. (Okaihau).—From 16 m. 25 ch. to 18 m. 64 ch. the formation has been finished for some time, but slips are of frequent occurrence, and these have been removed from time to time.

The length from 18 m. 64 ch. to 19 m. 44 ch., including a tunnel and some heavy earthworks, has been constructed under contract. The work was completed at the end of April, 1916, about ten months after due date, the contractors having been hindered by slips, shortage of labour, &c. A considerable quantity of slipped material was left in the cuttings on conclusion of the contract, and this has since been removed.

From the 31st March, 1916, to the 30th September, 1916, the Department had no men at work on this line. Since the beginning of October a few men have been employed on earthworks, culverts, &c. A stone-crushing plant is at work near 21 m., and has provided broken metal for all the culverts up to 22 m., as well as road-deviations and the main road between Kaikohe and Okaihau, which is in use as a service road.

The weather has been exceptionally wet, and floods have been very frequent, causing much damage to the railway-works and the roads in the vicinity.

A large cutting between 19 m. 58 ch. and 19 m. 74 ch. is the principal item of work to be done on this section. A steam-navy will be set to work here early in the spring, and an endeavour will be made to take out the whole of the cutting during the dry weather.

WHANGAREI—NORTH AUCKLAND RAILWAY.

Oakleigh Section (0 m. to 7 m. 60 ch.).—The Kioreroa contract (0 m. to 4 m.) is still in hand, its completion being considerably overdue. The delay is partly owing to scarcity of good workmen and the very bad weather which has been experienced. The Otaika River Bridge (1 m. 76 ch.) is completed, including some protective works, but there is still a gap of 4 chains in the south approach, and a good deal of stone-pitching remains to be done on both approach banks. The remaining works comprised in the contract are practically completed.

Platelaying was commenced from Kioreroa, and the rail-head is now at 1 m. 40 ch. Arrangements have been made with the Railway Department for a supply of ballast, and it is proposed to complete the permanent-way to Portland Station (5 m. 10 ch.) as soon as the Kioreroa contract is out of hand. With this object in view co-operative works on the section have been confined to the formation of the length between 4 m. and 5 m. 10 ch., which is practically completed. Rails have also been laid in the main line at Oakleigh Station yard, with one siding and a back shunt to the wharf.

Tauraroa Section (7 m. 60 ch. to 14 m. 73 ch.).—The formation of this section was completed during the year, with the exception of some filling in the Tauraroa Station yard, which is being done with material from the works ahead. Bridges over the Tauraroa River (10 m. 19 ch.) and Moewhare Creek (13 m. 30 ch.) were completed with the exception of the plate girders, which have not yet come to hand. Temporary stringers have been placed to carry the ballast-train. Rails have been laid on the entire section and on to 15 m., with sidings at Mangapai and Tauraroa Stations. A siding has also been laid into the ballast-quarry at Tauraroa. This siding involved the construction of a bridge over the Tauraroa River and considerable formation work. Air-drills and a stone-crusher are in operation at the quarry, and ballast is being run out for use on the line. A second stone-crusher is available, but cannot be used, as the two steam-engines required which were on order have been commandeered by the Imperial Government. Six miles of fencing were erected on the section, leaving only 70 chains to complete, and a telephone-line has been erected throughout. Very heavy slips have occurred in many cuttings on this section, and about 30,000 cubic yards of slipped material have been removed by the ballast-train. The section will not be satisfactory until it is ballasted.