

The following is a brief summary of the progress made on each line :—

#### KAIHU RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Formation, culverting, and fencing on this section have been practically completed. A certain amount of trimming, however, remains to be done when a ballast-train is available, and a few culverts also require to be built. Plate-laying has been completed to Donnelly's Crossing Station yard, but the plate-laying in the yard itself will not be possible until the bridge at 23 miles 58 chains has been completed. About 5,000 cubic yards of ballast is still required to complete this work.

A goods service has been in operation since September last between Tarawhata and Aranga, and recently it was extended to Donnelly's Crossing. Full advantage has been taken by the settlers of both services.

With the exception of the station buildings, this line should be in order for handing over to the New Zealand Railways Department before next winter.

#### NORTH AUCKLAND MAIN TRUNK.

##### *Ngapuhi Northwards.*

*Okaihau Section.*—The last mile of formation on this section has been completed, but slips have caused much concern. Over 22,000 cubic yards have been removed, but further slips and subsidences have since occurred, which will be attended to during the drier weather.

Platelaying has been completed to 24 miles 14 chains, 10 miles of fencing have been erected, and a considerable number of culverts have been built.

Utakura Quarry has been opened up, a light line laid to it, and a crushing plant erected and is in readiness for operation.

It is hoped to put the first lift of ballast on the section between Kaikohe and Okaihau as early as possible, in order to admit of the carriage of passengers and goods. This connection will save at least 25 miles of the present circuitous coach route to Hokianga and Mongonui Counties. Its completion depends upon the Government's ability to finance it.

*Okoro Section.*—Very little work has been done on this section during the year, and operations have now ceased altogether. A short piece of formation was completed, some culverts were built, and a few chains of fencing erected. It is not proposed to do anything further on this line for some time, and, in view of this, substantial provision has this year been made to improve the road from Okaihau to Horeke.

##### *Waiotira Northwards.*

Only a small amount of work has been done on the Waiotira end of this section owing to the removal of men for concentration on the Waiotira Southwards section.

On the northern end work has been chiefly confined to tramway-construction from the Wairoa River to the Omana Tunnel. Formation and platelaying are being carried on from the river. The approach cutting to the northern end of the Omana Tunnel has been commenced, and a steam-shovel which is being assembled will shortly commence operations there. It is proposed to lay a tram-line over the tunnel hill to convey the steam-shovel to the southern side after the northern approach has been completed.

The reason for operating on this isolated portion is the necessity for making an early start with the Omana Tunnel, which will take a long time to drive, and would, if not started in advance, delay the final connection. Financial considerations may necessitate a modification of this programme.

An endeavour will be made during the current year to give effect to the Royal Commission's recommendation regarding the completion of the Kirikopuni-Mangakahia and the Mangakahia-Kaikohe Roads. The result of this work will be that when this section of railway is completed, probably within the next few years, to Kirikopuni on the Wairoa River, the settlers northward of this point will have properly constructed access roads over which produce can be transported to the end of the finished line.