

## GISBORNE—NAPIER (NORTH END).

*Ngatapa Section* (0 m. to 10 m. 29 ch. ; length, 10 miles 29 chains).—The formation in Repongaire station-yard was widened. Between 9 m. 40 ch. and 9 m. 65 ch. the formation was raised, and the raising of the Ngatapa station-yard to its new level was completed. The third lift of ballast was completed from 9 m. 40 ch. to Ngatapa station-yard (10 m. 29 ch.), and some ballasting was done in the station-yard. The line has been maintained and a regular goods and passenger traffic service run.

*Waikura Section* (10 m. 29 ch. onwards).—The formation was raised from 10 m. 40 ch. to 11 m. 23 ch. The cutting at 11 m. 63 ch. has given a good deal of trouble with slips, which were removed by steam-shovel and utilized to raise Ngatapa station-yard, and banks at other places. Cuttings at 12 m. 34 ch. and 12 m. 50 ch. were finished during the year. The formation is now practically finished to 13 m., and very little has been done beyond this. The first lift of ballast was completed to 11 m. 50 ch., the second to 10 m. 60 ch., and the third lift to 10 m. 45 ch.

## WAIKOKOPU BRANCH RAILWAY.

*Nuhaka Section* (0 m. to 17 m. 12 ch. ; actual length, 18 miles 65 chains).—The large cutting at 0 m. 40 ch. was practically completed by steam-shovel and hand labour during the year, over 60,000 cubic yards being taken from the cutting. The slopes of this cutting are now being flattened, and the material is being used to raise and widen the bank from 1 m. 50 ch. to 3 m. This raising and widening process is necessary where the bank has been built with material from the peat swamp between 1 m. 50 ch. and 4 m. Fencing is well on towards completion on this section. The under-structure of the bridges at 1 m. 2 ch. and 1 m. 23 ch. was completed, and temporary stringers erected. Pile-driving is in hand on the bridges at 3 m. 76 ch. and 13 m. 62 ch. Hardwood for most of the bridges is now on the sites. The rails have been laid from 0 m. 5 ch. to 1 m. 20 ch., an actual distance of 3 miles, and a further 50 chains were laid to the wharf on the Wairoa River. Platelaying-materials were also unloaded at Waikokopu Harbour and carted back to Nuhaka, and the permanent-way has been laid from 17 m. 21 ch. back to 13 m. 62 ch. A branch line 50 chains long to a ballast-pit opposite 15 m. has been laid. The stripping of the ballast-pit at 15 m. is now being done. About 20,000 cubic yards of stripping has been removed. It is proposed to erect a drag-line excavator here to dig out the ballast and load it on to the trains. It is proposed to work another ballast-pit at Wairoa, and the prospecting-work has been done at this pit.

At Wairoa station-yard a Stationmaster's house and three platelayers' cottages, and at Nuhaka Station two platelayers' cottages, were completed.

*Waikokopu Section* (17 m. 12 ch. to 23 m. 5 ch. ; length, 5 miles 73 chains).—Formation has been practically completed up to 22 m. There are still two cuttings to be completed at 21 m. 19 ch. and 21 m. 60 ch., but these should be done in a month or two. Formation is also well in hand from 22 m. to the end of the section, the only large remaining earthworks being a bank of 20,000 yards at 22 m. 30 ch. and two cuttings in the Waikokopu station-yard. Two steam-shovels were employed on the formation of this section. Most of the fencing is completed or in hand. Pile-driving for the Nuhaka River Bridge at 17 m. 50 ch. is well on towards completion. Several concrete culverts were completed, and the construction of a large 12 ft. arched culvert at 22 m. 30 ch. is now well advanced. Hardwood timber for the bridges on this section is now arriving, and contracts have been let for all the steel girders for the superstructures. The rails have been laid from 17 m. 12 ch. to 17 m. 47 ch. A large number of rails and sleepers have been landed at Waikokopu Harbour, and some of them have been carted back to 19 m. 60 ch. to lay the line between 17 m. 47 ch. and 19 m. 60 ch.

## GISBORNE—NAPIER (SOUTH END).

*Eskdale Section* (0 m. to 10 m. 51 ch. ; length, 10 miles 51 chains).—The formation on this section is done, with the exception of a small gap in the bank at 0 m. 32 ch., over which a temporary bridge has been built. The Harbour Board filled in the gap at 0 m. 55 ch., and their contract, with the exception of this and some dredging of the river-channel, is completed. Both sides of the railway have been fenced to 3 m. Rail-laying has been done to 2 m. 49 ch., and has received a bottom lift of ballast. The ballast has also been placed on the formation from the railhead to 5 m. 50 ch. The telephone-line has been completed along the section. Two platelayers' cottages were erected during the year in concrete blocks at Eskdale Station, and a Stationmaster's house is now in course of erection.

*Tutira Section* (10 m. 51 ch. onwards).—The formation of this section is practically completed to 14 m. 47 ch. A good deal of the excavation was done with a steam-shovel, which is now working in a long cutting at 14 m. 47 ch. Several cuttings have been opened out between this and 16 m. The formation of the service road was completed from 17 m. to 19 m. 40 ch. A concrete culvert at 15 m. 6 ch. was completed ; a water-drive at 15 m. 44 ch. was finished, and one at 15 m. 21 ch. is in hand. Reinforced-concrete piles for bridges at 11 m. 41 ch. and 13 m. 35 ch. have been completed.

## STRATFORD—MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.

*(East End.)*

*Matiere Section* (0 m. to 10 m. 23 ch. ; length, 10 miles 23 chains).—Formation has been trimmed and platelaying has been completed to the Matiere Township at 9 m. 49 ch. A temporary station has been provided here, and two locomotives are constantly employed in ballasting and running a goods and passenger service. A considerable quantity of slips had to be removed, and five temporary bridges were erected, in order to enable the platelaying to proceed. The combined road and railway bridge over the Ongarue River at 0 m. 7 ch. was completed in November last. In this bridge the railway is carried on the upper level, while lower road-traffic deck is carried on the bottom chords of the two