

REPORT ON ELECTRIFICATION OF RAILWAYS.

The report in connection with the electrification of suburban lines which the Government is obtaining from Messrs. Merz and McLellan, Consulting Engineers of London, may affect the proposals in connection with the Christchurch—Lyttelton Tunnel. Recent cabled advice indicates that the report will not be received in time to place it before Parliament this session, but its contents will be made known, together with the Government's proposals thereon, at the earliest possible moment.

HUTT VALLEY RAILWAY.

The Government has acquired some 600 acres of land in the eastern Hutt Valley suitable for residential and industrial purposes which is to be served by this line.

The survey of the line from the existing railway at Petone to Silverstream has been completed, and the first sod was turned by the Hon. the Minister of Railways on the 16th April last.

A commencement has been made with the work, forty-one men being employed at the present time. Plans for the bridge over the Hutt River have been completed, and tenders will shortly be called for the work.

An Osgood drag-line scoop is being erected at the Hutt River to obtain gravel from the river for railway embankment and formation work.

The line will be laid to Waterloo Road for the present, and in addition an industrial line will be laid to the land set apart for industrial purposes.

Competitive designs for the town-planning of the land acquired were invited, and twenty designs received. The land will be subdivided for settlement as far as possible in accordance with the design adopted for town-planning.

HIKURANGI STATION.

The layout of this station is inconvenient and dangerous. The rearrangement of the yard to suit traffic conditions is now in hand, and will be completed this financial year.

NEW PLYMOUTH WORKS.

To provide for growing traffic at New Plymouth until the Harbour Board completes the construction of new wharf and sheds at Moturoa, additional goods-shed accommodation was found necessary. This work is in hand, and will be completed at an early date.

HELENSVILLE STATION.

The arrangement of this station is very bad from a traffic point of view, and requires a complete rearrangement. Plans for a new yard have been prepared, and are now under consideration by the Department.

TIMARU STATION.

The present facilities at Timaru are insufficient for satisfactorily dealing with the passenger and goods traffic. Plans for the rearrangement of the yard are in course of preparation, and a portion of the scheme to cover immediate requirements will shortly be put in hand.

FRANKTON STATION.

To meet the demands of growing traffic, additional yard accommodation for the marshalling of trains is urgently required. Plans have been prepared for the extension of the yard, and additional land is now being acquired for this purpose.

PENROSE-PAPAKURA DUPLICATION.

To meet the growth of traffic between Penrose and Papakura the duplication of the line is necessary. Plans for the duplication between Penrose and Otahuhu, and rearrangement of station-yards to suit, have been completed. The work has now been started, and good progress is being made.

MORRINSVILLE REARRANGEMENT.

Plans for the future rearrangement of station-yard on a new site have been prepared, and the necessary land has been acquired.

STRATFORD REARRANGEMENT.

Plans have been prepared for a yard on a new site on the south side of the Patea River, the present site being too limited to allow for extension. The necessary land is now being taken, as the locality is being rapidly settled.