

Additions to Open Lines.—The expenditure under this heading during the year was £153,475, the principal works being station rearrangements at Whangarei (in hand), Maungaturoto (part), Homai, Otira (part), Hokitika and Greymouth (in hand); siding extensions at Kaukapakapa, Wharepapa, Henderson, Te Kauwhata, Frankton Junction, Hikurangi, Putaruru, New Plymouth, Tamaki, Tomoana, Christchurch, Little River, Fairlie, Methven, Kauri, Flaxmill, Waikiwi; station building erected at Waitoa; verandas erected at Mount Eden (extension), Hokitika, Ikamatua, Upper Port Chalmers, Owaka; ladies' waiting-rooms at Ahuroa, Pukerua Bay, Ngaio; road overbridges at Walton, New Lynn, Kingsland (part); subways at Hamilton and Nagio; cattle-yards erected at Whakapara, Rangiriri, Puketutu, Tamaki, Okehu, Rangitata Island, Sea View, Galloway; goods-sheds erected or extended at Takanini, Makarau, Cambridge, Taupiri, Claudelands, Bell Block, Inglewood, Granity, Medbury; new houses erected at Ikamatua, Waitoa, Glen Afton, Halcombe, Seddonville, and St. Andrew's.

Miscellaneous.—Additions and improvements amounting to £15,979 and charged to working-expenses were carried out. The works include providing ladies' waiting-room, Kaipara Flats; loading-bank, Makarau; extending platform and goods-shed, Swanson; altering cattle-yards, Papatotoc; providing shed for motor-truck, Palmerston North; altering stock-yards, Masterton; providing loading-bank, Waipawa; altering cleaners' barracks, Cross Creek; extending platform, Orari; providing crane, Hawarden; stock-yards, Kauana; shelter for motor-cars, Reefton.

<i>Expenditure.</i> —The expenditure for the year was as follows:—		£
Maintenance (charged to working-expenses)	1,109,659
New works (charged to capital)	284,671
Other Government Departments, public bodies, and private parties?	88,030
Total expenditure	£1,482,360

The Maintenance expenditure charged to working-expenses amounted to £362 per mile, compared with £373 per mile in 1923–24, £342 per mile in 1922–23, £367 per mile in 1921–22, £350 per mile in 1920–21, £280 per mile in 1919–20, £252 per mile in 1918–19, £240 per mile in 1917–18, £243 per mile in 1916–17, £251 per mile in 1915–16, and £254 per mile in 1914–15.

Mileage.—The mileage open for traffic on the 31st March, 1925, was 3,097 miles 11 chains. During the year 33 miles 3 chains additional lines were opened for traffic.

Land and Leases.—Number of leases registered during the year, 616; aggregate rental of same, £12,316 7s. 6d. Total number of leases current on 31st March, 1925, 6,357; aggregate rental of same £52,863 17s. 6d. Private-siding agreements registered during year, 106; aggregate rental of same, £4,209. Total number of agreements current on 31st March, 1925, 491; aggregate rental of same, £18,258. Miscellaneous agreements entered into, 5; aggregate rental of same, £225. Total number of Proclamations issued, taking or giving up land, 41. Total amount of compensation paid during the year for land taken, £82,084 5s. 11d.

Staff.—Maintenance Branch: Working staff, 3,809; office staff, 150; total, 3,959.

SIGNAL AND ELECTRICAL.

Mr. H. J. Wynne, A.M.I.C.E., Signal Engineer, reports as follows:—

Fixed Signals at Officered Stations.—Home and distant signals have been provided at Maungaturoto, Cambridge, Waikiwi, Wallacetown, Winton, Centre Bush, Dipton, Lumsden, and Lochiel, and a home signal at Breakwater (New Plymouth). The total number of officered stations (including tablet stations) is 480, of which 312 are equipped with fixed signals, 112 are interlocked, and 56 unequipped. Seven signal repeaters have been installed during the year, making a total of 397 now in use.

Interlocking of Points and Signals.—Detection of facing points by fixed signals has been installed at Maungaturoto, Waikiwi, Wallacetown, Centre Bush, Dipton, Lochiel, Winton, and Lumsden. Complete all-electric-power signalling and interlocking has been installed at Darfield and Sheffield. Mechanical signalling and interlocking has been provided at Ohau and Paremata. Special locking arrangements for points and signals have been installed at Riccarton. Alterations to signalling and interlocking arrangements have been carried out at Paeroa, Taumarunui, Dannevirke, Aramoho, Ngaio, Lower Hutt, Lambton, and Tinwald. At Greymouth an electric switch lock has been installed to work the points for the Hokitika line.

Interlocking with tablet system has been installed as follows: Homai Station; service siding at 42 miles 70 chains, near Paeroa; service siding near Karangahake; quarry siding near Waikino; Armstrong Whitworth's private siding at Putaruru; T. G. Martin's private siding near Te Kawa; Rangitikei County Council's private siding, Kakariki; Chaney's Station; Ashley Station; Glasnevin ballast-pit siding; Styx Station; Wilson's Crossing Station; Ryal Bush Station; Thompson's Station; Gap Road Station; Todd and McSkimming's private siding at Waikiwi.

Special switch locks have been provided at Blenheim, Riccarton, Waikiwi, Wallacetown, Lochiel, Winton, Centre Bush, Dipton, and Lumsden.

Between Addington and Rolleston the interlocking has been rearranged for automatic signalling.

Total stations now interlocked, 112; tramway crossings, 7; sidings and flag stations interlocked with tablet, 236; stations where Woods' locks are installed, 314.

Automatic Signalling.—The electric-pneumatic system of signalling at Dunedin has worked satisfactorily during the year. Automatic signalling between Dunedin and Ravensbourne is in hand, and will be brought into operation shortly. The automatic signalling between Wellington and Upper Hutt has worked satisfactorily during the year, also between Rolleston and Arthur's Pass. The section