

The second section (being the fifth section of the road),  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, has been formed throughout; four bridges, varying from 20 to 25 feet span, and two culvert bridges have been built, also a number of small culverts. About one-half of this section lies through stony scoria land.

From the end of this section (a little beyond Waipekekaka) the Native work commences, and with the exception of a small section will shortly be completed to Ohaewai. All the bridges between Ohaewai and Kaikohe are finished—viz., three varying from 12 to 20 feet span, and one culvert bridge (these by European contractors), and one at Kaikohe by Native contractors—thus completing all the bridges from Waitangi to Kaikohe. Four more bridge culverts would complete the bridging to Taheke. All the small bridges are constructed of good sound puriri, excepting the floors and wings, which in some cases are of kauri planking. A considerable amount of heavy drainage works will be required on this road, but no instructions have yet been sent as to their execution.

The road between Ohaewai and Waitangi is in a good state for traffic for two-thirds of the year, but during the winter it is at times almost impassable owing to the wet character of the soil. Part of it at least will require metalling to insure a good road.

2. *Whangaroa and Black Bridge*.—The only works extended on this line of road have been about a quarter of a mile of side cuttings and several small culverts. It is only used as a bridle road, and is in very fair condition excepting one section of low land which requires draining, and four of the rivers which require good fordrays to be made. There is however not much traffic, as there is weekly steam communication between the Bay of Islands and Whangaroa.

3. *Mangakahia Road*.—Sixteen chains of side cuttings have been completed, and two bridges have been erected. Several of the original side cuttings have been widened, and landslips cleared away. Two sections are yet unfinished, owing to difficulties thrown in the way by the Natives; they have, however, lately begun work on one of these, and it is to be hoped will complete it, although this is doubtful, as work commenced by them twelve months ago on the Kotipu swamp still remains unfinished. The finished portions of this road are in good condition, and the traffic on it has increased at least fivefold.

4. *Waimate and Okaihu*.—The Provincial Government is spending £250 in forming the road through the Canadian settlement at Okaihu, but the remaining section of  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles at the Waimate is still untouched, and is the worst part of the road between Waitangi and Okaihu. It is very desirable on this account that this piece of work should be advertised for tenders as early as convenient.

5. *Waitangi and Ti*.—The Ti is the proper terminus of all the roads from the interior, and although this piece is very badly laid out it is a good deal used. It would be almost impossible to make a serviceable dray road on the present line, some of the grades being 1 in 5 or 1 in 6, but a better line could be found, reducing the grades to 1 in 10 or 12. The main part of the work already executed—viz., about 10 chains of embankment and two bridges—could still be made use of. Mr. Clarke estimates that an expenditure of £250 would make the required alterations.

In this district, as in the one last described, the influence of land sales is felt, and the Natives being in possession of money do not feel inclined to work. There is now considerable traffic on the main line of road, and some means must be devised for its proper maintenance, as there is no Highway Board, and the Natives use the road as much as the Europeans, and damage the bridges, water-tables, and culverts by their reckless manner of driving. What makes this worse is that there is no one in authority to prosecute for such damage.

The following is a general summary of the work done in this district under "The Public Works Act, 1870," viz.:—

*Mangakahia and Kaikohe*.—Nearly ten miles of clearing, three miles of side cutting, 29 chains formed, and almost all the small streams bridged.

*Whangaroa and Black Bridge*.—Four miles cleared, and one and a half miles of side cutting.

*Waitangi and Ti*.—Two miles cleared, half-mile side cutting, two bridges, and 10 chains of embankments.

*Waitangi to Kaikohe*.—Bridged, formed, and finished,  $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

*Kaikohe to Taheke*.—Three miles and three-quarters of clearing.

*Junction of Kaikohe and Waimate Roads to Okaihu*.—Formed and bridged and completed, three miles; cleared three miles, and all the bridges from Waimate to Okaihu completed. None of the roads in this district have yet been metalled.

Besides the above, the following is a close approximate statement of the works done, under the supervision of the Hon. Wi Katene, viz.:—

*Okaihu and Mangamuka via Waihou*.—Three miles of clearing, and three-quarters of a mile of side cutting, with several culverts and bridges.

*Okaihu and Ohaewai Roads Connection*.—Length, about three miles: culverts completed, and fences moved; the road good for traffic, and of great benefit to the western part of the district.

*Okaihu and Toreke*.—Eight miles cleared, with bridges, culverts, and side cuttings.

*Taheke and Hokianga Heads*.—About thirty miles of road opened up, and available for horse traffic.

#### MANGERE BRIDGE.

This work, described in last year's report, has been completed in a satisfactory manner.

#### WAIKATO DISTRICT, GREAT SOUTH ROAD.

(W. H. CLARKE in charge.)

*Mercer to Newcastle*.—Clearing, 85 chains; forming, 89 chains; fascining, 18 chains; 9 new culverts; 5 culverts repaired; 14 chains, double row of willows planted at Taupiri, and 3 chains at other places on bank of river exposed to heavy wash.

Bridges have been repaired as follow, namely:—

Whangamarino: 41 new planks, 4 new stringers, 2 capsills strapped, 12 piles fished at heads, 2 backed at abutment.