

purpose of determining the best line of road; the information however yet acquired, is not sufficient to determine this point.

Wairoa-Gisborne, Bridle Track via Coast.—Native contractors have kept this open for horse traffic. Two miles are under construction by the Armed Constabulary at the Wairoa end—the work includes formation and drainage. A cart bridge will be required across the Awatere Stream.

Wairoa-Gisborne, inland.—The work completed on this road amounts to 17 miles of bridle track 8 feet wide, 1 horse bridge 70 feet long and 7 feet wide, also 25 miles of road repaired. A distance of 5 miles is yet to be constructed; 3 miles of that already constructed is blocked up by slips, and great difficulty has been experienced in inducing the Natives to work at their removal. For greater part of its length this road could easily be made into a cart road; the grades between Te Reinga and Poverty Bay are good, and the work has been well done; the whole is in fair order for horse traffic.

Roads, Poverty Bay District.—These have been maintained by the District Highway Board, assisted in some cases near Ormond by the Armed Constabulary, who have also opened the road temporarily over Kaitaratahi Hill, towards Mangatu. Grants in aid to the Board have been made from the Public Works Department to the extent of £1,000; of this, £250 were expended in improving outfall drainage—the remainder applied to repairs rendered necessary by the January floods, some of which are still in hand.

A large quantity of useful work has been executed by the Armed Constabulary under Captain Gudgeon, on the road leading to the Oil Springs and Opotiki.

Mr. Bold draws attention to the importance of certain works much needed in this district; amongst others, bridges across the Turanganui (at Gisborne), the Waipaoa, and Te Arai; also the excavation of the main drain from the Patutahi Flat through the Pipiwaka Bush.

Bridle Road, Gisborne, Hicks' Bay.—The repair and maintenance of this has been intrusted to the Armed Constabulary, but their number (only two) has been quite insufficient, and the road is generally in a bad state from slips and the action of heavy rain. It will require at least other six men to maintain this line in a passable state.

The Natives have constructed a track on their own account between Waiapu and East Cape.

The ferries at Pakara, Uawa, and Orutua have been maintained as usual.

Other works connected with the Colonial Architect's Branch, Native, and Telegraph Departments have also occupied a share of Mr. Bold's time and supervision, as well as a considerable amount of survey work conducted in the Patutahi Block and the Waikare-Moana Block, including, in the latter, the Waitara, the Tongoro, and Tarawera Reserves.

MANAWATU DISTRICT, EAST OF GORGE.

F. H. GEISOW in charge.

Road Seventy-Mile Bush, Manawatu Gorge to Takapau.—Length, about 30 miles. This, after being completed, was maintained until August, 1875, and then handed over to the province (Hawke's Bay).

Road, Gorge towards Opaki.—Three miles seventy chains. A contract for metalling this section was let on 3rd March, and progressed satisfactorily until about end of May, when the weather became too bad to work to advantage; the work is therefore suspended until more favourable weather.

Norsewood Road.—This branches from the main road in the Seventy-Mile Bush near Norsewood, and crosses the forest in an easterly direction, following the course of the valley of the Mangarangiara River till it meets the line of railway; its whole length being about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. One hundred and fifty-seven and a half chains have been formed, and $269\frac{1}{2}$ chains of bush felled and cleared, 40 feet wide. This work, as well as that described under the next headings, has been executed by immigrant labour.

Road leading to proposed Railway Station at end of Takapau Tramway.—About $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, and nearly parallel with the last described. One hundred and twenty-eight and three-quarter chains of bush have been felled and cleared 50 feet wide.

Branch Roads.—Two hundred and forty-nine chains of bush have been felled and cleared 20 feet wide. The first of these leaves the main road at Norsewood, proceeding eastward for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, where it joins the second, which is at right angles to it, and is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, stretching between the Mangarangiara River and a branch of the Upper Manawatu, and lying parallel with the main road.

MANAWATU DISTRICT.

(J. T. STEWART, in charge.)

There have been no new road works undertaken in this district since last year's report. The road between Foxton and the Gorge has been maintained, the principal outlay being required in the Gorge itself, to keep the road clear of slips which occur frequently, the hill side being so steep. The maintenance men also have been employed in widening the narrow places and improving the sharp turns. This part of the road is in good order.

A ferry has been established at the lower crossing of the Manawatu River, but a larger and more substantial punt is required than the one now in use, or, considering the importance of this as a main line of road, a bridge would be better suited to meet future requirements, this would probably cost £8,000.

Between this point and Palmerston, the road being well metalled has been maintained in good order at a small cost.

That portion, however, between Palmerston and Oroua has not yet been metalled, and is therefore, in winter, unsuited for traffic; it is probable that it will be found necessary to metal it to insure good communication between the local and private roads and the several stations on the railway.

Small repairs have been executed between Oroua and Foxton. The road is chiefly used as a cattle driving and horse road, the heavy traffic now being carried by the railway.