

in the Appendix give in detail the several works in hand; and, while these officers have a general control of all the works in their respective districts, and see to the due performance of contracts before certifying to payments, acknowledgment must also be made of the co-operation and assistance in many of the works of officers of the Public Works Department, and of the officers of the counties and Road Boards, for in carrying on this class of work the department has found it better to avail itself of whatever agency was most to hand in each locality, rather than adhere to any cast-iron rule of exclusive departmental procedure.

During the year which closed on the 30th June the following works have been accomplished:—

In Auckland there have been 44·65 miles of cart-road made, 5·05 miles of cart-road felled and cleared through forest, 45·5 miles of bridle-road made, and 1 mile felled and cleared; 5·65 miles of ditching done, 216 culverts and bridges constructed, and 49·87 miles of roads graded in anticipation of their being formed in the future: the payments on account being £19,803.

In Taranaki 22·53 miles of cart-road have been formed, and 28·5 miles have been felled and cleared; 2·93 miles of bridle-road have been made, 2·2 miles of road gravelled, and 5 bridges and culverts constructed: payments on account, £4,160.

In Hawke's Bay 27 miles of cart-road have been felled and cleared, and 1 mile formed; and 22 miles of road have been graded ready for construction: payments, £1,953.

In Wellington 8·34 miles of cart-road have been felled and cleared, and 5·1 miles formed;  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of road has been gravelled, and 32·32 miles graded ready for construction: payments, £2,909.

In Nelson 22·81 miles of cart-road have been constructed, and 3·5 miles graded: payments, £1,963, and £1,133 paid out of goldfields votes.

In Westland 75 mile of cart-road has been cleared, and 9·75 miles constructed; 12 miles of bridle-road have been felled and cleared, and 9·25 miles formed: payments, £774.

In Marlborough a sum of £379 has been expended in finishing up the Awatere Road.

In Canterbury 15·86 miles of cart-road have been made during the year, 1 mile of ditching, and 12·12 miles of water-race for irrigation purposes constructed: payments, £6,315.

In Southland 4·28 miles of cart-road have been made,  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile cleared of bush, 4 miles of gravelling done, 54 mile of ditches and drains have been made, and 24 culverts and bridges have been built: payments, £4,200.

In Otago 21·97 miles of cart-road have been constructed, 14 miles have been gravelled, and 1·25 miles of drains have been made: payments, £5,890.

The totals are: 147·95 miles of cart-road formed; 69·89 miles of cart-road felled and cleared; 57·68 miles of bridle-road formed; 13 miles of bridle-road felled or cleared; 8·44 miles of drains and ditches made; 245 culverts and small bridges made; 20·45 miles of road gravelled; 107·69 miles of road graded ready for formation; and 12·12 miles of water-race for irrigation made. The total payments to account have been £48,346 from roads vote, and £1,133 from goldfields vote.

#### FUTURE DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS.

In consequence of the decrease in the number of officers by the discharge of 23 surveyors and 20 draughtsmen the working power of the department is necessarily very considerably curtailed. It is a matter for regret that the necessity arose for dispensing with so many officers able and willing to serve the department. In field-work it is proposed that this reduction shall affect the sectional settlement survey as little as possible. It will, therefore, be necessary to refrain from entering on any new extensive trigonometrical and topographical surveys, but simply confine operations on this class of work to the completion of districts already begun, and which it would be a loss to leave in an unfinished state. In the matter of taking roads through Native blocks and Crown-granted lands, before the expiry of the time allowed by law, the department will endeavour to survey the more important lines; but it will be impossible to do all that the local bodies or the public interest would require in that respect. In a previous report it was recommended that the Legislature should extend the time within which to exercise the right of taking roads.

In any forecast of work a very considerable allowance has to be made in respect of miscellaneous survey services required by the various departments of the public service. Thus, quite recently, peremptory demands were made for surveys and plans for defence, which had to be attended to in preference to other work. Again, the Property-Tax Department had