

settlers. These works were suspended for a few months, but were resumed lately, and three contracts let. Mr. A. B. Wright has charge of the works.

Rotorua to Galatea.—The principal work done on this road during the season has been clearing slips throughout the length of the already-formed road, doing some additional bridge and culvert work, and making some embankments. The items are—15½ miles of road repaired, 80ft. bridges and culverts, and 10 chains of embankments. Mr. J. C. Blythe has had charge.

Rotorua to Paeroa.—This road, the proposed route of which and the advantages to be derived from construction thereof were pointed out in last year's report, has been, during the season, surveyed and graded as far as the Waikato River. The work performed consists of 13½ miles of Proclamation survey. Mr. J. C. Blythe has had charge of this work also.

Huka Falls Road.—The work done on this road this season is as follows: 2 miles of formation 18ft. wide, repairs of damages by floods, and 71ft. of bridging, including a foot-bridge over the Huka Falls. The works have been under the charge of Mr. J. Howard Jackson.

Taupo to West Coast, Waimarino Branch.—The works carried out on this road since end of last season are as follows: 4¼ miles of formation 16½ft. wide, 98½ft. of small bridges and culverts, and, in addition, 13,300ft. of timber for future bridge-building purposes have been cut and delivered on the road. The Lake Road has also been kept in repair, and plans and specifications have been prepared for the Whanganui, Mangatepopo, and Whakapapanui Bridges. Mr. Jackson has been in charge of this road also.

Field's Track Branch of the West Coast Road.—The work done has been as follows: 5½ miles of forest cleared 2 chains wide, and the track kept in fair repair from June to 31st January, 1888 (following), at which latter date Mr. Jackson, who was in charge, handed over the road to the Wellington Survey Department.

VILLAGE-SETTLEMENT ROADS.

The circumstances in connection with these roads were explained in last year's report. The following is a statement showing the respective works done on them during the season:—

Ahipara to Herekino.—Owing to the uncertain nature of communication on the West Coast, attributable to bar-harbours and various other causes, while that on the East Coast can be depended on to the hour once every week, this road, which joins on to the Ahipara-Kaitaia Road leading on to Awanui, a steamer landing-place on the East Coast, distant from Herekino Village Settlement about 20½ miles—of which 12½ miles are on an old road in very fair condition, the remaining 8 being new branch road—is of vital importance to above-named settlement, it having been found by experience that all dependence on traffic by way of Whangape, the port of Herekino, at least for several years, must be abandoned. The different contracts let for the formation of the Ahipara-Herekino Road were completed in the beginning of the autumn, the road being formed from junction with old road to the village as a dray-road, good in summer, or available for wheeled-traffic six or seven months in the year. It is necessary though, that, in addition, various soft places on the road should be metalled or fascined, it being the settlers only outlet, and they being exceptionally situated as compared with the other settlements. A sum of money has lately been authorised to be expended on new works on the road, which would go far to putting it in a fair condition, provided its expenditure could have been applied about four months earlier. But as owing to the wet season being well on, and the process of carrying out of the improvements most required would destroy the surface of the remainder of the road, therefore as much of the expenditure as is possible—having reference to the necessities of the settlers as to being provided with work, which are very pressing—should be deferred till dry weather sets in, discontinuing dray-work and taking to pack-horses. Accordingly, in the new work given that kind will be selected the carrying out of which will not injure the other portions of the road, such as side or outfall drainage, corduroying or fascining where the material is handy and can be carried by hand or barrow, and is not on Native land or outside limit of road. All the portion of the road (about seven-eighths of whole) which runs through Native land has been made by Native contractors, who are very jealous at the works additional to the original formation being given to the village settlers, and refuse to allow fascining material or gravel to be taken off their land except at exorbitant rates. At the same time, it is a necessity that the settlers should have the work, as many of them will not be able to exist without it. The particulars of work done are as follows: 691 chains of formation 16ft. wide, 492ft. of bridging, and 87 chains of embankments with ditches.

Herekino Roads.—These roads are in connection with the last named, and are those intersecting the settlement, chiefly through bush. Some of them are graded, and some cleared as pack-tracks, according as they are likely to be of future importance as forming parts of main branch-lines. With the work done, however, every settler is able to have communication of some sort between the main road and his land. The work carried out has been—4 miles formation 6ft. wide, 76ft. of bridging, and 20 chains of embankments, with ditches. In addition, about 2 miles of pack-tracks through the bush were made. Mr. R. McLeod has had charge of this, as well as that of the last-mentioned road, under Mr. E. Fairburn's occasional supervision.

Takahue Roads.—Since date of last report there have been constructed 140 chains road-formation 6ft. wide, and 74ft. of bridging under the supervision of Mr. H. Larmer, the County Engineer. No work has been done during the latter part of the season, but is about being resumed at present date, under the charge of Mr. R. McLeod, to a small extent.

Fern Flat Roads.—There have been formed 19 chains road 6ft. wide and 100ft. of bridging constructed. Mr. Larmer has had charge.

Motukaraka Roads.—Since last season 162 chains of road 6ft. wide have been formed, 16 chains of road widened from 6ft. to 14ft., and 3½ miles of road cleared of fallen timber.

Punakitere Roads.—Since date of last report a bridge of 89ft. span has been built over the Punakitere River, and one of 49ft. over the Mangakorari Stream, both flowing into the Taheka.