

of the Uruti stream with the Mimi, about twenty miles from Waitara. The route has been explored as far as 33 miles over much rougher country, all in bush, by two alternative lines, on either of which grades of 1 in 50 could be obtained. From the 33rd mile to the 40th (where the line would join the Ngaire-Nihoniho line) the country has also been observed, and presents no more than ordinary difficulties. On this route one survey party is employed.

#### NAPIER-PALMERSTON RAILWAY.

*Napier-Woodville Section: Tamaki and Woodville Contracts.*—Various minor works, which were not completed at date of last year's report, have since been completed, such as fencing, station-buildings, cottages, water-supplies, and drainage-works.

*Surveys.*—Land plans for the section Tahoraite to Woodville have been completed; also plans for land taken at Hastings and Danevirke Stations, and for Tamaki water-supply; also for land taken for railway between Napier and Spit Stations. The latter was done by the Survey Department.

*Woodville-Palmerston Section: Gorge Contract* (4 miles, 32 chains).—This work has been proceeded with steadily; all the bush-felling is done, and about nine-tenths of the earthwork. The retaining-walls will be heavier than was expected in consequence of the rock being found not to be so solid as it looked, necessitating foundations much deeper and heavier. The retaining-walls will also be more numerous; there are seven of these completed, and four in hand.

The order to begin the tunnels (which were cut provisionally out of the contract) was given to the contractors on the 31st January, 1888, and work in connection with them was begun at once.

The concrete abutments and piers for the bridges and for the culverts are well in hand, and nearly all the ironwork for the bridges is now on the ground. Only one large slip has occurred on this contract, but it has taken a long time to remove it.

The site for the Pohangina Bridge has been re-surveyed, and a fresh section of the river has been taken; the designs for the bridge are now nearly complete, and tenders for the work will, it is expected, be called for shortly.

*Surveys.*—Land plans from Woodville Station to the boundary of Hawke's Bay Provincial District in the Gorge have been made by the Survey Department, but have not yet been handed over.

*Woodville-Wellington Section.*—Tenders were called for protective works at the Awapurua Bridge, and were received on the 27th instant. The contract, however, has not yet been let.

#### SUNDRY WORKS.

*Survey of Completed Lines—Foxton-New Plymouth.*—For New Plymouth and Waitara to Hawera section, plans have been sent in from 24 miles from New Plymouth to 47 miles 60 chains (Hawera Station), which completes the plans of survey on this section. From Greatford (34 miles 14.16 chains from Aramoho) to Foxton (83 miles 1.67 chains) the survey has been completed and plans plotted. The section from Greatford to Wanganui will be surveyed from time to time, as an officer can be spared for the work.

#### WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

##### WELLINGTON-WOODVILLE RAILWAY.

*Wiwaka Contract* (6 miles 15 chains Formation and Permanent-way, terminating at Eketahuna).—This work has been carried on vigorously, in spite of adverse weather and other difficulties. The earthwork is now very nearly finished, as are also all the bridges and culverts, with a few exceptions; fencing is nearly complete, and the work at the tunnel is proceeding satisfactorily. The time for completion of this work is the 23rd August, 1888.

*Sleeper Contracts.*—A supply of sleepers was required for the Wiwaka contract, and contracts were let for 13,000, of which, up to date, 9,747 have been supplied.

*Surveys.*—Sundry petty surveys have been made during the year.

#### NELSON-MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

##### PICTON-AWATERE RAILWAY.

*Dashwood Contract* (3½ miles of Formation, beginning at a point 22½ miles from Picton).—This work is still unfinished, but it is expected that it will be completed by the end of April.

#### WESTLAND DISTRICT.

##### GREYMOUTH-HOKITIKA RAILWAY.

*Arahura Bridge.*—This contract was satisfactorily completed in November.

*Protective Works, Arahura River.*—These works are to the south of the Arahura Bridge, and will form an approach to it. They are designed to prevent any overflow of the river, as well as to form an embankment as part of the railway formation. The work—which consists of a strong earthen bank heavily faced with stone, and with projecting timber and stone groins to prevent scour—extends for a length of about 20 chains, and is now about half finished, partly by contract and partly by day-labour.

*Teeremakau Bridge Contract.*—This contract was let in May last to Messrs. Scott Brothers, of Christchurch, and the time for its completion is the 18th March, 1889. There has yet been no work done on the ground; but a considerable quantity of material, mostly iron plates and bars, &c., has been delivered at Greymouth, and the contractors expect to start erection of the work shortly.

*Platelaying.*—About 4 miles of platelaying have been executed for some time at the Hokitika end, and this has been extended on to the Hokitika Wharf, a distance of 26 chains. The wharf