

Hokitika-Christchurch Road.—In July, 1887, considerable damage was done to this road by heavy rains, causing many large slips. In March of this year also much damage was done by floods. The number of maintenance men was reduced in September last from twelve to eight. The road, however, has been kept in a fair state of repair.

Relief Works.—Men have been employed during the year on various works—viz., at the Irrigation Reserve, where they have been employed in levelling sandhills, clearing out drains, and trimming hedges, &c.; in Hagley Park, forming and gravelling footpaths, improving plantations, clearing drains, and fencing; at the Kaituna quarries, in quarrying stone for the various railway protective works; at Addington workshops, stone-breaking, and in making and deepening drains round the yard to prevent it being flooded; and on the main line of railway, in weeding plantations, &c.

Land Plan Surveys.—The land plans for the Waimate Gorge branch were completed in the beginning of the year; and a survey has been made, and Proclamation plan prepared for a portion of the Waiau-Hammer Springs Road, which had not been previously laid off for road purposes. Survey and Proclamation plan have also been made of the ballast-pit, Lincoln Road, which is no longer required, and will be sold. Various other small surveys have been made and plans prepared in connection with land plans in the district.

OTAGO DISTRICT.

Haast Pass Track.—A party of men is now employed in effecting repairs and improvements on this track, and, if weather permits, will remain on the ground until June.

Maori Kaika to Taiaroa Heads.—This road has been maintained during the year at a small cost.

Roxburgh Bridge.—This work was finished in April, 1887, and was shortly afterwards handed over to the Tuapeka County Council.

Hindon Road.—This road is intended to connect the Township of Hindon with the railway-station on the Otago Central Railway at 16 miles 70 chains; it will be about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, with grades varying from 1 in $12\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 in 25. The work has been done as a "relief" work, and up to date about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the upper end have been formed 18ft. wide; the remainder ranging from 8ft. to 12ft. wide, which will require widening to 18ft. when funds are available. This is one of the roads intended to open up Crown lands before sale.

Road from Native Reserve, Purakanui, to Purakanui Railway-station.—Under a "grant in aid" this work was carried out, in small contracts, by Natives, under the Waikouaiti County Council, the plan having been previously approved by this department.

BUILDINGS.

AUCKLAND.

New Prison, Mount Eden.—This work is making satisfactory progress; it is expected that the ground-floor will be ready for occupation in about four weeks; all the walls are nearly ready to receive the second-floor joists, some of which are now being fixed.

Additions to Whau Lunatic Asylum.—A contract was let in December, 1886, for the above, the date fixed for completion being the 9th March, 1888. After a considerable amount of unnecessary delay the work is now nearly finished, and it is hoped the whole building may be occupied about a month hence.

Mortuary and Outbuildings Contract, Whau Asylum.—This work was let by contract in September, and completed in January.

Courthouses.—The maintenance of these generally has been attended to, as well as that of police buildings. A small cottage has been built at Te Kuiti, and a lock-up at Pukekohe.

Post and Telegraph.—Additions and repairs have been executed at Onehunga and Te Aroha Post-offices.

Departmental Buildings, Auckland.—A contract has been let for the construction of these, which will be carried out under the superintendence of Mr. Mahoney, architect, of Auckland.

Government House and Grounds.—These have been maintained as usual, and a contract for painting and further repairs will shortly be let.

Supreme Court Grounds.—A new picket-fence has been erected.

The erection of Native schools and teachers' houses at Wharekakiha (Hicks Bay) and at Kawakawa (East Coast) has been supervised, as well as repairs to the police gaol, Opotiki.

Stone-breaking.—This work was put in hand on the 12th December, at Mount Eden. The highest number of men employed since was eighty-two, the number varying exceedingly. During the last four weeks it has averaged sixty-nine, sixty-eight, sixty-three, and sixty-two.

TARANAKI, MANAWATU, AND HAWKE'S BAY.

Various public buildings, such as post and telegraph offices, gaols, police-stations, courthouses, &c., have been attended to and kept in a state of repair, and sundry small improvements and additions made at New Plymouth, Normanby, Hawera, Manaia, Wanganui, Marton, Feilding, Woodville, Spit, and Napier.

WELLINGTON.

Mount Cook Prison.—Fair progress has been made with this building. An average of sixty to seventy prisoners has been kept at work, mostly on the southern wing of the building, which has now reached the height of 45ft. from the basement, and is ready to receive the roof. The work is now being black-joint-pointed, which work is about two-thirds done. The cells throughout have been prepared to receive asphalte, and a few of them have been asphalted. The number of bricks used during the year is 413,000, making 1,200 cubic yards of brickwork; cement, 160 casks; lime, 1,068 bushels; sand, 365 cubic yards; water, 171,000 gallons; timber wrought and fixed, 2,500ft.