

KAMO-PUHIPUHI RAILWAY.

Kamo to Puhipuhi and Taumarere.—The report and estimate for a railway to the Puhipuhi forest has been completed, showing that a line 14 miles 36 chains in length could be constructed with favourable grades and curves for £70,500. A preliminary examination and report was also made of a route west of the Puhipuhi forest, from the end of the first survey to Taumarere on the Kawakawa Railway, *via* the Waiotu, Tirohanga, or Karetu Rivers. This line, however, would not be so good as the through route proposed west of the Ruapekapeka Mountain.

HELENSVILLE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY.

Kaukapakapa Section.—The fencing of the road to Kanohi Station and connecting fences to the Kaukapakapa ballast-pit have been completed.

Makarau Section (3 miles 6 chains).—Work on this section was greatly retarded by unsettled weather throughout the year, but, notwithstanding this, fair progress has been made. The line is practically formed from the commencement to the tunnel, the excavation of which is in hand. Beyond the tunnel all the bush has been cleared and the cuttings started.

Mount Rix Wharf.—Owing to a difficulty in obtaining piles, and an accident through a small steamer running into the wharf, the contract has only just been finished.

Surveys.—As reported last year, the Tahekeroa Section, 46 miles 36 chains to 49 miles 54 chains, is ready for contract. This year the Komokoriki Section, 49 miles 54 chains to 56 miles, has been located, and the plans are now being prepared. A trial survey from 56 miles to about 3 miles south of Wellsford at 67 miles 60 chains, shows that, with the exception of 2 miles through a rough gorge, an easy line can be obtained.

WAIKATO-THAMES RAILWAY.

The maintenance of the flood-openings contract, Thames, drainage by deferred-payment settlers of Block XI., drainage through the Waikato Land Association's property, all of which were in progress last year, and some minor works, have been completed.

THAMES VALLEY-ROTORUA RAILWAY.

Kaponga Section (10 miles 23 chains).—It is expected that the contractor will finish this section ready for traffic by the contract date—*viz.*, October next. The rails are laid and ballasting done on the first 2 miles, the earthwork on the next 5 miles is well forward, and the bush has been felled on the remainder of the section.

NORTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.

Poru-o-tarao Tunnel.—As anticipated, the tunnel was completed in May, but in consequence of the season being an unusually wet one, the contractors were very much hindered in finishing up, and it was not until the middle of December that they were relieved of the maintenance.

Mangaonoho Section (3 miles 70 chains).—This section extends from Rangatira, the terminus of the southern portion of the railway, towards Makohine, where there is good land and a totara bush. The contract includes the laying of the permanent-way, and since it was let, in December, fair progress has been made.

WOODVILLE-PALMERSTON RAILWAY.

Woodville-Gorge Section.—The few works remaining to complete this portion of the line ready for platelaying were duly finished.

Manawatu Gorge Section.—Shortly after the satisfactory completion of Messrs. Jones and Peters's contract in July, a large slip of 51,340 cubic yards of material came down it at 9 miles 40 chains. It has been removed by the contractors under special arrangement.

Woodville-Pohangina Platelaying Contract.—This was let in July, and, in addition to the platelaying between Woodville and the Pohangina Bridge, included the building of two retaining-walls in the Manawatu Gorge. The slip at 9 miles 20 chains considerably retarded the work, and it was not finished until the 8th ultimo.

Ashurst Section.—This has been completed, and station-accommodation provided, a shelter-shed being erected at Whakaronga, and a shelter-shed, goods-shed, and sheep- and cattle-yards at Ashurst.

General.—It was expected that the railway would have been opened earlier in the year; but when approaching completion some exceptionally heavy rainstorms caused a number of slips, which had to be cleared away before traffic could be commenced. After the line had been cleared and the Railway Commissioners had taken it over it was opened for traffic on the 9th instant.

WELLINGTON-WOODVILLE RAILWAY.

Awapurua Contract.—The contractor has very nearly completed the stream-diversion and works designed for the protection of the Awapurua Bridge, the delay being caused by the obstruction of the Natives, soon after the contract was entered into, to the necessary land being taken.

PICTON-AWATERE RAILWAY.

Utawai Section (2 miles 50 chains).—This contract will complete the formation of the railway to the Dashwood Pass. So far good progress has been made by the contractors; but the excavation of the tunnel was delayed somewhat by a slip which occurred at the end of the drive, when a length of about 70 links from the face had been taken out to full size ready for lining.

Surveys.—The land-plan survey is finished, and the plans have been forwarded to the Survey Department for certificate.