

Hunt's Beach to Makawiho.—A bridle-road on main south route; length of section, three miles. This road was constructed by the department a couple of years ago, and has since been understood to be a county road. That body, however, states they never took it over. The road is now in a bad state, and will have to be attended to. We have spent nothing on it during last year.

Cook's River Flat Road.—This is also a bridle one, and portion of the Main South Road. Two contracts for construction and metalling of about 1 mile 20 chains have been completed during period—clearing, 33ft.; formation, 7ft.; metal, 4ft.: cost, £215 6s. 6d.

Cook's River southward.—No construction work done, but an engineering and traverse survey has been completed of the gap formerly existing, about thirteen miles, and the plans of greater portion received. Tenders are now invited for construction and metalling of 102 chains. Similar tenders were called in December last, but were all too high, and none accepted.

Makawiho to Mahitahi.—A bridle-track, and on the main south line; length of section, about eight miles. A contract for the construction and metalling of 3 miles 7 chains has been completed—clearing, 33ft.; formation, 7ft.; metal, 4ft. wide: cost, £243 17s. 2d. Tenders were also called for a further distance of four miles, but none accepted, and we are now inviting tenders for construction of one mile.

Cascade River to Barn Bay.—A bridle-road proposed to be constructed by Mines Department, under my supervision. The line has been explored and surveyed, and we are at present in treaty with the settlers in Jackson's Bay for letting the clearing, &c., of a portion of it in small contracts at piecework rates. Length of section, 8 miles 25 chains; expenditure to 31st March, £55 6s.

Nelson, Westport, Greymouth, and Hokitika Road.—Grey County Council received a subsidy of £450 towards maintenance of this road, the length within county being forty miles. Vote expended. The Brunnerton Borough Council received a grant of £50 towards maintenance of portion of same road through their bounds, some four miles and a half. On 31st March they had only drawn £40, leaving a balance of £10 still to their credit. This borough also became entitled to a further grant of £100 for river protection works but, as they considered the amount totally inadequate for the purpose, it was declined, and the vote remains untouched. The Westland County Council, on account of maintenance of the portion of above road in their county, received a grant of £500. All expended. Length, about eighteen miles.

Paroa-Teremakau Road.—The Grey County Council have received a grant of £500 towards construction of this road, which is to be a dray one, and have already let some 2 miles 48 chains of formation—contract price, £269 5s.—and this work is now in progress, although up to the 31st March no payments from grant have been made. Total length, 3 miles 58 chains.

Approaches to Arahura Railway and Traffic Bridge.—Westland County Council received a grant of £450 towards cost of this work, which has been completed, and the vote expended.

PROPOSED ROAD WORKS FOR THE YEAR 1892-93 IN WESTLAND.

Hokitika-Christchurch Road.—In addition to the ordinary maintenance work on this road, we will be forced to construct several deviations, these being rendered necessary through damage done by floods. In places this damage has been made good, but to insure a safe road a new one will have to be laid out. Since making up the estimates, circumstances on this road have altered very considerably through the commencement of the Midland Railway works and Teremakau Railway-bridge near Jackson's. Very heavy traffic has begun, and a portion of the road on each side of the Taipo, which used formerly to be the best on road, has now begun to cut up badly. Having been metalled when constructed with mica-schist, it is now unable to resist the heavy wagons, and about five miles of it will have to be remetalled with gravel, which at this particular part is difficult to obtain. To do the work thoroughly would cost about £1,400. In addition to this, some of the small bridges should be strengthened and replanked. Since the commencement of the heavy traffic I have had all the bridges and culverts (which we considered likely to stand the former traffic for years) re-examined, and find that six of the bridges have been built with only four stringers each. To insure safety they should be wholly replanked with 8in. by 4in. planking. The cost, including labour, ironwork, &c., would be about £140. In fact, to put this road in a state to stand the new traffic, an expenditure of £1,600 is necessary, and will have to be faced sooner or later—if long deferred, a much larger sum. No doubt we could put on five or six more men and patch the worst places in metal with the best material easily obtainable, obtain the necessary timber and replank the bridges at a cost of from £600 to £700; but I would strongly recommend doing it thoroughly when at it. I would also point out that, beyond the ordinary maintenance expenses, little or no money has been spent on this piece of road for years past, the bulk of expenditure under the vote being necessarily in the Otira Valley and Gorge. In any case, it will be absolutely necessary to adopt one or other of the courses suggested, and to add one or other of the respective sums stated to the estimates already sent in, as there is no doubt that, should an accident happen through defective state of road or bridges, the Government would be liable for damages.

Paroa-Teremakau Road.—I would recommend that work on this road be continued, and that a further sum be granted to the Grey County Council for this purpose.

Kumara and Lake Brunner Road.—It is proposed to renew the Three-mile Creek Bridge on this road—a very necessary work.

Cook's River southward.—It is proposed to construct this road during the year to a point on Havelock Creek. On completion of this, and the contract now let, a horseman could then go through to Karangarua River.

Hunt's Beach to Makawiho River.—This is a very necessary work, and should be taken in hand as soon as possible. I think the construction of a new road from the beach up the south-west bank of the Manakiaiu River, to join the present road near ford, would be both cheaper and more permanent than reconstructing the present one and putting a bridge over the river, as would have to be done if the old route is retained, the ford (the only one near) having now become too deep to enable goods