

TARANAKI.

Roads East of Waitara (Junction Road).—This road will lead direct from New Plymouth, through Inglewood, Tarata, and Purangi, on to the East Road (Ongaruhe to Stratford), the distance of the junction of the two roads from the railway-line at Inglewood being about thirty-four miles. Of this distance, about nineteen miles of dray-road were open in March, 1892, since which a mile of dray-road and 3 miles 57 chains 8ft. wide bridle-road, in five contracts, have been formed, the former by Milsom special settlers, and the latter by local settlers, the road being now open to Purangi, about 23½ miles from Inglewood. East of Purangi, about six miles and a half of the remaining 10½ miles is in course of construction, as an 8ft. wide bridle-road, by the members of the Milsom and Tanner Special Settlements, and the connection of this road with the East Road will probably be made this year. The members of the Milsom, Tanner, and Oxford Special Settlements will shortly be building upon and occupying the clearings which they have made upon their holdings; and a bridge over the Waitara River at Purangi will then be urgently needed, as the river is not fordable. One member of the Milsom Settlement has already been drowned near there when attempting to ford. The works on the road are under the charge of Mr. Flinders Hursthouse.

Huiroa District (Motukawa Road).—This will be one of the main roads leading into a large portion of Blocks VII., VIII., and XII., Huiroa, and contracts for felling and clearing of over four miles of it are nearly completed. The engineering survey of 7 miles 27 chains of this and the Kawau Road, connecting the Junction Road, near Tarata, with the Makino Stream, has just been completed by Mr. Seeley, and the plans will shortly be prepared for the formation and bridging of the road. Mr. F. Hursthouse is in charge of contracts.

Roads East of Waipuku (Waiwiri Road).—Two small bridges were erected, and some culverting, draining, formation, &c., have been done on about a mile and three quarters of road, expending the balance of a previous authority. The local body (Stratford County Council) is now about to complete the formation of the whole of the road from the East to the Makuri Road, and gravel it with limestone shell-rock. Mr. Seeley had charge.

Mangamingi—Within the block, which when sold was specially loaded for road-making, 10 miles 36 chains of engineering survey, including plans, &c., for a cart-road, have been made on the Anderson and Rotokare Roads, and five miles of road-felling and clearing on the Rotokare and Wingrove Roads, and two miles and a quarter of bridle-road formation 8ft. wide have been done—the former by ordinary contract, the latter, Rotokare Road, by co-operative contract. The formation of the Rotokare Road from Mangawhero Road on to the Anderson Road is being carried on by co-operative men in small contracts, the work being let at ordinary contract rates, and, so far, has been finished in a very satisfactory manner, equal to the best contract work. The construction of the Anderson Road within the Mangamingi Block will probably be carried on in a similar manner. Mr. Fuller is in charge of contracts.

Pukearuhe Inland to Mangaroa (Mimi Road).—The only work which has been done on this road was to remove slips and dress up the six miles already formed, and to repair a bridge damaged by a heavy flood. A contract is now being let for the erection of a bridge over the Hoehanga Stream, and formation contracts will follow to the amount of the authority issued. This will probably complete the cart-road formation to beyond the junction of the Mimi and Uruti Roads, about seven miles from the Main North Road.

Rotokare Road.—Two miles of this road, from its junction with the Whareroa Road to about the Mangawhero Road, have been let in two contracts for formation and bridging, the formation being an 8ft.-wide bridle-road. In consequence of the extremely wet season, and the heavy damages caused by floods and slips, the contracts are still in hand, although the contract time has expired. Authority is required for a bridge over the Ararata Stream, at the junction of the Whareroa, Makino, and Rotokare Roads, and for another bridge over the same stream on the Rotokare Road, at about where the Mangawhero Road now joins it. When these bridges are erected, and the contracts in hand completed, the road will be available for traffic from Hawera to the Anderson Road, a distance of about eighteen miles. From the Mangawhero Road on to the Mangamingi Block the road-formation has been made by co-operative labour, in small contracts.

Whenuakura Valley Road.—The formation of this as a bridle-road has been completed from the Kaharoa Road to the Whenuakura Stream, 3 miles 47 chains, about 1 mile 70 chains, in addition to the maintenance of the whole, having been done this financial year. The work was of a very heavy description, a large portion being in papa and sandstone rock, and the progress of the work was much retarded by extensive slips from the ridges above, which had to be cleared away to keep the track open.

Waitotara Valley Road.—The work on this road in the Taranaki District is a continuation of the bridle-road formation, commenced with co-operative labour in the Wellington District, at the point where the road from the Waitotara Township joins the Waitotara River, about twenty-two miles from the former. Four miles and a quarter of new work were completed in the Wellington District, bringing the roadworks up to the provincial boundary at the Kapara Block. The work in the Taranaki District has been continued into the Kapara Block by co-operative labour, about three miles and a quarter having been felled and cleared, of which three miles have been formed. The work is still in hand, and is being performed at rates which will compare favourably with ordinary contracts. A number of bridges will be required on the part already formed, which will be taken in hand by the party now engaged on similar work in the Wellington District.

Tikorangi Bridge.—The erection of this bridge has been much delayed by several heavy floods which have occurred in the Waitara River, the contractor's pile-driving plant having been in one flood swept away, and a set of piles having in another been broken off and swept to sea before the contractor had time to brace or secure them, through a mass of drift logs collecting against them. The work will now be pushed on as rapidly as possible, and should be completed in about four months' time.

Anderson Road.—In connection with the opening-up of the Mangamingi Block, the engineering survey of this road was made from the confiscation line near Eltham through the Ngaere Block, a distance of 5 miles 48 chains. Contracts are now in hand for the felling and clearing of four miles