

between Froghall and the Leamington Junction should be done, if possible, to preserve the cutting. This road appears to be more used than any of the roads except the Port roads, Hurunui Flats, and the Waiau Road.

Sinclair Road.—Length, 255 chains, all of which has been surveyed, but only about 20 chains formed. This is the cuttings into and out of Swamp Stream, and the bank over the stream flat. The cost has been for formation, £87 10s., or £4 7s. 6d. per chain. The total cost for surveys, formation, and supervision has been £124 18s. 9d.

Parnassus Road.—Length, 518 chains, 25 only of which have been completed, but more is in hand. We have three parties of settlers, and three of co-operative men, also one contractor (Corcoran), working at schedule rates. The cost of formation has been £263 13s. 8d., but, as most of it has been progress-payments, and cost of some material, it is not worth working out at per chain. The surveys have cost £110 7s. 5d., and the supervision £19 8s. 9d., which, with tents, tools, &c., makes a total of £393 9s. 10d. up to date. This road is gradually getting fenced in, which has obliged us to do just the most urgent parts first. This, of course, considerably adds to the cost of the work.

East Waiau Road.—Total length, 211 chains, of which 91 have been completed as far as the earthwork, at a cost of £512 2s. 3d., or £5 12s. 6d. per chain, the high cost of which is due to its being through a swamp, where a high bank is required to keep it dry. The stuff has been got out of the ditches, and, although it has made a splendid road, it will not be of much use to the settlers until it is consolidated and gravelled. We have let a small contract to some settlers to continue the ditching lower down, and, when a few cuttings are made down the river terraces, access will be given to the river-bed, &c., but a gate will be required through the rabbit-fence first. The cost of surveys, supervision, &c., has been £29 6s. 8d., and the total expenditure, £541 18s. 11d. It will be necessary to put in a box culvert on the stream near Mr. Kelly's house to open this road to the eastern end.

McMillan Road.—Length, 240 chains. Only one cutting and bank of 3 chains has been made, costing £9 14s. 2d., or £3 4s. 9d. per chain. This was simply a deep gut, which had to be filled in to allow the settlers to cross. A small contract has been let to some settlers to make a ford over the Swamp Stream near the junction with Parnassus Road, and a considerable amount of work has to be done to give access down this road to the second crossing of the stream, where a 50ft. bridge will be required. I am sorry we are not able to push on with this road faster, as it forms the only means of access to the holdings at the bottom end, and also will be the road to the trans-Waiau bush. We propose shifting the men from the East Waiau Road over to the heavy cutting at the lower end of this road. This road forms the best access to Grazing Farm 1, of Block V., and Mr. Anderson cannot well get his fencing on to the ground until it is opened.

Campbell and Elizabeth Roads.—The former has only been partly surveyed, and nothing has been spent on either of them beyond the cost of surveys; but some bridges, banks, and drains are urgently required on the Elizabeth Road, as several settlers are living up that road, and have a long way round to go to get at their homesteads. It is too late in the season to do more than put in the culvert-bridges and open drains; to form it would only make it worse.

Domett Saddle Road.—The contractor has made good progress with the post-office section of this road. I do not see the slightest prospect of his being able to complete this road this winter, and, even if he did, we could not, I fear, shingle it, as the ground is too soft to cart over, the shingle not being handy to this road. We are endeavouring to get the banks, &c., past the post-office shingled while this dry weather lasts. If we fail in that we shall be in a bad case there this winter.

A large amount of work has been done this month in repairing the road to the Port, especially the piece by the white gate between Puschell's and Darroch, on the Hurunui-Port Road. The rain formed a large lagoon on this flat, and we had to cut a drain to get the water off the road. This drain was cut through Section 7, Block XI., Cheviot Survey District, to drain the water off the lagoon on Section 6 of Block XI.

According to our measurements 1,607 chains of road have been formed, at a total cost of about £18,750 2s. 6d. This sum includes many things that have not been paid for, chiefly material. Our actual expenditure is £17,464 12s. 7d. up to date. This also includes material. No proper cost can be got out at this period of the works, as they are all only in progress. The engineering and supervision, as shown here, come to over 10 per cent.; but it should be remembered that this includes surveys for the whole 4,098 chains, and will not be materially increased when the works are all completed. The necessary fragmentary style of the works adds very much to the cost of both surveys and supervision.

I do not see how we can well reduce this item. We have, besides myself, two Road Surveyors and parties, one draughtsman and clerk, one Inspector, and one timekeeper for about 150 men, or about thirty parties, scattered all over the estate. Both Road Surveyors' time is now fully taken up in affording access to the various holdings, so that I do not see any prospect of doing with less.

Every class of labour is now offering from among the settlers, who, now they have carted most of their material, are offering their carts and themselves. The difficulty is in finding work for them; in fact, we simply cannot do so and keep within the authorised expenditure per month.

I attach two lithos showing roughly—first, the state of the surveys; second, the state of the work; also a general table and a report on co-operative works.

F. STEPHENSON SMITH, District Surveyor.

WESTLAND.

Hokitika-Christchurch Road.—The portion of road under the charge of the Lands and Survey Department, Westland, extends from Arthur's Pass, Otira Gorge, to within seven miles of Kumara, and from this point about three miles along the old road towards Hokitika.