

practically absorb the whole amount standing to the credit of Part II. of the Public Works Fund. After this year it will be necessary to provide for the further construction of this railway out of Part I., or the General Account of the Public Works Fund.

#### EKETAHUNA—WOODVILLE

A considerable amount of work was done on this line during the year. The formation-works are now almost complete, the Makakahi Bridge is finished, the ironwork for the Mangatainoka Bridge is in an advanced stage, the plate-laying to the site of that bridge is in hand, and the station-buildings at Newman are about to be erected.

The section of the railway between Eketahuna and Newman will be ready for opening for goods traffic in about a month's time, and, if the Mangatainoka Bridge is finished by the contract date, the line should be opened to Pahiatua within a year, and completed to Woodville by about June of the following year.

The expenditure on this railway last year amounted to £25,849. This year we ask for a vote for £25,000.

#### BLenheim—AWATERE

The small sum of £756 was expended on this line during last year, being for the purpose of putting the formation-works on the incomplete section south of Blenheim into good order.

#### WESTPORT—NGAKAWAU—MOKIHINUI.

Acting under the authority contained in "The Westport-Ngakawau Railway Extension Act 1890 Amendment Act, 1894," arrangements were made in February last for the purchase of the Mokihinui Coal Company's railway. The price paid for the line and appurtenances was £15,745. Of this amount £14,500 was paid to the company, and the balance (£1,245) to the Working Railways Department for the purpose of placing the line in a satisfactory state of repair. In further pursuance of the Act referred to, a Proclamation was issued finally vesting the railway in the Queen in May last. The funds for the purchase of the line were provided by the Westport Harbour Board.

#### GREYMOUTH—HOKITIKA.

This railway was opened for traffic during 1893-94, but a great deal of finishing-work remained to be done. The expenditure on the line last year amounted to £12,978, and liabilities existed at the close of the year to an additional amount of £5,365. We ask for a vote of £6,000 to cover these liabilities and other contingent expenditure. This will be the final vote required for this railway.

#### OTAGO CENTRAL RAILWAY

The section of this railway between Middlemarch and Hyde was completed and opened for traffic during last financial year, but sufficiently early in the year to be recorded in my last year's Statement. Work has since been energetically proceeded with on the Hyde-Kyeburn and Kyeburn-Eweburn Sections. The whole of the former section is now under formation, and also a mile or two of the latter, and the excavation of the Hyde Tunnel is completed and the lining built for 6½ chains. The Capburn Bridge is well in hand, and the plans of the Taieri Bridge have been completed ready for lithographing.

The expenditure on this line last year amounted to £28,131, which was again the largest expenditure on any railway-works in the colony, with the single exception of the North Island Main Trunk Railway. We ask for a vote this year of £25,000, which will enable the construction of this important work to go on with reasonable diligence.

#### HERIOT—ROXBURGH.

A detailed survey has been made of the first section of this railway, 6 miles 25 chains in length, and careful trial surveys for a further length of 9 miles 50 chains, which brings the line to the banks of the Clutha River. It is proposed this year to complete the survey, and a vote to defray the cost of the work has been included in the Estimates under the head of "Surveys."