

40 chains, the termination of the previously completed survey) to the Mangaturuturu River, at 96 miles 30 chains, a distance of 34 miles 70 chains. Trial lines have been surveyed, levelled, and pegged for the whole of this distance, and the permanent survey of the portion between 82 miles 50 chains and 87 miles 13 chains, a length of 4 miles 43 chains, has been completed, and the plans of same are about half finished. The work done also comprised the cutting of foot- or horse-tracks through bush for about 5 miles, to give access to the line from existing roads, the traversing of the Hautapu River for a length of 2 miles 5 chains, and the traverse of the main road for a mile beyond 61½ miles.

INSPECTION OF OPENED RAILWAYS.

In accordance with your instructions, I, acting with Mr C. Napier Bell, went over and carefully examined the whole of the Government Railways constructed and opened for public traffic throughout New Zealand; and from notes taken in connection with the inspection, we have prepared a report, giving full particulars of the condition in which we found the various lines of railway and the rolling-stock running thereon, which report will be forwarded to you shortly. The inspection of the railways in the North Island was commenced on the 8th December, 1894, and completed on the 22nd January, 1895, after which, on the 29th January, 1895, we began the inspection of the South Island Railways, and finished examining these lines on the 15th April, 1895, during which time a detailed and thorough examination of the works and rolling-stock on about 2,000 miles of railway was made, and their condition noted.

ROADS AND BRIDGES.

AUCKLAND.

Te Aroha to Katikati Road (Thompson's Track).—The formation of this track over the range from the Gordon Settlement was commenced in March last, with forty men, divided into seven co-operative parties. A length of 2½ miles on the Te Aroha side that had not been touched previously has since been cut to form a track 8ft. wide, and the men are now being moved on to open up and clear the portion of the track that was made some years ago. The work is in Bush County.

WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

Shelly Bay Road.—This road at the Shelly Bay end, 50 chains in length, has been constructed to join the portion made at the Miramar end last year, the work being done by prison labour, and the prisoners have since repaired and blinded the latter portion. An extension of the road from Miramar to Kilbirnie, 50 chains in length, was surveyed in November, 1894, and has since been constructed by co-operative labour, being finished in May last.

MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

Bridge over Tinline River.—This is a horse-bridge of one 70ft. and two 20ft. spans. It was erected by co-operative contract, being finished in April last.

WESTLAND.

Great South Road (Widening and Metalling for Dray Traffic).—The widening, &c., of this road was completed to 22 miles 48 chains in February, 1894. A further length of one mile was put in hand in October, and completed in December last. A survey of a further portion from 23 miles 50 chains to 25 miles 61·50 chains was made, and the construction of this section was let in five contracts in December, and finished last month. This completes the work of widening the road to a point (25 miles 61·50 chains) where a deviation was rendered necessary to avoid swampy ground. A survey of this deviation, 5 miles 45 chains in length, has been made, and plans and estimates of same are being prepared. The construction-works on this road have been carried out on the co-operative principle.

Blackball Road.—As reported last year, the portion of this road extending from the main road on the north side of the river to the Blackball township was constructed by three co-operative contracts. Nothing further has been done except the survey of a portion of the road for land-plans.

Road from Kanieri Road to Kanieri Lake.—The bridge at Kennedy's and timber crossing at Coal Creek, reported last year as being in progress, were finished early in the year.

Kanieri-Kokatahi Road Bridge.—A new bridge is being erected to replace the old one which was found to be unsafe.

Karamea Bridge.—Plans were prepared for a bridge of five 80ft. and two 20ft. spans over the Karamea River. Tenders were invited for its erection, and the tender of Mr M. O'Connor was accepted last month, amount, £2,780.

SOUTHLAND.

Forest Hill Tramway.—A survey of the extension of this tramway from the terminus of the previously constructed portion at 10 miles was made to the Makarewa River, a length of about 50 chains, and the formation of this extension is now being carried out by co-operative contract, there being about twenty men at work. Tenders were also invited for the erection of a combined road- and tramway-bridge over this line, and the tender of Messrs. McLeod and Shaw was accepted in March, 1895, amount, £528.

MISCELLANEOUS.

County Work, &c.—The following works have been designed, or inspected, and reported upon by this department for other departments or local bodies during the year, viz.:—Mangare Road Bridge, plans of additions to the Hospitals at Auckland, Christchurch, and Invercargill, and Dunedin Female Refuge, Mangatainoko Road Bridge, bridge over the Rangitikei at Vinegar Hill,