

the nine miles and a half of horse-road mentioned above, I would strongly recommend that this length be completed by being formed into a dray-road 16ft. wide. If this were done the road would be in uniformity with the other roads in the district; and not only on this account, but because the road is in close proximity to the Tiraumea (Hull's Crossing) Bridge, which was recently opened with such *éclat*, and which is on the high road to Pahiatua and the Mangaone Railway-station.

*Makairo-Kumeroa Road.*—A grant of £200 was made to the Kumeroa Road Board for carrying out this work, but up to the present nothing has been done beyond exploring, and a report has been furnished concerning it.

*Tiraumea Bridge (Hull's Crossing).*—A subsidy of £500 was granted to the Pahiatua County Council to aid in the construction of this bridge. In last year's annual report Mr. Reaney, the officer then in charge of the work, stated that the plans had been approved, but the work had only just commenced. When the district was taken over by me in October last good progress had been made, and the bridge has since been completed. It is a truss bridge of one span of 108ft. and two land-spans of 29ft. each, and affords access to Thompson's Road, Ngaturi, Woodville-Aohanga, and Makairo Roads, and also to the Tiraumea Valley Road.

*Malton Block.*—A sum of money was authorised for expenditure on the roads in this block, and work will shortly be proceeded with.

*Upper Manawatu Roads.*—These roads are situated in the Hall Farm-homestead Block, and since last year, when Mr. Reaney reported upon them, 1 mile and 13 chains of bush have been felled 66ft. and cleared 33ft., and 33 chains have been felled 66ft. wide; two miles of horse-road, 6ft. in width, have been formed; and 271 culverts built, ranging in size from 12in. by 12in. to 2ft. by 2ft.

*Ballance to Manawatu Gorge Road.*—Work on this road has only recently been started, and, judging from the rough nature of the country, the first half-mile is likely to prove a costly piece of work. At present there are four contracts let for forming the road from 14ft. to 16ft. in width, and in a short time contracts for providing the timber for two bridges, with 60ft. and 70ft. spans respectively, will be let. The above road extends from the Gorge Bridge in a southerly direction, towards the Township of Ballance.

*Pahiatua-Palmerston Road.*—When reported upon last year, the sum of £24 had been expended in widening, &c., three miles of the above road to afford settlers better access to their holdings. During the past year four miles of the road have been widened to 6ft., and 255 cubic yards of slips have been cleared. This road, at the time it was taken over by the Government to put in repair, was totally unfit for traffic, and was positively unsafe. It is at the present time in fair order; but, as it is very narrow in places, it is found to be very inconvenient for travellers, as the cattle-traffic on the road is very extensive. In order that some idea may be obtained of the extent of the cattle-traffic, it may be mentioned that, since November last, 62,500 sheep, 8,943 head of cattle, and thirty-eight horses have passed over the road, which is a 6ft. track. A great amount of extra traffic is caused upon this road owing to the bridge at the Manawatu Gorge having been swept away by the last Easter floods. This road was taken over by me from Mr. Reaney in October last.

*Mangahao Bridge.*—This bridge is on the main road leading from Pahiatua to Ballance and from Pahiatua to Palmerston, and consists of a laminated arch truss of 120ft. span, with two truss spans of 46ft. each. At the time Mr. Reaney handed it over to me, the bridge was almost completed, and has since been finished. The sum of £500 was granted to the Pahiatua County Council to assist in this undertaking.

*Mangatainoka Bridge.*—For this structure, which is situated near Pahiatua, a sum of £1,000 as a subsidy was granted to the Pahiatua Borough Council to assist in its erection. When the work was taken over from Mr. Reaney in October last, the bridge was well under way, and has since been completed. It is a long bridge, consisting of nine truss spans of 70ft. each and two land-spans of 25ft. each, and will be the means of giving access to the railway-station, and is on the high-road to Ballance and also to Palmerston North.

*Mangarama Village Settlement Roads.*—The Tawera Road forms the western boundary of the above-named village-settlement township, the Namu Road cuts through the northern portion, and the Oparatai Road forms the eastern boundary, the three roads together constituting the village-settlement roads. During the year one mile of road has been formed 12ft. wide, one mile of drains completed, the embankment where the creek overflowed has been made up, 1 mile 40 chains has been metalled 9ft. wide, 15 cubic yards to the chain, one mile sown with grass, and two miles and a half of roads maintained, which now afford good access to the whole settlement.

*Tiraumea North Road.*—Since the 31st March, 1895, one mile of road has been metalled 12ft. wide, 20 chains formed 16ft. wide, and one footbridge (70ft. in length) constructed, and the whole length of the road maintained. The Pahiatua County Council has now charge of the road, which is in thorough repair. It connects the Mangarama Village Settlement with the Mangatainoka Township, and until the commencement of last October was under the control of Mr. Reaney.

*Woodville-Aohanga Road.*—Since last year, when Mr. Reaney reported upon this road, 61 chains of bush have been felled 66ft. and cleared 33ft., and 61 chains of horse-road have been formed 6ft. wide; 859 cubic yards of slips have been removed; seven culverts built, ranging in size from 12in. by 12in. to 2ft. by 2ft., totalling 174ft. in length; 824 cubic yards of formation in solid rock; one ford over a small creek formed; and five miles and a half of road maintained. Now that the bridge over the Tiraumea River at Hull's Crossing is finished, it would be of great benefit to the settlers if that portion of the road now formed as a horse-road were widened into a dray-road and metalled, as it would afford greater facilities for reaching the Mangatainoka Railway-station from Makuri.