

*Hokitika-Southward Road (Gillespie's to Karangarua).*—Ten contracts were let for the forming and metalling of a horse-track between Gillespie's and the Karangarua River, and one for building a horse-bridge over the Oinetawatea or Saltwater River. Five of these contracts were on the north side of Cook's River, and five on the south side. The total length of track made is 3 miles 78 chains, and by using it the two bluffs, one on each side of Cook's River, are avoided, and a much safer crossing of the river is obtained. The daily average wage earned all weathers was 8s. 1d.

*Hokitika Southward Road (Ross Road deviation).*—A deviation from the original road near Rimu was surveyed last year to avoid some of the worst grades, and to get new bridges over Deep and Dusky Creeks, as the two old bridges were almost unsafe for traffic. The length of this deviation is 1 mile 27½ chains; and, besides the bushfelling, clearing, forming, and metalling, two bridges have been built, one over Deep Creek 74ft. long and one over Dusky Creek 18ft. long, and 12in. and 18in. earthenware drain-pipes have been put in where they were required. The work was done under great disadvantages, as the weather was very wet most of the time, and there was considerable difficulty in getting gravel, and the leads were long. In the bridge-building the highest daily wage earned was 11s. 4d, but in the road-formation and -metalling it was not more than 7s. 6d; the average daily wage all weathers being 6s. 9d.

*Lake Mapourika Road—Wire Footbridge over the Waiho River.*—A contract for the construction of a wire footbridge 288ft. long, in a single span, was let during the year; the Government supplying the ironwork and wire, and the contractor finding the timber and labour for erecting the bridge. The amount of the contract was £210 12s., and the total cost of the bridge, including cost of ironwork, wire, freight, and supervision, was £347 16s. 10d. The daily average wage earned all weathers was 7s. 11d.

*Turnbull River Road.*—Three contracts were let on this road—one for widening and gravelling a portion of the track already made and gravelled, one for making a deviation from the old track, owing to the encroachment of the river, and one for making a second deviation and clearing and forming a new piece of track to the upper crossing of the river; and a fourth contract was for building a bridge 23ft. long over Gagliardi's Creek. The daily average wage earned all weathers was 8s. 7d.

*Wataroa Bluff Track.*—In order to avoid the danger of going round the foot of the bluff, a track was laid off at the back of the bluff, starting from the flat on the north side of the Wataroa River, and running out on the beach again at what is known as the Middle Beach. The length of track is a mile and a half, and the daily average wage earned, all weathers, was 8s. 7d.

FREDERICK WITHER, Road Surveyor.

## CANTERBURY.

### CHEVIOT ESTATE.

*Domett Drainage.*—On this work £27 3s. 4d. has been expended, which comprised the cutting of two channels from the Darroch Road to the Hurunui, through Sections 4 and 5, Block XIX., to carry off the Domett drainage which previously was thrown on to these sections, and spread half over them in rainy weather. The work was carried out by nine of the settlers in two contracts on the co-operative system. The maximum wage earned per man per day, all weathers, was 7s., and the minimum 5s. 6d.

*Homeview Drainage.*—On this work £29 9s. was expended, which comprised the opening up the natural watercourses to a width of 6ft. and a depth of 18in. for a length of 103 chains, providing thereby a much-needed outlet for the drainage of the settlement. The work was carried out in one contract on the co-operative system by three of the settlers. The maximum wage earned per man per day, all weathers, was 7s., and the minimum 5s. 6d.

*Lower Jed Works.*—During the year £232 19s. 3d. was expended. The works commenced at a point 1 mile 70 chains above the Jed Bridge, and terminated about 22 chains above the Telegraph Ford Bridge, a distance of 157 chains, and comprised cutting down the willows for a width of 50 links on each side of the stream; also clearing off and burning the undergrowth, niggerheads, &c., which obstructed the channel during floods. The works were carried out by twenty-two of the settlers in five contracts on the co-operative system. The maximum wage earned per man per day, all weathers, was 7s., and the minimum 4s. 8d. The above expenditure includes the cutting and stacking of 260 cords of firewood and 7,000 posts, most of which has since been sold, the former at the rate of 10s. per cord, and the latter at 14s. per hundred.

## OTAGO.

DURING the past year all the road works in the Catlin's District have been carried out under the co-operative system, and an average of over eighty men have been employed. The average daily wage all weathers was only 4s. 2½d., but this is accounted for by the very wet weather. The average loss of time through bad weather was very heavy last year, and the average hours worked per day was only 5.66. The minimum wage earned was 2s. 2d. per day; but these contracts were carried out by the settlers, who spent most of their time on their sections. As this system has been reported on at various times, there is no need for me to make further comment. I might mention, however, that the men are getting to understand the system better, and are making much better results. For a long time the men were handicapped for want of proper appliances for the carrying-out of their work. I have found the advisability of the department buying tools such as woodjacks, trollies, &c., and supplying them to the men at a small weekly cost. The appliances are soon paid for, and the men make better wages.

C. W. ADAMS, Chief Surveyor.