

to the timbers in White's Creek Bridge, but, instead of piles being driven, sills were put in and trestles were built. The average wages earned per man per day was 10s. 7d.

*Woodstock-Mahinapua Road.*—A bridge over Fisherman's Creek has been built in connection with the Woodstock-Mahinapua Road, and the approaches have been formed and metalled. A small section about 6 chains in length has been metalled, but to do this the formation had to be made up again, because there has been considerable traffic along this newly-formed road. A ballast-pit has been opened and a tramway laid from it to the road. The daily average wage earned is 9s. 4½d.

*Okarito River Bridge.*—The old road bridge over the Okarito at the Forks had become unsafe for traffic, and a new bridge has now been built. The previous bridge was under-strutted, and I noticed that in flood time drift-timber caught in these struts; in fact, some of them were torn away, so a truss of 55 ft., leaving the whole water-way clear, and two short land spans of 7 ft. each, have been built. The ironwork was prepared in Hokitika, and so were the hardwood blocks, but all the other timber was got locally, and is almost all silver-pine. The average wages earned per man per day was 10s. 3½d.

*Poerua Settlement Roads.—Crooked River Road.*—The bushfelling and clearing on this road, which extends from the Bell Hill Road to the Crooked River, a distance of 1 mile 51 chains, has been done; 12 chains of fascines have been laid through a swamp, and the formation on the fascines has been finished, the stuff for formation having been obtained from two side-drains. The culverts on the upper section have also been built. The daily average wage earned was 9s. 3d.

*Greenstone-Teremakau.*—The Teremakau settlers constructed a further length of this road, amounting to 26½ chains altogether, with the culverts. They completed the bushfelling, clearing, forming, and metalling, and earned an average daily wage of 6s. 8d.

*Hokitika-Southward Road.*—Since the work of making tracks behind the bluffs between Okarito and Bruce Bay has been done travelling has become much easier, but it was found that frequent delays were caused by the tide at the Karangarua Lagoon. To obviate this a bridle-track 76 chains in length, in continuation of a piece made on the edge of the lagoon, has been made and metalled, with two bridges each 50 ft. long. The average daily wage earned was 9s. 8½d.

*Block 112, Kokatahi.*—This road, which starts from the Koiterangi Road, and gives access to settlers, has been pushed on during the year, and the bushfelling, clearing, forming, and metalling of one mile has been completed, as well as all the culverts required, and a bridge 20 ft. long over Davis Creek. The average daily wage was 10s. 7d. The men working on this road were settlers, and were strong, able men, and anxious to get the work done.

*Waimea-Stafford.*—Work has been continued on this road, and the bushfelling, clearing, and forming of 13½ chains has been completed; also the culverts. The daily wage earned has averaged 6s. 7d.

*Stafford-Awatuna Road.*—This is another name for the Waimea-Stafford Road. The bushfelling and forming has been finished on 53 chains more, and four culverts have been built. 35 chains still remain untouched to connect with the main road from Hokitika to Kumara. No metalling has been done on any of this road. The daily average wage has been 7s. 2d. on this work.

W. G. MURRAY, Chief Surveyor.

## OTAGO.

Most of the roadworks carried out have been under the co-operative system, except the road repairs, quarrying, and metalling, which were carried out by day-labour. The average rate of wages earned (which are fairly uniform) all weathers has been 4s. 8d. per day, but by the actual time worked a little over 6s. The minimum of 3s. per day was earned by an inexperienced gang, who did not work full time, while 8s. 4½d. was earned by an experienced gang of quarrymen on the Ardgowan Estate. I might add that the co-operative system has worked very satisfactorily this year, and the works have gone on smoothly. The men employed are all settlers, and, as a rule, are more experienced and better workers than the men from the towns, and, being settlers, they have an interest in doing the work well. In my road report I have given full details of the work performed on each road.

JOHN HAY, Chief Surveyor.

## SOUTHLAND.

I HAVE not been sufficiently long in this district to offer an opinion on the success or otherwise of this system in Southland. So far as I have seen, it does not work quite so well as I would like. The tendency in this district seems to be towards rather a low rate of wages, hence slight dissatisfaction. I will, however, endeavour to impress upon surveyors and Inspectors, if possible, to regulate prices so that an average workman will not earn less than 6s. In a district such as this, where there is a surplus or floating labour population of men perhaps skilled in many branches of labour, but totally unfitted for bush- or road-work, a great difficulty occurs, as these men scarcely recognise their unfitness or inability to earn fair wages at these contracts, or that they are unable to work alongside, and do as much work as, those who have been trained to road- and bush-work. The co-operative system to this class of labourers is only a temporary means of assisting them until they again find employment at work for which they have been trained. A difficulty also to contend with is the want of proper appliances for the use of these men; ploughs, scoops, and graders in open country have so reduced the cost of roading that the professional contractor has everything in his favour. This, with the further difficulty of obtaining gravel, greatly handicaps the system.

D. BARRON, Chief Surveyor.