

will be a great advantage to get this road constructed through from Napier to Wairoa, but, the estimated cost being about £26,000, I fear we shall not be able to complete it for some years yet.

Miscellaneous.—Under this heading is a vote of £150 granted to Cook County Council to assist them in forming a dray-road to Run 46, Maungatokerau. With this, assisted by other moneys, six miles of dray-road has been constructed. The work has been well carried out, and will be of benefit to the settlers of Maungatokerau Valley.

Hikurangi Block.—5 miles 62 chains of 8 ft. bridle-road has been constructed from Ihunga to the Mata River, to give access to Crown lands, a portion of which has been selected. The works were done by co-operative labour, and are well executed. This road puts the settlers in good communication with Waipiro Bay.

Ruakituri Block.—3 miles 12 chains of the road up the Ruakituri Valley has been widened to an 8 ft. horse-track, with all necessary culverts, &c. The work was done in a satisfactory manner by co-operative labour, and will be of great service to the settlers.

Pohui Block.—Under this heading is a grant of £100 7s. 6d., being a grant of £1 for £1 to the Hawke's Bay County Council, which was expended on the erection of a bridge.

Ruahine Block.—51 chains of dray-road in the Ruahine Block, with necessary culverts, outlet and inlet drains, &c., has been constructed by co-operative labour. When the remaining portion of this road (about three-quarters of a mile: now under construction) is completed it will put the Ruahine settlers in communication with the Township of Blackburn.

Motu Road (widening).—A grant of £500 was made for widening this road, but, only being authorised late in the year, we have only constructed 41½ chains, which have been widened from 8 ft. to 12 ft., at a cost of £96 15s. The work has been done by co-operative labour. When the road is widened to the edge of the bush, which will be the case, I hope, before the winter, it will be a great advantage to the Motu settlers.

Waikopiro.—1 mile 23 chains of dray-road, being main road through the Waikopiro Settlement, has been constructed, and portions metalled. Also 1 mile 16 chains of bridle-road, with necessary culverts and bridges, has been completed by co-operative labour. These roads were very necessary to give settlers access to their sections, and, in fact, much yet remains to be done before the necessary roads are completed. I would urge on the department the necessity in these new settlements of pushing on the road-works, as otherwise it is difficult for settlers to get on to their sections, and it retards progress and disheartens the settlers. A bridge is also necessary over the Manawatu River.

Takapau-Kopua.—The only expenditure on this road was £85, cost of survey.

Roads on Estates purchased under Land for Settlements Act.—Under this heading a sum of £1,500 was authorised to be expended on the new settlement at Elsthorpe, and £180 at Raureka Settlement. At Elsthorpe 1 mile 46 chains of dray-road has been formed, with all necessary culverts. At Raureka 1 mile 26 chains of dray-road has been improved and metalled, all the work being done by co-operative labour.

Rotorua-Galatea-Waikaremoana (including Frasertown, Waikaremoana).—4 miles 66 chains of this road has been widened from 6 ft. to 10 ft., which completes coach-communication from Wairoa to Waikaremoana Lake, and 2 miles 33 chains of 6 ft. bridle-road has been constructed round the lake in the direction of Galatea. All this work has been done by co-operatives working under Mr. Strauchon's supervision. The bridle-road runs through very hard country, and is expensive to construct. I find that instructions were given when the works started not to clear more of the forest off the road-line round the margin of the lake than was absolutely necessary for the construction, the idea being that to fell the timber would spoil the road from an artistic point of view; the consequence is that it is only cleared from 15 ft. to 20 ft. Looked at only from the artistic side it may be correct, but from an engineering point of view it is bad, and before a good road can be maintained it will be necessary to clear it a chain wide. I think most travellers will appreciate a good road, even at the sacrifice of the bush, and, looking at it from an artistic point of view, I think the ferns, flowers, &c., which spring up after a few months on the cleared portion of the road are more pleasing to the eye than the forest, of which by the time the traveller arrives at Waikaremoana from Galatea he will have had quite enough. Since the completion of the road to the lake a number of travellers have visited it, and they have found a singular object which has attracted much attention, a report on which may be interesting. There is a large rock situated near the middle of the new bridle-road round the lake. Beside it there grows a rata-tree which, in the course of its growth, and when a sucker, has crept through a crack in the rock; now the full trunk has penetrated through, and detached a slice of the big rock, and carried it up in its growth, and it is now nursed by the tree. The piece of rock so lifted is 24 ft. long, 4 ft. thick, and 4½ ft. wide. It is quite a curiosity, and I have given instructions not to destroy it.

ERIC P. GOLD-SMITH, Chief Surveyor.

TARANAKI.

Mohakatino Bridge.—During the year the bridge has been screwed up, the lower parts tarred, and the upper parts painted. The northern bank of the stream, for a length of 10 chains above the bridge, has been planted with three rows of willow-stakes, in order to stop the scouring and fretting away the banks in floods. A post-and-wire fence has been erected to protect the willows from travelling stock.

Junction Road-Purangi.—This work includes—first, the extension of metalling onwards and eastwards from Matara Road towards Purangi; and second, metalling Junction Road between Kaimata Road and Tarata. Of the former, about one mile has been completed to date, and the remainder is in progress; and, of the latter, the whole of the previously unmetalled gap between Inglewood and Tarata has been metalled. There is now a continuous metalled road from