

of wage earned was 2s. 5d., occasioned by old men being employed who were indifferent workmen. The highest rate—viz., 11s. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.—was owing to the men employed using teams of bullocks.

The number of vouchers dealt with during the past period amount to 2,011.

A. C. TURNER, Road Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

It has hitherto been the practice to construct the bridle-tracks in the Sounds of a width generally of 4 ft. to 6 ft., sometimes more, of which at least 3 ft. was cut out of the solid. All through the Sounds the tracks are almost entirely along sidelings, and very seldom on level ground. In many cases long lengths of track already formed are not available for through traffic owing to short breaks or gaps where nothing has been done, and which are often impassable. I am therefore devoting my attention towards the completion of these portions, so as to make the tracks continuous. In order to accomplish this object as soon as possible I am making the tracks somewhat narrower than usual—viz., 2 ft. in the solid, but still quite wide enough for horsemen, except where the hill-side is too steep to allow the track to be widened or made up with excavated material. These places will be widened at once, and the whole track will be widened from year to year as funds permit. If it be thought that 2 ft. in the solid is a narrow track, I may be allowed to point to the pack-tracks in the Clarence Valley, which are often less than this for miles together, and very frequently the grades are steeper than 1 in 3, and yet all the traffic has been conducted by pack-horses on these tracks for many years past.

The most important track in the Sounds, and the one giving the greatest advantage to the greatest number of people, is the track which, when completed, will be known as the Mahakipawa-Titirangi Track, and will be about sixty miles in length. It begins at the main road through the Linkwater Dale, connecting the head of Queen Charlotte Sound with the Mahakipawa Arm, but nearer the latter. It then crosses a high saddle, and follows the south side of Mahau Sound and Kenepuru Sound to within three miles of the Kenepuru Post-office. (This part is now let, and will be opened in a few months). It then follows the south side of Kenepuru Sound to its head, and back along the north side to Waitaria Bay, and thence over the Manaroa Saddle, about 980 ft. above sea-level, and then down to the Manaroa Post-office. It then runs along the east side of Clova Bay and Beatrix Bay to a low saddle, where the present formation terminates. A contract is now in operation to carry the track on to Te Puru Post-office (Hocquard's), and I hope to have this track extended to the head of Anakoa Bay (Redwood's) before the summer is over. Next season it will probably be completed to Titirangi Bay (Neave's), which will be the terminus. Another useful track will be one connecting the head of Kenepuru Sound with the head of Anakoa Bay with a branch track to Endeavour Inlet.

Tracks, Queen Charlotte Sound.—By authority of this vote a bridle-road has been constructed from Section 33, Otenarua Bay, to the saddle between it and Te Awaitei. A connection has been made between this bridle-road and the west side of Otenarua by a fork branch to Section 29. This road, connecting as it does with the Arapawa bridle-road, puts Otenarua and Queen Charlotte Sound in easy communication with the post-office and school of Te Awaitei and Tory Channel. Length of road constructed, 3 miles 37 chains; and 2 miles 47 chains of heavy bush cleared.

Whatamonga-Port Underwood Track.—The works on this line have during the past year been chiefly of a maintenance character—repairing damages caused by floods and bush-fires.

Tory Heads-Whatamonga-Picton.—Tracks have been formed on the east and west shores of Onapua and Opua Bays, Tory Channel. These prove of advantage to the resident settlers for postal convenience, and more especially for educational purposes. Length of tracks, 4 miles 11 chains.

Arapawa-Te Awaitei.—Under this heading and vote bridle-roads have been constructed connecting the following bays—Onopopiti, Te Awaitei, Wekenui, and Okukari—and joining at the Saddle the bridle-roads from Otenarua. The carrying-on of these roads ceased for a short time, pending the receipt of an additional authority, but have since been resumed. The completion of these bridle-roads to the Saddle and connection with those from Otenarua is much appreciated by residents of the district, as the Te Awaitei Post-office and the school have to suffice for the whole of Arapawa Island. Driving of cattle and sheep is also greatly facilitated between Tory Channel and Queen Charlotte Sound. Mileage of bridle-road formed, 4 miles 22 chains; bush cleared, 66 chains.

Manaroa-Hopai.—An extension of this bridle-road has been made to Eli Bay from Hopai; the old track widened by the blasting away of rock, and partially re-formed; four 20 ft. log bridges and four crates constructed. Length of bridle-road formed, 1 mile 34 chains.

Manaroa-Okoha.—Bush-fires having caused a stoppage on this line, a small contract was entered into and completed for the removal of fallen trees and clearing the bush-track.

Crail Bay Track.—This bridle-road forms a section of a long line of road extending from Torea Bay, Queen Charlotte Sound, to Te Mautau-a-Maui Bay, Kenepuru Sound, of which about five miles, between Eli Bay and Wet Inlet, remain incomplete, though progress is being continued. On the completion of the above five miles the settlements in the following sounds and bays will be in direct land-communication with each other: Queen Charlotte Sound, Torea Bay, Kenepuru Sound, Portage Bay, Waitaria Bay, Pelorus Sound, Clova Bay, Hopai Bay, Crail Bay, Wet Inlet and Te Mautau-a-Maui Bay, Kenepuru—in all a distance of about forty-two miles. Under the vote for Crail Bay 37 chains of bridle-road have been graded, cleared, and formed, earth-slips removed, and four log bridges constructed.

Kenepuru-Anakoa.—An engineering survey has been made on this line for a dray-road. It is proposed to construct this road to near the head of Kenepuru Valley; from thence a bridle-road