

structure partly built of the materials that formed the old one. The new bridge is longer, and considerably above the highest flood-level. The right and left banks of the Taylor River in the vicinity of the bridge have also been protected by groins. The Board was assisted in these works by a Government grant-in-aid of £50.

Double Bay.—Works of maintenance have, during the past year, been carried out on the bridle-road in the neighbourhood of this bay.

Picton-Queen Charlotte Sound.—An engineering survey for a dray-road to connect Picton with the Grove, Anakiwi Bay, has been made, and the road commenced at each end. When completed, this line of road will, without doubt, be of great public utility, leading, as it will, direct from the Port of Picton to the goldfields of Mahakipawa, the Town of Havelock, and the goldfields of Wakamarina. The tourist also will find it a route of great beauty, as it winds along the shores of Queen Charlotte and Pelorus Sounds. A sum has been placed on the estimates to continue the works. Work completed: A mile and a half of engineering survey; 1 mile $12\frac{1}{2}$ chains of sidling dray-road (partly rock-cutting, and of full regulation width); and 5 chains of sea-wall.

Grove Wharf and Shed.—The old piles of this wharf and shed have been drawn, new ones substituted, and other repairs to each effected. The original piles were much worn—several entirely through—probably eaten away by small crustacea, as search was made for the *Teredo navalis*, but none found. This being the case, it was decided to coat the new piles with chunam, sheath with Muntz-metal, and stiffen the structure by introducing on the cross-section walings and diagonal braces. The old piles were of totara of excellent quality, though unable to resist the limnoria; the new ones are also of totara, but it is confidently expected that the sheathing will give them a much longer life than those replaced, which but slightly exceeded six years. The wharf timbers above the top line of the sheathing have been well coated with pitch and tar, and the shed twice painted. A small balance remains to credit, which will be expended on road-repairs within the boundaries of the lease.

Clarence Bridge.—Repairs to this bridge, consisting of renewals to parts of the decking, providing and fixing sheep wire-netting to the girders on each side, tarring and sanding the deck, and sundries.

Blenheim-Kaikoura-Waiatu.—Works of general maintenance to road and bridges, and removal of slips, have been executed by the Amuri County Council, assisted by a Government grant-in-aid.

Nelson-Havelock (and Bridges).—The crown of Totara Hill, about a mile and a half north-west of Canvas Town, on the Nelson-Havelock Road, has been lowered, and, as far as the cutting extended, metalled. Plans of a truss bridge, of 45 ft. span and embanked approaches, are being prepared for Flat Creek, and tenders will shortly be invited for the work. During floods in the Rai River the water backs up Flat Creek to a depth, at times, of 11 ft. above the level of normal flow, causing great inconvenience and delay, it being on the main line of coach-road. Work executed and completed: 404 cubic yards road-cutting at Totara Hill, and four chains of road-metalling.

Nydia Bay-Havelock.—Works of maintenance to this bridle-road, removal of fallen trees and slips, have been carried on during the past year. Fires in the bush near the bridle-road was the cause of the track being blocked by timber, and which demanded removal.

Blind River Road.—No return was made prior to 31st March of work executed under this vote, though a start was made on the new road through the Starborough Run, connecting Blind River Estate with the Awatere. This line of road will lead in a more direct line to Blenheim than the present road by the Taylor Pass, a great advantage to the settlers of Blind River, as it shortens by time about an hour and a half for a dray trip between Blind River Estate and Blenheim. One other advantage it has, in that the height of the Redwood Pass is nearly 450 ft. lower than that of the Taylor Pass. Under a grant (Land for Settlement, 20), sundry works of road-formation and construction of culverts have been carried on on the roads of Blind River Estate, and are being continued. Dray-road constructed, 44 chains.

Omaka Estate.—The embanked approaches to the Mill Creek Bridge, executed by resident settlers, is the only work of formation carried on during the past year on this estate. Arrangements are being made to expend the balance of the grant (Land for Settlement, 18) on roading, ditching, and a 30 ft. span bridge over the Mill Creek where it crosses the Renwick line. By request of the resident settlers, the commencement of these works has been postponed, as they desire themselves to carry them out under the co-operative system during intervals when work on their farms is slack. Work: 8 chains bridge-embankments, and metalling.

Flood Relief, Awatere Road Board.—A grant-in-aid having been made for the purpose of reinstating roads and bridges within the jurisdiction of the above Board, works were undertaken between Flaxbourne and the Shades, on the Blenheim-Kaikoura Main Road. The works consisted of putting the road generally in passable condition, making up the various fords, removing slips, filling wash-outs, re-forming bridge-approaches, and general repairs to bridges. These works were rendered necessary in order to put the line of road in safe condition, by repairing all damages occasioned by the severe floods of June and July, 1896, and were carried out by the Awatere Road Board under the supervision of this office.

Kahautara-Conway and Hundalee Block.—The roads under this heading and expenditure form a portion of the Cheviot-Kaikoura Road, lying between the Conway and Kahautara Rivers. It was considered, when first laying off these works, that funds would not be forthcoming for a dray-road, so a bridle-road 4 ft. wide, and through a bush-clearing of 45 ft. in width, was first constructed. This proved of great service in locating the co-operative contractors on their sections, it being formed along the levels of the permanent road afterwards constructed, and in getting forward tools and supplies. Of bridges, none were completed during the twelve months of a span exceeding 30 ft., though one was finished after the close of the financial year having a span of 46 ft. Works executed: 13 miles 41 chains of roading complete and of regulation width; 10 miles 27 chains of bridle-road through a bush clearing; and two bridges of 20 ft. span each.

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