

month) monthly in advance to the Public Account. The contract time will expire on the 1st day of December, 1900. Although the punt and all fittings, ropes, boats, &c., were reported to be in thorough repair when Mr. Grooby signed the contract in December, 1899, yet I find that such is not the case now, and I have had to put one new flap on the punt, and the other needs renewing, and the two boats belonging to the punt need to be replaced by new boats.

Timber has been obtained locally for building a temporary 80 ft. span for the Inangahua Junction Bridge while the main spans are being repaired, but the temporary trusses have not yet been erected, because the bridge-repairers, under Mr. M. M. Dixon, were called away to repair damage elsewhere caused by floods.

The road from the Inangahua Junction to Hope Junction has not been damaged to any great extent by heavy rains during the year, and the expenditure has in consequence been kept low.

The strength of the ordinary maintenance staff was temporarily reduced by five men in February last.

Lyell Cemetery Road.—The Lyell Cemetery Trust Board was authorised to expend this vote, but no work has been done on the road.

Hampden Cemetery, Murchison Road.—An authority for this work was issued some time ago, but it was only at the end of last financial year that the residents decided that the work was needed, and accordingly a contract for a portion of the work was let. The amount of the contract was £40, and the work comprised in the contract has since been completed.

Slips Road.—No work has been done on this road during the year.

Grey County Bridge-repairs.—The work of repairing bridges on the Greymouth-Reefton Road was put in hand in the previous financial year, and only the final payment on the contract was paid during this financial year, the work having been practically finished before the commencement of this financial year.

Dee Creek Bridge.—A contract for the construction of the Dee Creek Bridge, 90 ft. long, was let to Mr. John Dixon, of Reefton, for £432. The work has been satisfactorily completed, but the bridge cannot be used until the approaches to it are made, as they were not included in the contract. These approaches are now in hand, and will be completed as soon as possible.

Mangles Bridge.—The suspension-bridge over the Buller River, just below the junction of the Mangles with the Buller, was completed in the middle of March last, after considerable delay. Owing to the rock not being so solid as it appeared before any work was done, some additional supports to one of the anchorages at the north-east end of the bridge were necessary, and a concrete retaining-wall to hold the approach to the bridge at the same end has also been built.

Glenroy-Matakitaki Gorge Bridge and Road.—A contract for the construction of a bridge consisting of a single span of 60 ft. has been let, Mr. John Dixon being the contractor, and the amount is £439. The erection of the bridge is not yet begun, but the contractor has all the totara timber for the trusses.

Larry's Creek Bridge Extension.—This is comprised in the general maintenance of the Belgrove-Westport-Reefton Road. Shortly before the end of the financial year the south approach to this bridge was damaged in a very heavy flood. Since then there have been two more floods, and the bridge has sustained further damage, the southernmost pier having been washed out.

Ahaura-Haupiri Road.—An authority to expend £400 on the extension of this road was issued, but subsequently the work was transferred to the Public Works Department.

THOS. HUMPHRIES, Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Piripaua Neck Cutting.—During the year one contract has been completed—namely, cutting this razor-backed ridge down to a further depth, making the total from surface 40 ft. Owing to the difficulty in securing the services of experienced men the work has not proceeded as anticipated. Continuous slips have occurred during the progress of the work. Since the completion of the contract a large slip took place, which will require to be removed prior to another contract being let for cutting the Neck to within 10 ft. of high-water mark. Upon the completion of this work it will, as previously stated, be a great convenience to settlers. Work completed for the year: 400 cubic yards of earth removed, and 800 cubic yards of rock excavated.

Anakoa-Manaroa.—For the year 4 miles 40 chains track formed 2 ft. in the solid. This track starts from head of Anakoa Bay and goes towards Titirangi. One contract has been completed.

Okoha-Titirangi.—This is a continuation of track from Anakoa Bay leading to Titirangi. Three miles of track formed 2 ft. in the solid. Two contracts have been completed for the year.

Manaroa-Okoha.—This track has been repaired, and thirteen gates erected. No other work undertaken during the year.

Manaroa-Hopai.—185 chains of track improved, and foot-bridge erected over Manaroa Creek—length of bridge, 40 ft. 28½ chains of track formed 2 ft. in the solid.

Fairy Bay-North-west Bay.—A mile and a half of track graded.

Crail Bay-Hamewood.—122½ chains of track formed 2 ft. in the solid; 3 miles 15 chains of track graded. Three contracts have been completed.

Crail Bay Track.—1 mile 42½ chains of track formed 2 ft. in the solid, and six gates erected. One contract completed.

Wet Inlet-Crail Bay.—6 miles 39 chains of track formed 2 ft. in the solid, 97 chains of track widened, two gates erected, and 31 cubic yards of rock-cutting.

Tawhitinui-Rai.—50 chains of track repaired. One contract completed.

Kenepuru-Endeavour Inlet.—59 chains of track formed 2 ft. in the solid; also 2 miles 40 chains of track graded. One contract completed.