

the line up to the adit of the Blackball Mine, has been finished. It is found that, with a maximum gradient of 1 in 40, the line can be carried up to a point on the left bank of Ford's Creek, and close to the mine-adit, at an estimated cost of about £30,000, in addition to the sum already expended on the bridge and approaches, and if the vote appearing on the estimates now submitted is duly passed by Parliament the work will be gone on with.

The expenditure last year amounted to £19,538, and the vote proposed for the current year is £10,000.

#### COAL CREEK.

This railway, extending from the Government railway-station at Greymouth to the newly opened State Coal-mine, a distance of about five miles, has been completed with the exception of a few small works at the terminus, and a considerable coal traffic is now being carried over it. Last year's expenditure amounted to £23,112. The amount does not appear as a disbursement out of the Public Works Fund, as it is made a charge against the State Coal-mines Account, which is a separate account. To cover the works carried out since the 31st March last, and to complete the line, a vote of £10,000 is provided on the Consolidated Fund estimates.

#### GREYMOUTH-HOKITIKA-ROSS.

The combined road and railway bridge over the Hokitika River is practically finished, and will shortly be available for traffic. The formation on the first five miles of the line is nearly ready, and platelaying will soon be begun.

Owing to the payments which had to be made on the Hokitika Bridge contract, the expenditure last year amounted to £25,063, but a smaller sum will suffice for the current year, and a vote of £15,000 is accordingly asked for.

#### OTAGO CENTRAL.

The section between Ida Valley and Ophir has been completed and opened for traffic. Goods traffic as far as Lauder has been run since quite early in the year, and similar traffic has been carried to Ophir since July last. The line was opened for passenger traffic to Ophir on the 1st September.

The earthworks on the Chatto Creek Section are well in hand, and a contract has been entered into for the bridge over the second crossing of the Manuherikia River. The next section of this line to be opened will be the section to Chatto Creek, a distance of eight miles and a half. This will bring the railway within ten miles and a half of Alexandra.

Last year's expenditure amounted to £47,997. For the current year a vote of £50,000 is provided.

#### HERIOT EXTENSION.

The formation-works on this extension have now been completed, and the bridges nearly so. A contract has been let for the station buildings at Edie, and considerable progress made with the work. A part of the rail-laying has been done, and the rest is now in hand, and every effort will be made to have the line available for traffic as early as possible. Disbursements last year were £6,057, being a few pounds in excess of the vote provided. For the current year an appropriation of £8,000 is asked for.

#### CATLIN'S-SEAWARD BUSH.

The work at the Catlin's end, which was in progress last year, has now been finished, and regular goods and passenger traffic has been run since the 1st August. A survey party has also been at work on the next section for several months, and the position of the line determined for some eleven miles. It is proposed to carry the survey right through to a junction with the Seaward Bush line at Waimahaka. The Railways Authorisation Bill now before Parliament provides for the formal authorisation of a further section of four miles at the Catlin's end of the line.