

rails have been laid to 40 m. 34 ch.; the line is partly ballasted up to 39 m., and has been fenced where it runs through private property.

Reefton-Inangahua Section.—A combined road and railway bridge has been built over the Waitahu River, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond Reefton. The bridge over the Inangahua River at the Landing Ferry has also been finished, and road-approaches have been made to it. One pier was damaged by flood in June last, and stone protection is being put round it. Some progress has also been made with the earthworks. Large parties of men are employed on the approach-banks to the Waitahu Bridge, and on stone protection for these banks.

Arthur's Pass Section.—A contract was let this month for the erection of the bridges over Goat Creek and the Rolleston River, and a start is being made with the construction of all works required between Otira Station and the Rolleston end of the Summit tunnel, excepting the banks to be made up from the tunnel-spoil. There is one large cutting on which several parties will be started, and special efforts made to secure its early completion. The distance from the end of the Otira Station-yard to the Rolleston end of the tunnel is 2 miles 28 chains.

Mount Torlesse Section (6 m. to 18 m.; length, 12 miles).—The line is finished up to Staircase, and has been opened for goods traffic to that point. It is now fit to be opened for passenger traffic to 9 miles 30 chains. There is only a short length of unfinished formation between Staircase and Broken River—about a quarter of a mile—but some of the works thereon are heavy. About a mile of service-road has been completed during the year, and at present about $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles are under construction. Work on the two unfinished tunnels between Staircase and Broken River is being carried on vigorously; one of these tunnels is $26\frac{1}{4}$ chains and the other $30\frac{1}{4}$ chains long. Of the first, 7 chains are completed and the heading put through, and 11 chains of the second is also completed, whilst the heading is about three-quarters driven. A start will shortly be made to work at four faces in the first of these tunnels—four faces are now being worked in the second in enlarging and lining it. Block-making for tunnel-lining has been carried on uninterruptedly during the year. The concrete foundation-blocks for the Staircase Viaduct were finished in December last. The contractors for the steelwork began erection in January this year, and the central steel pier has now been finished; the short span at the east end of the viaduct is nearly completed, and the staging for the other two large spans is being erected. Four small bridges beyond Staircase are finished, and the masonry and timber piers and abutments for two other somewhat larger bridges are now well advanced towards completion. The steelwork for these two bridges is being manufactured by contract. The foundations for the piers for the Broken River Bridge have been excavated, and preparations are being made to build the concrete piers. The line has been fenced up to Staircase Station.

PICTON - WAIPARA.

All the works between Scargill and the Hurunui Station, just north of the Hurunui River crossing, are finished, except the ballasting of the Hurunui Station-yard. The rails are laid up to the end of the station. The station buildings are being erected. A road has been made up the Hurunui Gorge to give access to the Hurunui Station from the main road. This station is 8 miles 54 chains beyond Scargill Station. The formation-works are in hand for about three miles beyond Hurunui Station. The works are not heavy, but an old slip has to be crossed in the gorge, and this may give trouble in excessively wet seasons. The questions of tunnelling behind the slip, or bridging over the toe of it near the river, were carefully considered, as alternatives to making the line over the slip, as is now being done. The construction of culverts is being kept well in advance of the earthworks. The bridge over the Hurunui River was completed in August last.

NGAHERE - BLACKBALL RAILWAY.

The road-approaches to Ngahere Bridge were completed early in the year. Some protective groyne of stone have been put in along the left bank of Nelson Creek to prevent possible alteration of its course. The formation-works beyond the bridge have been in hand, and some progress has been made.

COAL CREEK RAILWAY.

The works were taken over by the Railway Department on the 1st December last. Since then a station-yard has been in course of construction at Runanga, and is now nearly completed. The station-buildings are being put up. Large quantities of gravel have been hauled by this Department for metalling of streets and roads. A considerable amount of work had to be done in removing slips on the line.

HOKITIKA - ROSS RAILWAY.

The combined road and railway bridge over the Hokitika River at Hokitika was finished in October last. A contract for building bridges over Mahinapua and Fisherman's Creeks was let in February following, and these works are now in progress. The formation-works are now practically finished for $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond Hokitika, with the exception of one cutting, and of the approaches to the Hokitika Bridge at the north end. A service-line has been laid into a ballast-pit about three quarters of a mile beyond the Hokitika Bridge. Platelaying will be started almost immediately. The works are in progress to over 10 miles beyond Hokitika; the earthworks are of a relatively light character.

OTAGO CENTRAL RAILWAY.

The line was completed up to Ophir and handed over to the Working Railways on the 1st September last, the line being now finished up to $111\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Wingatui Junction.

The earthworks are now completed up to $121\frac{1}{2}$ miles. On the length from Ophir to the second crossing of the Manuherikia there are some heavy rock cuttings. Beyond this point up to near the third crossing of the Manuherikia, at 128 miles 72 chains, the heavier earthworks have been put in hand, and good progress has been made. A start has also been made with the formation