

GREYMOUTH—POINT ELIZABETH.

It was stated in last year's Public Works Statement that the above railway had been completed and opened for traffic. An extension of about four miles is now proposed, however, to open up some very fine coal-seams that have been fully proved in that locality. The survey of the line is in hand, and as soon as a definite estimate of the cost is obtained I propose to ask the House to make provision for the extension proposed out of the State Coal-mines Account.

HOKITIKA—ROSS.

The first seven miles of this line—viz., to Ruatapu, near Lake Mahinapua—was opened for regular passenger traffic on the 9th November, 1906. The formation of the remainder of the line to Ross is nearly completed, and the whole line would have been finished and open for traffic ere this had it not been for the very great delay which has taken place in the completion of the Totara Bridges contract. The timber first delivered by the contractor for these bridges was condemned, and great delay has taken place in supplying other satisfactory timber in its place. Some deliveries have recently come to hand, and the work of erecting the bridges is in progress, but it will still take several months to complete the contract, lay the rails, and finish the railway. A contract has been entered into for the station buildings at Ross.

Last year's expenditure on the line amounted to £21,628, and for the current year we propose a vote of £20,000.

CULVERDEN—HANMER.

It was mentioned in last year's Statement that a good motor-car service was proposed to be established between Culverden and Hanmer. The cars have now arrived, and are running between Culverden and the Waiau River.

Practically no expenditure came to charge against last year's vote, but for the current year an appropriation of £4,000 will be needed.

OTAGO CENTRAL.

The section between Chatto Creek and Alexandra was opened for public traffic in December, and the further section to Clyde in April last. On the completion of the line to Clyde construction-works were discontinued, and it is not proposed to take any further section of this line in hand at present. To remove any doubt as to the best route for the extension of the line when the time arrives to continue construction operations, an examination of the country on the right bank of the Clutha River and a further examination of that on the left bank has been made. The country on the left bank for some considerable distance out of Clyde is of a heavy and forbidding character, and it was suggested that a cheaper line could probably be obtained by crossing the river opposite Clyde Township, running for some miles up the opposite bank, and recrossing well before reaching Cromwell. The report of the Engineer does not, however, confirm this view.

The expenditure on the Otago Central Railway last year amounted to £38,274, which, with the value of the permanent-way materials issued, brings the gross total expenditure on the line up to £1,270,918. For the current year a vote of £10,000 is required to meet expenditure since the 1st April last and a few small liabilities at present existing.

LAWRENCE—ROXBURGH.

Considerable progress has been made with the works on this line, and the formation of the first section to Evans Flat, four miles in length, is nearly finished, and the further section from Evans Flat to Big Hill is well in hand. It is considered probable that a relocation of the line beyond this point would shorten the proposed tunnel through Big Hill and lighten the earthworks on the