

GORE-WAIKAKA.

This line was handed over to the Railway Department on 26th November, 1908, or a little earlier than anticipated in last year's Statement. It was not quite finished at that date, but the various unfinished works have been completed since.

Last year's expenditure amounted to £29,549—namely, £16,158 from the vote for railway-construction, and £13,391 from the special account established under "The Waikaka Branch Railway Act, 1905." For the current year a small vote of £3,000 will be necessary to meet expenditure already incurred.

CATLIN'S-WAIMAHAKA.

The section of this line between Catlin's River and Houipapa was available for goods traffic when last year's Statement was brought down. It has since been entirely completed, and the Public Works stone-crushing and ballasting plant removed further on. The section was handed over to the Railway Department for regular working in the early part of the present month.

The earthwork on the Papatupu section is practically completed, and plate-laying and ballasting well in hand. A great deal of work has also been done on the Table Hill section, but, being of a heavy character, it will still be some little time before it is finished.

At the Waimahaka end of the line a large amount of work has been done. The number of men has been considerably increased. The authorisation of the line at this end is about a mile and a half short of the terminus at present proposed, and provision for the necessary amendment in the Act to authorise the remaining distance is made in this year's Railways Authorisation Bill. The same Bill will also provide for an extension at the Catlin's end of the line—namely, to the confluence of the McLennan and Tahakopa Rivers.

The expenditure on the whole railway during the last financial year was £35,091, and for the current year an appropriation of £80,000 is asked for.

RIVERSDALE-SWITZERS.

Excellent work was done on this railway during the year. When last year's Statement was delivered only two miles of rails had been laid, and about eight miles of formation was in an advanced condition. The whole line—fourteen miles in length—has since been completed, and was handed over to the Railway Department for regular traffic on the 1st October last.

The expenditure during the year amounted to £20,478, and a vote for £20,000 will be necessary this year in order to clear accounts.

OREPUKI-WAIAU.

On this line also very good work was done last year, the railway having been completed and the line opened for traffic on 1st October last.

The expenditure during the year amounted to £15,846, and a vote for £15,000 is provided on the estimates to cover the expenditure of the current year.

SURVEYS.

A very considerable list of proposed surveys was mentioned by my predecessor in his last Public Works Statement—sufficient, it seems to me, to keep the officers likely to be available from the departmental staff busily employed for years to come. Much important survey-work was done during the past year, however, principally on the North Auckland, East Coast Main Trunk, Paeroa-Pokeno, Blenheim-Waipara, and Catlins-Waimahaka Railways. The other lines mentioned in Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones's list will receive attention as soon as opportunity offers.

Last year's expenditure on surveys of new lines amounted to £5,462, and for the current year a vote of £2,000 is asked for.