

## CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FORECAST.

The work connected with the duplication of the railway-lines leading from the four main centres is progressing steadily. At Auckland the double line from Newmarket to Penrose Junction has been opened for traffic. One side of the two-track Parnell railway-bridge on the Auckland side of the tunnel has been completed, and is regularly used by trains. Work on the other side is progressing favourably.

The Wellington-Hutt duplication was opened as far as Ngahauranga on 27th September, and the two-track line between Lower Hutt and Ngahauranga is regularly in use. It is anticipated that a further section—Ngahauranga to Kaiwarra—will be ready for use shortly. The construction of the new main road is now in hand, and portions of it are being daily used for vehicle traffic.

Good progress has been made between Addington and Rolleston, and I anticipate that the double line between those stations will be ready for traffic very shortly.

Of the Dunedin-Mogiel line the portion between Dunedin and Caversham is nearly completed. The Anderson's Bay Road, King Edward Road, and other smaller steel bridges have been erected, the engine-depot has been completed to meet present requirements, and about 39 chains of the Caversham Tunnel have been driven.

The Culverden-Waiiau motor service continues to give satisfaction, and it is anticipated that the bridges over the Hanmer, Percival, and Rogerson Streams will be completed in time to enable the motors to run through to Hanmer next tourist season. This will entirely obviate the necessity for the running of the coach between Waiiau Ferry and Hanmer.

The rolling-stock under order and in course of construction in the Railway workshops at the close of the year comprised 6 Class X tender engines of the four-cylinder balanced compound type, weighing in working-trim 94 tons each, 2 heavy tank engines, 12 new boilers, 48 bogie cars, 22 bogie and 1 four-wheel brake-van, 65 bogie and 1,129 four-wheeled wagons.

Messrs. A. and G. Price, of Thames, have now delivered 12 of the Class A four-cylinder balanced compound locomotives, each weighing 72 tons in working-trim, they were building under contract for the Railways, leaving 8 to complete the contract. The engines turned out by this firm have been very satisfactory.

With a view to providing for the expansion of business that must occur in the near future as a result of the increased mileage of our lines and the opening-up and settlement of new districts, the following rolling-stock will be put in hand for the year 1909-10: 10 Class A, 10 Class B, and 20 Class Wg locomotives, 40 bogie cars, 12 bogie brake-vans, 16 bogie and 738 four-wheeled wagons.

I am of opinion that the time has arrived when it is desirable to develop settlement within a reasonable distance of the main centres of population by a further inauguration of motor services. Satisfactory results have been obtained from the running of motor-cars in connection with various railway systems in different parts of the world, and, in view of the advancement that has been made in connection with the means of propulsion and construction of such cars, I am at present obtaining data respecting the results of working the different types of railway-motors used abroad, so that the most efficient and economical type of vehicle suitable for the requirements of New Zealand may shortly be brought into use on our lines.

Signalling and interlocking equipment was installed and brought into operation at Lepperton Junction, Ngahauranga, Milton, Clinton, and Pukerua. Temporary systems were installed at Newmarket Junction, Penrose Junction, Addington Junction, and Hornby Junction; also, complete system for double-line working at Newmarket, Remuera, Green Lane, Racecourse Platform, Ellerslie, and Penrose. Forty-eight stations have been equipped with fixed semaphore signals, and the sidings known as Turner's, Gardner's, Booth's, and Palmer's have been interlocked with the tablet system, as has also a railway service siding at Burnside.