

A fair amount of relaying has been done during the past four or five years. It is still desirable, in view of the increase of traffic and in engine-weights, to keep ahead of pressing requirements.

Between 1st April, 1899, and 31st March last (ten years) 929 miles of track have been relaid, viz. :—

New material :—							Miles.
56 lb. material (steel)	..	..	..	..	..	..	171
70 lb. „ „	..	..	..	..	..	..	595½
100 lb. „ „	..	..	..	..	..	..	1½
Total (new material)							768
Second-hand 53 lb. and 56 lb. material removed from main line (relaid with 70 lb.) and laid on branch lines, replacing 30 lb. and 40 lb.							161
Total relaying, 1st April, 1899, to 31st March, 1909							929

The expenditure on track renewals, which includes relaying and the provision of new sleepers, during the ten years named amounts to £1,678,526.

Sleepers.—During the year 292,549 sleepers were put in the track.

Slips and Floods.—The Foxton branch was flooded in August, interrupting traffic for four days.

In July heavy floods were experienced in South Canterbury and Otago, and a heavy snowfall in the latter district, causing delay to traffic and considerable damage to the railway-works.

Ballasting.—335,891 cubic yards of ballast were used on the track during the year. The plant on the Mount Egmont Branch has been kept fully employed for the most part in supplying metal for local road authorities.

Bridges, &c.—Bridges and culverts have been maintained in safe condition. Renewals and strengthening have been carried out.

The strengthening of the Hamilton Bridge has been completed. Approaches to new steel viaduct, Mangatowainui, Napier line, have been completed. Oreti Bridge on Mossburn Branch rebuilt.

Wharves.—Wharves have been maintained in good condition. The approaches for new wharf, Picton, have been in hand, about 51,000 cubic yards spoil having been used during the year.

Buildings.—A considerable number of houses have been erected. Mount Albert, Glenavy, and Fairlie station buildings, destroyed by fire, have been rebuilt, and several other new station buildings erected.

Miscellaneous Works.—Additions and improvements were carried out during the year amounting to £10,825, which was charged to working-expenses. The principal works were : Additions to stations and sidings at Auckland, Te Papa, Upper Hutt, Lyttelton, Coalgate, Clinton ; additions to water services at Lepperton, Greymouth, Addington Workshops, Thornbury, Colac ; additions to a number of houses ; electric lighting Invercargill workshops, goods-sheds Waitakerei and Eureka ; fire-brigade stations, and fencing workshops yard, Invercargill ; railway telephone-wire, Wellington to Petone ; engine turntable, Hawera ; fitting up store, Newmarket ; ash-pit, Timaru.

Additions to Open Lines.—The principal works carried out during the year were as follows :—

Signalling, interlocking, block-working, &c. Additions to station buildings, station yards, and sidings : Auckland, Newmarket (completion), Pukekohe (completion), Frankton Junction, Morrinsville, Te Aroha, Rukuhia, Kawa, Te Kuiti (completion), Puketutu, Waimiha, Te Koura, Marton (completion), Paekakariki, Pukerua, Ngaio, Thorndon, Port Ahuriri (completion), Wai-pukurau, Masterton (completion), Lambton, Amberley (completion), Rangiora, Waimate (completion), Waihao Downs (completion), Otekaike, Milton, Invercargill, Riversdale (completion).

Erection of new houses—on North Island Main Trunk and Manawatu line, Lepperton Junction, Eltham (completion), Culverden, Fairfax (completion).

Miscellaneous : Wharf extension, Nelson ; new wharf and storage-shed, Picton ; approaches Mangatowainui Viaduct ; additions to water services, Mercer, Te Kuiti (completion), Ohingaiti, Waiouru, Marton, Palmerston North, Paekakariki ; strengthening Hamilton Bridge ; additions to workshops, Napier (completion), Addington, Hillside, Invercargill ; engine turntables, Auckland and Christchurch Sections ; lighting engine depot, Invercargill ; new engine depot, Dunedin (part) ; store, Invercargill ; weighbridge, Lyttelton ; fencing line, Wanganui district (completion) ; flag-station between Takapau and Hatuma ; purchase of land at Longburn, Upper Hutt, and Paekakariki ; goods-shed, Wanganui Wharf ; pile-driving plant ; stockyards, Wangaehu ; stone-crushing plants, Te Kuiti (completion), Fernside (completion) ; overbridge, Timaru (completion) ; overbridge, Oamaru ; additions to goods-sheds, Auckland, New Plymouth, Waimate.

The cost of these works, charged to capital, amounts to £128,941.

Doubling and Improvement of Lines.—Auckland—Penrose : The double line between Newmarket and Penrose has been brought into use. The Parnell Bridge on one side is completed, and is being used for traffic ; the other half of the bridge is now in hand.

Hutt Road and Railway Improvement : These works have been carried on steadily, though slowly, a further length of track having been opened on the 27th September last, and the double line is now in use between Lower Hutt and Ngahauranga. The next portion to Kaiwarra will be ready in about three months.

The construction of the road is being proceeded with.

Addington—Rolleston : This work is approaching completion, and double-line working will soon be started.

Dunedin—Mosgiel : During the year fair progress has been made, the new line between Dunedin and Caversham being nearly completed. The Anderson's Bay Road, King Edward Road, and several other smaller steel bridges have been erected. The new engine-depot at Dunedin, so far as at present required, has been completed.