

SOUTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK (LATE BLenheim-Waipara) RAILWAY.

North End.

Blind River Section (33 m. 45 ch. to 37 m. 7 ch.) and *Ward Section* (37 m. 7 ch. to 48 m. 9 ch.), (in all 14 m. 44 ch. in length) were completed and handed over to the Working Railways Department for general traffic on the 15th April, 1911.

Mirza Section (48 m. 9 ch. to 51 m. 45 ch.—3 m. 36 ch. in length).—The formation of this section, which was untouched at the date of my last report, is now well in hand. Various concrete and pipe culverts and stream-diversions have been completed. A platelayers' cottage has been built at Mirza Station, and service workshops, stores, &c., at Ward Station. The formation of a further length, to the Ure River, is being put in hand.

South End.

Mackenzie Section (31 m. 67 ch. to 35 m. 50 ch.—3 m. 63 ch. in length).—Work on this section was practically complete at the end of last year. What required to be done was finished off, and the line handed over to the Railway Department for general traffic on the 1st August, 1910, as far as Mina Station.

Parnassus Section (35 m. 50 ch. to 44 m. 13 ch.—8 m. 43 ch. in length).—The line on this section, after leaving Mina, rises over a saddle and then descends to the Waiau-ua River, which it crosses near the end of section. There are two intermediate station-sites—Phœbe and Spotswood. Formation and platelaying is now complete for about three miles, or as far as Phœbe; thence to Spotswood, another 3 miles, line is nearly completed. From Spotswood to Parnassus the formation is light, and will be quickly disposed of. The bridge across the Waiau-ua—a combined road and railway structure (2,330 ft. long)—is finished and in use. Construction of the railway approach-banks is in hand, and heavy protection-works are being put in. It was hoped to have this section complete by the end of February, but damage by flood which has occurred since the end of June may cause some delay.

Mendip Section (44 m. 13 ch. onwards).—A commencement has been made in a few cuttings, and a service-road is under construction as far as 48 m. So far, practically only preliminary work has been done.

MIDLAND RAILWAY.

Nelson-Westland Section, North End.

Tui (part of Manu) Section (46 m. 38 ch. to 49 ch. 55 ch.—3 m. 17 ch. in length).—The work remaining unfinished on this section at the end of last year has been completed, including the erection of Tui Station buildings.

Glenhope Section (49 m. 55 ch. to 59 m. 19 ch.—9 m. 34 ch. (omitting short chainage) in length).—Earthwork from the end of Tui Section to the beginning of deviation at 57 m. 40 ch. has been completed, except at small block cuttings at 53 m. 49 ch. through which only a gullet has been driven, 54 m. 34 ch. at overbridge, 55 m. 29½ ch. at saddle cutting, and 57 m. 20 ch.

A large slide in the saddle cutting at 55 m. 29½ ch., which commenced in May last owing to a seam of soft material giving way at back of batter-line, has occasioned a good deal of trouble. Three parties are working at it, and it is anticipated that sufficient material will have been removed by the time the platelaying reaches that point to allow the rails to be laid through.

Bushfelling and clearing on the deviation from 57 m. 40 ch. to 59 m. 15 ch. are completed to 58 m. 31 ch. A bridge at 50 m. 68 ch., consisting of five 20 ft. spans, has been built; also a bridge at 53 m. 16 ch., consisting of five 22 ft. and one 40 ft. spans. All concrete-work at the piers has been completed, and the 40 ft. timber span has been erected. The 22 ft. plate-girders have come to hand, and riveting-up and placing on the piers is in progress.

Bridge at 55 m. 39 ch., consisting of two 22 ft. and one 40 ft. spans. Concrete abutments and piers have been completed. Arched bridge at 55 m. 55 ch.: Concrete blocks were made for the arch, and erection of the bridge is in progress. The arch has been built, and wing walls and parapets are partially completed. Various water-drives, culverts, and pipe drains were put in where necessary.

Platelaying south of Cat Creek was commenced in January, and has been extended up to the north end of the bridge at 53 m. 14 ch., and siding has been laid at Kaka Station yard. The first lift of ballast ing is done up to 53 m. 14 ch., and the second lift up to 51 m. 73 ch., and boxing-in has all been done between Kiwi and Tui. A new stone-crusher for ballast purposes has been erected at Kiwi, and is working satisfactorily. Fencing on both sides of the line from 48 m. 88 ch. to 52 m. 57 ch. was put up during the year.

Nelson-Westland Section, South End.

Cronadun-Landing Section (45 m. 40 ch. to 54 m.—8 m. 40 ch. in length).—The formation, which was well in hand at the beginning of the year, was completed, and platelaying put in hand. As soon as the rails reached the ballast-pit at Larry's Creek, ballasting was commenced, and has since been satisfactorily completed. A contract for erection of the bridges on this section was let in September, and completed in the following June. Two platelayers' cottages have been erected at the Rotokohu Station at 50 m. 17 ch., and another contract is now in hand for erection of station buildings at this and the Landing Station. Immediately on completion of the buildings the line can be opened for traffic.

Arrangements are being made to put further work in hand on the first two miles of the next section, the big cutting and platelaying have been already completed as far as the Landing Bridge at 54 m. 28 ch.