

Henderson, Ruakura (part), Pukekohe (part), and Invercargill (part); new houses at Frankton (completion), Ohinewai, Taumarunui, Ohakune (part), Owaka (part), Lumsden, and Otorohanga; purchase of land at Whangarei, Otahuhu, Ngauruawahia, Palmerston North, Carterton, Plimmer-ton, Papanui, Christchurch, Addington, and One-tree Point; additions to workshops at Whangarei (completion), Petone (completion), Addington, and Newmarket (part); extension of veranda at Gore (completion); extension of platforms at Palmerston North and Auckland; new goods-sheds at Morton Mains and Dashwood (part); additions to goods-sheds at Christchurch and Invercargill (part); grade improvements, Auckland-Mercer (part); weighbridge at Port Ahuriri (completion); turntables at Paekakariki and Christchurch; overbridges at Newmarket (Park Road) (completion), Avondale, Morningside (completion), and Mount Eden (part); reclama-tions at Mechanics Bay (part) and Bluff (part); stockyards at Mangapeehi (completion) and Outram; new wharves and additions at Picton (completion) and Opuia (part); engine-depots at Newmarket (part), Rotorua, Linwood (part), and Paekakariki (part); gas-lighting at Puke-kohe; new tablet stations at Marakeke, Hangatiki, Rangiriri, Wiri, and Takanini; wagon-repair shed at Taumarunui (completion); crane at Hawera (completion); improved drainage at Taumarunui and Wellington; new district offices at Christchurch (completion); new station and yard at Picton (part); slipway at Lake Wakatipu (part); stone-crusher at Mount Albert; tunnel duplication at Auckland (Parnell) (part); wharf-extension at Nelson (completion); engine-shed extension at Thorndon; improved coal-storage at Frankton.

Doubling and Improvement of Lines.—Dunedin-Mosgiel: The new Chain Hills tunnel was opened and single-line working on new line between Abbot's Creek and Wingatui new station brought into operation on the 23rd March, 1914. This duplication is approaching completion.

New Hutt Road: This was vested in the Wellington City Corporation by His Excellency the Governor's Proclamation on the 17th March, 1914. During May, 1913, a large slip came down at Ngahauranga, and a further slip occurred at the same place in the following August. The value of the material from this place which was used for reclamation on the railway has been credited to the construction authority.

Grade improvements, North Island Main Trunk line: The expenditure for the year amounted to £25,585. The grade easement north of Whangarata has been finished, and that north of Pokeno is almost complete. A start is being made between Drury and Paerata. A larger authorization is desirable so that much-needed improvements may be made in reasonable time. The deviation at Manawapou has been practically completed.

Parnell tunnel duplication: The earthworks are well advanced, and a start has been made with the driving at the Auckland end of the tunnel.

Reclamation, Mechanics Bay, Auckland.—The Auckland Harbour Board has had this in hand under agreement with the Department. Expenditure for the year, including purchase of land, £30,002. It is anticipated that the work will be completed by the stipulated time—November, 1915.

Expenditure.—The amount expended by this branch during the year was as under: Main-tenance, charged to working-expenses, £763,207 = £267 per mile of railway; other expenditure, chargeable to capital, other Government Departments, and public and private parties, £277,957: total, £1,041,164.

Mileage.—The mileage open for traffic on the 31st March, 1914, was 2,863 miles 16 chains, the length opened during the year being 3 miles 6 chains.

Lands and Leases.—Number of leases registered during the year, 579; annual rental, £2,454. Leases current at 31st March, 1914, 4,595; annual rental, £33,051. Private-siding agreements registered during the year, 48; annual rental, £910. Private-siding agreements current at 31st March, 1914, 360; annual rental, £7,392. Proclamations taking or giving up land, 64. Total amount of compensation paid during the year for land, £20,859.

Staff.—Maintenance Branch working staff, 4,160 men; office staff, 135: total, 4,295.

SIGNAL AND ELECTRICAL.

Fixed Signals at Officered Stations.

During the past year seventeen stations have been fitted with fixed semaphore signals, viz.: Ranfurly, Middlemarch, Hyde, Wiri, Waitakere, Waimauku, Waikumete, Kamo, Te Rapa, Takanini, Oringi, Motumaoho, Kopua, Kiwitahi, Otiria, Whakapara, Onoke ballast-pit.

Total number of officered stations (including tablet stations), 469; equipped with fixed signals, 245; interlocked, 82; unequipped, 142.

Interlocking of Points and Signals.

The electro-pneumatic installation at Dunedin has worked satisfactorily.

The following places have been signalled and interlocked: Taumarunui, Te Kuiti, Mount Eden, Wingatui new station.

The interlocking has been added to and rearranged at Auckland, Penrose, Taihape, Palmers-ton North, Paekakariki, Timaru, Lower Hutt, Studholme, Invercargill, and Greymouth.

The following sidings have been interlocked with the tablet system: Post and Telegraph Department's siding, Addington; Auckland Brick Company's siding, New Lynn; Railway sawmill siding, Ohakune.

During the year all stations (125) in the North Island equipped with fixed signals have been fitted with special switch-locks, interlocking the crossing loop facing points with the respective home signals, and a start has been made to similarly equip all stations in the South Island.

The interlocking at Morningside and Mount Albert is in hand.

Total stations now interlocked, 82; tramway crossings interlocked, 6; intermediate sidings interlocked with tablet, 25.

Expenditure for the year was—New works, £15,944 5s. 7d.; maintenance, £7,773 2s. 3d.