

*Matapihi Section* (41 m. 5 ch. to 45 m. 0 ch.; length, 3 miles 75 chains).—The formation from 41 m. 5 ch. to the Tauranga Bridge has been completed, and both abutments of the bridge built up with stone. The Tauranga Harbour Bridge, consisting of fourteen 104 ft. steel spans, was completed in April, 1924. The work done during the year consisted of the completion of the fabrication at the Mount yard, while on the bridge itself piers A to H and O to P were completed, eleven spans completely finished, and the whole fourteen riveted and painted, including all necessary false work and the dismantling of same. (See photo.) Rails were laid from 41 m. 5 ch. to 42 m., the line over the Tauranga Bridge being only temporary, pending the arrival of the heavy rails and special sleepers. Ballasting has been completed from 42 m. to 41 m. 5 ch., and this portion of the section was opened for traffic in June. On the remainder of the section traffic was carried throughout the year.

*Te Puke Section* (45 m. to 54 m.; length, 9 miles).—This section has been open for traffic throughout the period. In addition to maintenance, a little extra ballasting and a few alterations to bridges and culverting were carried out. The heavy floods in April damaged this portion somewhat, and traffic was disorganized for a few days. At the quarry 15,318 cubic yards of ballast or road-metal were crushed, and 8,511 cubic yards of one-man size spalls for pitching purposes were delivered.

*Paengaroa Section* (54 m. 59 ch. to 59 m. 67 ch.; length, 5 miles 67 chains).—This section is open for traffic, and the usual maintenance was carried out; in addition all buildings and cottages were repainted and overhauled.

*Otamarakau Section* (64 m. 15 ch. to 71 m. 5 ch.; length, 6 miles 60 chains).—This section has been open for traffic and the usual maintenance carried out. In addition, a certain amount of construction was carried out in the widening of banks and formation at Pukehina and Otamarakau station-yards. Additional fencing and cattle-stops, and the completion of reinforced-concrete bridge at 70 m. 77 ch. were also carried out. About 1,245 cubic yards of ballast from the Matata pit was placed on the section.

*Matata Section* (71 m. 5 ch. to 79 m. 16 ch.; length, 8 miles 11 chains).—Section open for traffic. General maintenance carried out, and new construction, consisting of bank-widening, 8 ft. flat-topped culvert at 71 m. 62 ch., and slab-topped bridge at 72 m. 43 ch. 2,074 cubic yards of new ballast were placed on the section. The Matata ballast-pit has been fully opened up, the strippings used for bank raising and widening on various sections, and the shingle for ballasting and road-metal supplies to local bodies. The total output was 28,460 cubic yards spoil, 21,269 cubic yards metal, and 127 cubic yards rock spalls. A steam-shovel has been installed in pit for loading both strippings and ballast.

*Rangitaiki Section* (79 m. 16 ch. to 87 m. 45 ch.; length, 8 miles 29 chains).—This section was opened for traffic in November of last year. Construction work has consisted of widening and forming approaches to the Tarawera Bridge, and the completion of formation at Awakaponga, Rangitaiki, and Tarawera station-yards. The Tarawera Bridge, at 83 m. 50 ch., consisting of six 30 ft. girder spans on pile piers, was completed. A number of sidings were laid in Tarawera yard, and 6,960 cubic yards of ballast from the Matata pit were placed on the section. Station-buildings are all well in hand at Awakaponga, Rangitaiki, and Tarawera station-yards.

*Awakeri Section* (87 m. 45 ch. to 91 m. 40 ch.; length, 3 miles 75 chains).—This section was opened for all classes of traffic in November, 1923, and in addition to the usual maintenance the following new construction was carried out: The Awakeri station-yard was widened and road-deviation completed; 30 chains of sidings were laid in the Awakeri yard, and 2,315 cubic yards of ballast placed on the section; station-buildings at Awakeri were completed.

*Taneatua Section* (91 m. 40 ch. to 100 m. 6 ch.; length, 8 miles 46 chains).—Good progress was made with the formation, which is now practically completed. 2 miles 69 chains of fencing was completed, and two large culverts built. Three steam-shovels were employed on this section, and altogether 130 chains of earthwork was completed, including the extra heavy earthwork between 96 m. 50 ch. and 98 m. 27 ch. The formation of Peketahi and Taneatua Stations has been completed, and the large station at Kiwinui is in hand. The formation of a ballast siding to the shingle deposits in the Whakatane River is in hand, and it is hoped to start ballasting from this pit in three months. All piles have been driven for the slab-topped bridge of three 20 ft. spans over the Mission Creek Stream at 95 m. 38 ch. The Waioho Bridge, at 96 m. 73 ch., consisting of two 35 ft., three 25 ft., and one 20 ft. plate girder spans on pile piers, was completed. At the Whakatane Bridge all concrete piles have been cast, and temporary staging has been erected across the river. The piles in the first four piers have been driven. Concrete piers B and C are completed, and girders are being erected in the Mount yard. Permanent-way has been laid from 96 m. 50 ch. to 98 m. 27 ch., and 17 chains of sidings laid in the Peketahi station-yard. The erection of cattle-yards and platform-fronts at Peketahi station-yard is in hand.

*Mount Branch* (0 m. to 4 m. 7 ch.; length, 4 miles 7 chains).—The section has been open for traffic, but no new construction has been carried out. The usual maintenance was carried out. A large amount of work has been carried out in the Mount workshops, both for the local railway and for works in other districts. The principal work has been the fabrication of bridge girders, trusses, &c., for local railway and highway construction, as well as for similar work for the Auckland and Taumarunui districts. In addition to this, all engines and other rolling-stock, as well as plant generally, both for construction and general traffic purposes, have been maintained in good condition. General repair work has been carried out in connection with the Lands Department's dredges, and part of the new Waihou dredge has been fabricated. The general goods and passenger service between the Mount and Matata has been maintained, with extension to Awakeri on 12th November, 1923, and to Tauranga in June, 1924.