

culverts of varying sizes have been built throughout the section. At 17 m. 35 ch. the 10½-chain tunnel has been completed, and at 18 m. 30 ch. the work is well in hand. The approaches for the tunnel at 19 m. 70 ch. have been opened up, and a start will shortly be made with the actual driving itself.

A sawmill has been established north-east of Waikoau Station, and a road formed and metalled to it. It is anticipated that this mill will provide the majority of the timber required for these works from the beginning of next summer. Three platelayers' cottages in concrete blocks have been built at Waipunga station-yard, and a fourth is in hand. A construction depot has been established at Waipunga station-yard, and various temporary construction buildings have been built at Waikoau station-yard. Workmen's accommodation has entailed a considerable amount of work, twelve married men's houses, eighty-one huts, and two cookhouses having been built.

The most exceptional floods of March last did considerable damage to the railway-works and the lines of communication, and this caused considerable delay. The rainfall was phenomenal, and probably a record for intensity in New Zealand.

STRATFORD MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY (EAST END).

Matiere Section (0 m. to 10 m. 23 ch.; length, 10 miles 23 chains).—The formation on this section has been completed. The principal earthwork carried out during the year was in connection with the formation of station-yards at Tuhua and Matiere. The lining of tunnel at 4 m. 65 ch. has been completed in brick, the work being carried out while traffic was in progress. Road-deviations at 5 m. 50 ch. and 9 m. 64 ch. have been completed and metalled. At the Tuhua station-yard the overbridge, consisting of two 25 ft. and two 20 ft. spans, is practically finished, and the foundations of piers for the overbridge at 10 m. 23 ch. have been laid and are ready for the superstructure. The road-bridge at 6 m. 64 ch. on the Ohura Road deviation, consisting of one 30 ft. rolled-steel joist span, has been completed and painted. All permanent-way has been laid on the section with the exception of a small amount of siding in the Tuhua station-yard. The second lift of ballast has been placed throughout the section, and the Ohura County Council has been supplied with about 2,000 cubic yards of shingle for roadwork. Contracts are being let for the station-buildings at Tuhua and Matiere, and this, and the final lift of ballasting, is practically all that is now required to complete the section. A passenger and goods service has been maintained between Okahukura and Matiere, which has served the district well, although interfering somewhat with the working of ballast-trains, which are now running a distance of 20 miles each way.

Ohura Section (10 m. 23 ch. to 19 m. 10 ch., length, 8 miles 67 chains).—Formation work on this section is now completed to 13 m. 54 ch., except for small deviations at 11 m. 40 ch. and at 13 m. 16 ch. From 13 m. 54 ch. to 14 m. 50 ch. cuttings have been excavated and banks formed wide enough to allow the rails to be laid. The objective on this section has been to connect up with Toitoto at 16 m. in order to facilitate the conveyance of materials, goods, and passengers to this point. From Toitoto to Ohura Township there is a good metalled road, and every endeavour was made to reach this point in June. In order to do so a light line on temporary alignment, consisting of 40 lb. rails, was laid from 14 m. 50 ch. over easy country, and connected with the permanent centre-line again at 16 m. The object of this tram-line was to avoid the heavy earthworks between 15 m. and 16 m., and to avoid two crossings of the Ohura River at 15 m. 47 ch. and 15 m. 65 ch. The rails reached Toitoto on 30th June, but, owing to the very heavy rains, difficulty was experienced in maintaining the tram-line over the new banks. It is hoped, however, to inaugurate the goods and passenger service within a few weeks. Temporary bridges have been erected at 11 m. 40 ch., 13 m. 16 ch., and at 14 m. 64 ch. These will enable traffic to be dealt with and material to be carried forward whilst the permanent bridges are under construction. The material for the latter is now coming to hand, and a commencement will be made with the erection immediately. A number of culverts, ranging from 18 in. to 5 ft., have been constructed between 10 m. 50 ch. and 14 m. 34 ch. Road-deviations at 11 m. 23 ch. and 12 m. 16 ch. are almost completed, and 400 chains of fencing have been erected.

STRATFORD-MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY (WEST END.)

Tahora Section (42 m. 26 ch. to 47 m. 40 ch.; length, 5 miles 14 chains).—All formation work, platelaying, ballasting, &c., was completed on this section by March last, but unfortunately very heavy floods were experienced, and a considerable amount of damage took place, which will take some months to repair. As the section of this line which is under the control of the Railway Department had also been very seriously damaged, and many roads practically blocked, all workmen were taken off the section and utilized either to assist the Railway Department in clearing their section or in opening up some of the roads. The principal work carried out during the year was the completion of private crossings, approach fences at Tahora station-yard, the placing of concrete walls at bridge-ends at 42 m. 64 ch. and 43 m. 54 ch., and the final ballasting of the section. 4,760 cubic yards of ballast was placed on the section during the period. A bi-weekly passenger and goods service is being run over the section, connecting with the opened railway at Kohuratahi.

Raekohua Section (47 m. 40 ch. to 50 m. 60 ch.; length, 3 miles 20 chains).—The only work carried out on this section was the survey for service tram and the preparation of plans. The hardwood timber for the road-bridges came to hand, and has been stacked at Te Wera pending the continuation of the work.

Heao Section (50 m. 60 ch. to 57 m.; length, 6 miles 20 chains).—Tram- and jig-line surveys have been carried out on this section, and some refinements of location between 53 m. and 54 m. are being investigated.