

Stratford Main Trunk Railway.—On the eastern end the passenger and goods service has been well maintained between Okahukura and Ohura, and early this year a goods service was started to Tokirima, thus extending the means of transport a further distance of 8 miles. The total distance over which this service is now run is 27 miles from the North Island Main Trunk Railway, and settlers are thus receiving most of the benefits of a completed railway in the transport of stock and manures, &c., particularly as through rates are given to and from any stations on the opened railways.

On the western end the tri-weekly goods and passenger service has been maintained between Tahora and Tangarakau, a distance of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. This has enabled the coal from the Egmont Collieries mine at Tangarakau to be marketed.

The formation has steadily progressed during the year. On the Tokirima Section the earthwork formation is practically complete. The six tunnels, aggregating $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles in length, have been finished.

The bulk of the work is now being concentrated on the Heao Section (3 miles 50 chains in length). Three bridges over the Heao Stream are being erected, and the remaining two tunnels are in hand. No. 1 Tunnel (8 chains long) has been pierced, and is now being enlarged and concrete-lined.

The Mangatete Tunnel (55 chains long) is manned at both ends, 20 chains of bottom heading being driven on the east end and 22 chains on the west end. Approximately 8 chains of enlargement and concrete-lining has been completed at the west end.

The Tangarakau River Bridge, consisting of 25 ft., 30 ft., 60 ft., 80 ft., and 60 ft. girder spans, has been completed.

The work on this railway is nearing completion, and the line should be ready for handing over to the Railway Department about July, 1932.

Wellington - Tawa Flat Deviation.—During the year work has been continued on the sea-wall, which has been extended a further 22 chains, and at Kaiwarra the embankment has been extended a distance of 16 chains.

The No. 1 Tunnel has been enlarged to full size and concreted throughout its entire length, a distance of 61·58 chains.

The No. 2 Tunnel has progressed satisfactorily. The heading from the north end has been extended 54 chains and from the south end $54\frac{1}{4}$ chains. There is still approximately $21\frac{1}{2}$ chains of heading to complete. The tunnel has been enlarged and concreted for a further 38 chains during the period.

Tunnel-work was interrupted for a period of nine weeks on account of the disinclination of the tunnel-workers to accept the modified prices fixed by the Government. This has now been overcome.

The formation has been completed from 6 miles 14 chains to 8 miles 26 chains, except for a small gap at 6 mile 72 chain peg. Concrete culverts have been placed totalling 488 lineal feet, and five girder bridges have been erected.

Midland Railway.—The construction of this railway was closed down in January last, and up to this date formation had practically been completed to 82-mile peg. Everything was in readiness for platelaying and ballasting to commence, and this work could have been proceeded with without interruption up to 82-mile peg, a distance of 14 miles.

Westport-Inangahua Railway.—The formation is progressing satisfactorily. The Cascade Section, 3 miles 8 chains in length, is practically complete, and coal traffic from Cascade Mines has been carried over it.

On the Hawk's Crag Section, 9 miles long, formation has been completed for a distance of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. A start has been made with driving the bottom heading for the tunnel at 13 miles 41 chains. Owing to an unfortunate disaster, involving the death of three men, and owing to disputes regarding tunnel prices, operations were suspended. The parties have now been reorganized and a fresh start is being made.

The erection of the Cascade Creek Bridge at 9-mile peg, consisting of five 80 ft. and one 40 ft. spans, is in hand. This bridge is on a $7\frac{1}{2}$ -chain curve, and massive concrete piers have been placed. It is anticipated that this bridge will be completed in about twelve months' time. A suspension bridge 530 ft. long over the Buller River has been erected to enable workmen to reach their work on the opposite side of the river from the camps.