



NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE,
(PROVINCE OF NELSON.)

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ALFRED GREENFIELD, Provincial Secretary.

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Superintendent's Office,
Nelson, 24th April, 1868.

THE SUPERINTENDENT directs the publication of the following Report for general information.

ALFRED GREENFIELD,
Provincial Secretary.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PROVINCIAL
ENGINEER ON PUBLIC WORKS EXECUTED
DURING THE PAST YEAR.

Provincial Engineer's Office,
Nelson, 13th April, 1868.

To the Provincial Secretary,
Nelson.

SIR,—I have the honor to forward, for the information of His Honor the Superintendent, my Annual Report on the Public Works executed, or being executed, in the several Districts of the Province during the past year. I shall commence with—

NELSON AND ITS VICINITY.

NELSON.

Government Buildings.—The contract for painting and sanding the whole of the Government Buildings and Court House has been completed in a very satisfactory manner by the contractor, Mr. Louisson. It was, however, found necessary to give one coat of paint more than specified to the front and eastern side of the main building, in order to make a thoroughly good job. This and the repairs which had been effected previously have made the buildings much more water-tight than before, although in storms of rain there are still a few places, as I anticipated, which are leaky. The slate roof has also been thoroughly overhauled and repaired.

Police Station.—This building, which was proposed in my last year's report, as being necessary to give increased accommodation in office room and the number of cells, has been erected under contract by Messrs. Moore and Conway, and could very soon be made ready for occupation. The vote, however, has been exceeded in completing the work as far as it has gone, and it will require an additional sum to make it complete. The adjoining yard should be well fenced, and the surface of the ground levelled and covered with clean shingle. Some internal fittings will also be needed. It has been erected on the site of the old Government Offices in the Depot.

Fire-Engine House and Hose-Reel.—Near the new Police Station have been erected a Fire-engine House and a Bell-tower, under contract with Mr. Gilbertson, and the whole has been completed in a very creditable manner. The Engine House has been made large enough to contain the fire-engine, hook and ladder carriage, and hose-reel, with a room overhead in which the Brigade may hold their meetings.

The New Hose-Reel has also been completed, the design being an improvement on the first one obtained from Dunedin. It was manufactured by Mr. H. Balme, and is well and strongly made; it is now lodged in the old Engine House.

Gaol Additions and Alterations.—These, which were mentioned in last year's report as being contracted for, have been completed in a very substantial manner by the contractor, Mr. J. Scott. The increased accommodation is found to be of the greatest convenience, and the Gaol, I should hope, will answer all our requirements for a long time to come. It has, however, a fault common to nearly all Provincial Gaols, viz., that we cannot yet classify and keep apart the different classes of prisoners.

This state of things points to the necessity of some central penal establishment, to which the worst criminals could be sent and there confined, so as to be entirely separated from the ordinary class of prisoners.

The alterations now enable us to keep entirely separate the female prisoners, and their accommodation is much improved.

I have to report, while on this head, that the dwelling-house attached to the Gaol appears to be too small for the Gaoler and his family. A very moderate addition would remedy this defect, and I should recommend its being carried out as soon as possible.

Government Wharf, and removing Buoy Rock.—Only a portion of the money voted under this head has been expended in making what were absolutely necessary repairs, which consisted of driving a number of new piles wherever the old ones were most decayed or worm-eaten, and in repairing the floor of the wharf where necessary. It was considered advisable that Mr. Balfour's Report on Nelson Harbor should be received and considered, before making any extensive additions to the wharf, or in expending any money on the Buoy Rock. This report has very lately been received, and will demand careful consideration.

Queen's Warehouse.—This building, which was ordered from England, is constructed of corrugated iron walls and roof, with cast-iron pilasters, which carry the iron framing of the roof, and also the wooden beams and joists which support the upper floor, which is of wood. It is now being erected by contract by Mr. J. Scott, and is nearly completed. The foundations, which are of stone, were let under another contract to Messrs. Jennings and Simpson, the pitching of the ground floor being included in their contract. This work they are now about to proceed with.

The fitting of the ironwork of the building is not of that satisfactory character which I should have expected of Messrs. F. Morton and Co.; but the whole, when completed, will be a substantial, commodious, and durable building.

Swinging Apparatus for the Correction of Ships' Compasses.—This structure has been completed in what I hope will prove to be a substantial and durable manner, the piles being of sound black birch, covered below water with Muntz-metal, to protect them from marine worms.

The original contractor, Mr. Robert Carter, failed to carry out this work, which was finally completed by Mr. W. Akersten in a satisfactory manner.

New Hospital.—This building would have been much nearer completion than it now is, had the contractor, Mr. W. T. Good, not been delayed on more than one occasion by the want of materials. In the first instance he was disappointed in the delivery of the timber, and he is now waiting the arrival from England of the cast-iron spouting and curved corrugated plating for the verandah roofs. Some time was also lost for the want of a proper supply of slates. The building, however, is now approaching completion, and will, I think, fully realise my expectations, for convenience and general adaptation to its intended purpose. Although the sum voted for this building last year has not all been spent, there have been incurred several extra items of expense beyond the actual contract price, such as earth excavation to obtain material for foundations and space for detached buildings, also a few extra windows between the wards and nurses' rooms, skylight, &c., &c. There will also be required a washhouse and dead house, and provision must be made for these and all the necessary internal fittings and furniture, which were not included in the first specification.

The ground around the buildings will also require to be levelled and formed, and drained, and well covered with a good layer of fine clean gravel. Some work will also be needed to form and gravel the road, trim and clean the fences, erect gates, &c., &c.

Buildings for Lunatics and Poor.—It has been found necessary to make a few alterations, repairs, and additions to these: one or two small rooms have been added, and also an inclosed yard for the male lunatic patients. Application has been made by the manager for increased accommodation for the female patients, and I have already submitted for approval a plan and estimate for an additional female ward, which it is most probable will be found to be required when the subject is brought under consideration.

Foot-bridge over Maitai, in Nile-street.—After the contract for this bridge had been let, and the work commenced, a very heavy flood occurred in the Maitai, higher than before known, which made it evident that the bridge as designed would be too low; it was therefore arranged to heighten the piers and lengthen the approaches, at an increased cost. Mr. Gilbertson, the contractor, has just now finished his contract as far as the wood-work is concerned, and as soon as the necessary earth-work, now in hand, for the approaches, shall have been completed, the bridge will be open for public traffic. A few days will effect this.

Maitai River Banks—Protection of Roads and Bridges.—The flood above spoken of has compelled our attention to this work, the most serious damage having been inflicted just above Collingwood Bridge, where a considerable amount of land was carried away, so as to encroach on the roadway and threaten the safety of the southern approach of the bridge. At a point a short distance above Bridge-street Bridge, also, the banks have been much damaged, the mischief being aggravated apparently by the rush of Brook-street stream at its junction with the Maitai.

I have prepared plans for protective works at each of these places, and the work is being proceeded with at the first two.

I propose to erect, at the junction of the brook, a breakwater similar to one built a few years ago in the Maitai, for the purpose of checking the force of the smaller stream, and confining its action to the near side of the bed of the Maitai. This work is now advertised for tender.

Fencing Victory Square.—The square has been enclosed with a seven-wire fence, by Messrs. Braithwaite and Morton, contractors for the work; the standards being of iron, and the straining-posts of wood, well and substantially erected.

Two iron wickets and one iron cart-gate have been provided to give access to the square.

The fence, I think, would be improved by the addition, at intervals, of stout wooden posts, to ensure its greater stiffness against the pressure of crowds.

Road to Quarantine Ground and Dip.—This work is now in progress, having been let by contract; it consists principally of forming a roadway over two pieces of swamp; this is being done by laying bundles of manuka on the surface, and of throwing on them the material excavated from a large ditch alongside; also of draining the swamp to some extent by cutting a ditch through the hard ground into the adjoining tideway.

It will shortly be completed, but additional work will be required in levelling and forming beyond the point described, and one or two small bridges will be required.

Pelorus Road, Repairs.—A succession of heavy floods has considerably damaged this road in the Maitai Valley, and rendered necessary extensive repairs in several places; many parts of the old road which never before had been reached by any flood, were by this year's floods submerged to a depth of several feet, and torn to pieces. Several old bridges and culverts have been repaired, and one tolerably large bridge at the extremity of the gorge in the North Maitai has been almost entirely renewed; the road generally has been repaired, and cleared of fallen timber, &c., &c.

Gravel-sifting Machine.—This machine has arrived in Nelson; also a small steam-engine to work it, as well as a horse-power for the same purpose. I had the machine put together in the Depot yard, and tried with ordinary river gravel; a short trial convinced me that no economy would result from its use, and that, could we work it, incessant expense would be incurred to keep it in repair, to such an extent as to forbid all idea of using it. I have therefore had it taken to pieces and stowed away.

The engine, on the other hand, has been most useful, and has been at work almost constantly since its trial, engaged in driving piles, for which purpose I had it specially fitted; it is now at work at the Waimea bridge.

The "horse-power" should, I think, be sold, as we shall not require it; it seems to be a strong serviceable piece of work.

Maintenance of Bridges, &c.—A considerable portion of this vote has been spent in repairing damage done to the embankment beyond the Wairoa bridge, which suffered during one very heavy flood. The stones forming the embankment were not entirely carried away, but those on the top were merely washed a little lower down, the effect being to give a longer slope below the roadway, thus really producing a form of embankment stronger to resist future floods; the crown of the roadway has been made good with other stones carted for the purpose, and over the whole of the lower slope the stones have been properly packed and "feathered," to resist the disturbing action of the water. I do not apprehend any serious damage to this work in future.

The floor of the bridge itself has needed considerable repairs, and has not been attended to as well as I could have desired. I intend to have it thoroughly examined and repaired, and have given orders for this to be done, after which some fresh arrangement may be made by which it shall be well maintained.

Damages to Bridge-street bridge also have been made good, as well as repairs to the floor of that and Collingwood-street bridges; the latter suffered in some of the late floods, by the displacement of some of the rocks, packed around the north pier, for its protection; these are now being replaced by heavier ones.

Botanical Garden Reserve.—Although not the subject of any vote, the reserve has been almost entirely levelled by prison labor; the whole having been first carefully surveyed and level pegs put in for the purpose. Some provision will be required for the effectual drainage of this ground, as a large quantity of water descends from the hills at the back, and becomes ponded for want of an outlet—which could be obtained by cutting a channel from Milton-street along Bridge-street to the Maitai.

This has been the subject of correspondence with the Board of Works, but no decision has yet been arrived at. It is very desirable that some arrangement should be made for this purpose as soon as possible.

Nelson Waterworks.—I have much satisfaction in being able to report that all the plant has arrived from England safely, and that the whole of the cast-iron main piping is now laid from the dam to the town, and in the several streets of the town embraced in the original plan.

This work was completed on the 28th March, having been a few days less than twenty weeks in hand.

The dam also has been completed and appears to be perfectly substantial and secure, having stood the test of several heavy floods.

The reservoir has now been completed for some time, and has been filled with water several times. Some little delay in finishing this work was occasioned by a strong spring of water from an adjoining hill, which did not shew itself in force until the wet weather had commenced. The means taken to remedy the mischief which this spring was likely to cause to the work have been successful, the spring having been cut through, and the water diverted by a deep drain and culvert.

The full pressure of water from the dam has now been laid on in the pipes for some weeks, and, with a few very trifling casualties, easily rectified, the works have been placed in a state of completeness and efficiency, as has been proved by repeated trials and inspection. The house services have been laid in several streets, and in a few weeks more they will be all laid, as well as the wharf services for supplying the shipping.

The principal contracts under this head have generally been well and faithfully carried out. Amongst them I may mention that for the dam and retaining wall by Messrs. Bray and Lloyd, who also executed the pipe bridges, and the contract for forming the road up to the reservoir. The reservoir was executed by Mr. John Scott in a very creditable manner. The contractor for the pipe-laying failed to carry through his contract, and this part of the work has been carried out by the Government, principally by day labor; sub-contracts however were let where practicable for trenching, carting, and the necessary mason-work.

Although some work yet remains to be done, such as fencing, &c., and a few other items, the accounts are sufficiently made up to warrant me in congratulating the Province on the fact that the whole expense of the work will be considerably under the estimated sum of £20,000 when fully complete.

As the town has considerably increased in size since the first design for the works was made, it will, without doubt, be necessary to extend the main pipes

in several directions to meet the increased requirements.

COUNTRY DISTRICTS.

Road by Pigeon Valley into Motueka Valley.—The amount voted for this road has been judiciously expended in repairing the old bridges in that part of the road lying in Pigeon-valley, or in replacing them with new ones, wide enough for cart traffic, and in generally repairing the other parts of the road most requiring it. It is proposed to improve the portion of this road lying between Stanley-brook and Motueka-valley, and convert it into a dray-road, so as to give the settlers in Stanley-brook an outlet to some main road. It is reported to me that this could be done at a moderate expense, and I think it is deserving of attention, either on the present line, or on another which has been suggested as offering better gradients over the range.

Roads into Dove Dale.—The sum voted under this head was apportioned to the different districts interested—one portion to the Motueka Road Board, another to the Pangatotara Road Board, with instructions as to the manner of expenditure, as far as could be given. Another portion was spent in improving the horse-road from Thorpe, in Dovedale, to the Motueka-valley, by what is called "Sunday-valley."

Except in the latter case, I believe the sums distributed were not considered sufficient, considering the great lengths of road to be kept up, and I believe a further amount could be spent with great advantage to the districts interested.

Roads between Wai-iti, Motueka-valley, Motupiko, Tadmor, and Wangapeka.—Repairs and improvements have been executed under this head, on the road over Spooner's Range, and on the road in the Tadmor-valley, and over the range as far as the Wangapeka Plains.

The dray-road has also been extended up the Tadmor for upwards of half a-mile. Other repairs on these lines of road are still needed, as the sum voted, being spread over such a length of line, will not effect substantial or extensive improvement. Some necessary formal alterations of roads have been effected in the Motupiko district.

Waimea Bridge.—The contract for the erection of this bridge has been let to Messrs. Bray and Lloyd, and the work is now in active progress. They are now driving the piles in the second pier, and are framing together the fourth truss, or span.

The bulk of the timber for this work was cut and delivered on the site during the winter months; and the iron work was also delivered on the ground preparatory to calling for tenders for its erection; the contract for which includes the timber for the approaches. The work is progressing, so far, very satisfactorily. The piles are being well and firmly driven, and the framing well fitted together.

Cart-Bridges, Wai-iti.—Plans and specifications have been prepared for a cart-bridge over the Wai-iti, on what is called "White's line," leading to a newly-opened line of road, past Tomlinson's, in Waimea-west; and tenders for the work have been advertised for. The river at the site selected runs in two channels, in floods; the lesser channel ordinarily being dry, or nearly so.

I propose to bridge only the large channel, and raise a low embankment, or dam, across the smaller, as has been done at the Wairoa.

I believe the want of a good cart-bridge is much felt where the Main South Road crosses the same river, the Wai-iti. The site, however, is not at all favourable on the line of road, and the cost would

be considerable to divert the road to where a good and unchanging site could be obtained, viz., near to the hills, east of the present road.

I should recommend that the locality be well examined and surveyed, with the object of designing and erecting a bridge where most convenient.

Horse-Bridge, Motueka River.—No expenditure has been made under this head, and no survey has yet been made of the river, for the purpose of determining the site. It may, however, now be made the subject of early attention.

A foot-bridge has been erected across an overflow of the Motueka River, at Edelsten's Ferry-house, on the Riwaka side, and will, I doubt not, prove to be a great convenience to foot passengers crossing by the ferry.

Motueka Jetty repairs, and Store-house.—The store-house has been erected, and the repairs have been completed. It has been found necessary to add six chafing-piles on the southern side of the jetty, to allow steamers to lie alongside without damage to themselves or the jetty. This work has been let, and will shortly be finished.

Hurunui Bridge.—This work, which had been placed by agreement in the hands of the Canterbury Government for execution, has, according to the last accounts, been destroyed during its erection by a very heavy flood, leaving only the wrought iron piles, more or less bent, standing in the river bed. It is now proposed by the Canterbury Government to adopt another site, and increase the sum necessary for its erection in consequence to £8,000, the original amount having been £6,000. From what I remember of the locality proposed for the new site, that is, a mile and a quarter below the first one at Hastie's. I do not think favourably of it, although on one side (the south) a high bank could be obtained to start from, but there is a quantity of low-lying flooded land on the other side; and on both a considerable expenditure would be required for road-making.

The fault of the first erection appears to have been that it was too low, so that the flood lifted or tore it bodily from the piles.

Main South Road—Wai-iti to Hammer Plain.—A considerable amount of work has been bestowed along this line of road, which in common with others during the past year has suffered severely from floods.

I despatched a party under an overseer, to that portion of it beyond the Top-house, after a severe flood, with instructions to repair damages, and to work their way gradually along it.

This they did, repairing as they went, considerably beyond Tarndale; they thus, to insure a supply of provisions, went at once as far as the junction of the Acheron and Clarence, working backwards to where they left off. On their return I found it necessary to send them at once to the long valley beyond M'Farlane's, where a terrific flood had torn the road to pieces and rendered it nearly impassable; they are yet at work on this part.

Waimea-west Pound and Lock-up.—Both the pound and lock-up have been erected adjoining each other, in a substantial and workmanlike manner by the contractor, Mr. Jos. Price; the situation seems well selected for the purpose.

East Takaka Road and Bridle Track.—The proposed improvements have been executed on this road.

Cross Road from East Takaka to the Waitapu Junction.—This work, which was placed in the hands of the Takaka Road Board, has, I understand, been completed and opened for some time. I have not, however, had any special report on it. It will be a great convenience to the district,

Road between East and West Takaka above the Waingaro.—Leave to open this road has been obtained from the land-owners, and by formal application to the magistrates; the balance of the vote, after paying the amount of compensation agreed upon, has been paid over to the Takaka Road Board, with instructions to have the road cleared and opened as soon as possible. This road will be of great utility to the district, especially during freshes, as it crosses the Takaka at an excellent and unchanging ford, and saves travellers the danger of crossing the dreaded Waingaro.

Cross Road, Clifton to Motupipi.—This line of road was very much needed, and the same course was pursued as described for the last mentioned road, the funds being placed in the hands of the Road Board, the road is, I believe, not completed, as no report has yet reached me to that effect.

Road, Riwaka to Takaka.—A few slight repairs only have been necessary on this road.

Carlyle-street, Clifton.—The sum of £25 voted for bridging and ditching over a swamp in this street was also placed at the disposal of the Road Board, the work I am given to understand has been completed for some time.

The same remarks will apply to the sum of £15, voted for marking entrance to Waitapu River; as also the sum of £25, one-half of that voted for a bridle track to Collingwood, the other half being handed to the Collingwood Road Board, to be expended in accordance with the vote.

Court House and Lock-up, Takaka. Plans and specifications were prepared for this work, and tenders called for and the work let, after which the inspection of the work was placed in the hands of the Road Board. It is not yet reported as being finished. Considerable delay was experienced in making the necessary arrangements for securing the site.

Slate River Bridge Repairs; Road to Rocky River; Road to Heaphy, repairs; Clearing Snags and Repairing Beacons, Aorere River.—The sums voted for these works were placed at the disposal of the Collingwood Road Board, with the necessary instructions.

Court House, Amuri.—The sum voted for this was treated in the same way, being handed to the Amuri Road Board. A considerable portion of it will be expended in fencing in a piece of ground adjoining the Court-house, and providing more accommodation for the clerk to the magistrates.

Roads to Karamea.—As full and special reports have been made from time to time on these roads by the Assistant Engineer, Mr. A. D. Dodson, I shall only describe generally what has been done:—

1. A walking-track along the line advocated by Mr. Dutton, commencing at the Graham River, a branch of the Motueka, and terminating where the Leslie joins the Karamea, near the "Bend," the length being about twenty-four miles. This is the most northerly track.

2. A walking-track, known as Jones's, south of Mount Arthur, proceeding up the Baton River, crossing the main range, and thence down the Leslie to the "Bend," the length being about fifteen miles from the Baton Store. This track has lately been improved by converting that portion of it between the Baton Store and the foot of the mountains, about eight miles, into a practicable horse-track, and by opening out and cleaning the remainder as a walking-track.

3. Snow's and Mackay's walking-track, by way of what has been called Hough's Pass, viz.:—Proceeding from the Baton Store up the Skeet River, cross-

ing the main range, and thence down the Crow River, to its junction with the Karamea, about six miles above the "Bend."

The length from the Baton Store to the "Bend" being about thirty-two miles.

4. The old road from the head of the Wangapeka Plains has been repaired and improved as a horse-track to the junction of the Rolling River, eight miles, and thence to the crossing of the Wangapeka, seven miles, the work beyond this being still in hand, viz.:—Six miles to a point where it is proposed to strike off over an intervening range by a short cut into the Karamea, about six miles long, avoiding the long detour made by Rockfort's old track.

Notwithstanding the number of tracks cut, and the comparative facility thereby afforded for getting about the country, the Karamea has failed to justify the expectations of those who predicted it to be a rich gold-field, and instead of the hundreds of diggers who should on these calculations have been on the ground, their number is now a mere handful, gradually diminishing.

WEST COAST ROADS, &c.

On my return from the West Coast in September, 1867, I made a special report on all the works there executed, or in hand, to which I may refer for any required information. Since that time, nearly all the roads on the West Coast, in common with other districts, have suffered more or less from the action of heavy rains and floods, and it has required a considerable expenditure in consequence to keep them in working order. The principal new work which has since been accomplished, is the making of a road up the Ahaura-valley, through what is known by the name of the Fifteen Mile Bush (ten in reality). This has been felled and cleared twenty-two feet wide, and formed for a width of seven feet in the centre; a good hard road and likely to be durable, part of it being on level ground, and part on the hill side where side-cuttings were formed.

This forms only a portion of what is deemed to be a very important work, and which I have before reported on, that is, the extension of this road to the Saddle and over into the Amuri. The most expenditure will be required between the Saddle and the Fifteen-mile Bush. If this line should be well laid out and executed, it will save nineteen crossings of the Ahaura, and a comparatively easy road will be the result.

Contracts have been let for clearing the main road as surveyed across Coal Creek Flat at the Grey, and its extension along the terrace to meet the old road.

Also, for the repair of Cobden Wharf, which had been damaged during a flood; this involves some new cap pieces and a few new piles, besides chafing-piles in front of the wharf.

Westport Wharf.—This work was let by contract to Mr. T. Miles, and, during its construction, was seriously retarded and injured by a succession of heavy and continuous floods; all attempts to finish it according to the original plan being frustrated by the rapid washing of the river-banks, by which the piles were completely undermined, and at last one flood heavier than the rest carried away the whole of the work which had then been erected.

Thus the whole of the labour was lost; the timber, however, or the greater part of it, was recovered, having been washed ashore at the North Beach. I am now endeavouring, by the erection of a series of small jetties, to provide the requisite accommodation for shipping, and to secure the banks from further damage.

New Court House and Lock-up at Westport.— These buildings, with some additions to the original design have now been completed and occupied for several months.

I believe we shall have to still further extend the accommodation at the lock-up, or gaol, which has been reported as insufficient.

Some provisions also must be made for increasing materially the hospital accommodation.

Plans and specifications were sent from Nelson for a new Custom-house at Westport, which building is now in course of erection.

A considerable length of new road has been opened in the Buller-valley, but one or two rocky places still require to be passed over; one at Hawkscray, and the other at Ohika Hill. Were these completed as intended, the horse-road would thus be available from Westport, by way of the Inanaghua, into the Little Grey, thence to Cobden. I should strongly urge the completion of this work. The road is now completed from Nelson to the Lyell on the north bank, and thence to the Inangahua on the south bank.

Substantial improvements have been made in the roads of the Upper Buller. The dray-road has been extended to the Howard store, and the existing roads have in the worst places been cleared and widened, and metalled where necessary. Much, however, yet remains to be done, and many repairs

have been rendered necessary by the frequent floods of last season; one of which, unexampled in height, carried away entirely a cart-bridge erected over the Upper Buller. This structure while it stood, was of the greatest service, and means must be taken to restore it on some well-selected site, where it will be free from any future damage.

The road to the Grey by the Maruia Plains was entirely blocked up by trees blown down by a gale of wind. A party has been at work on this for some time, and the line has been much improved in many places, by means of deviations judiciously selected on better ground.

During the same gale the road through the Big Bush was also blocked up in the same way, but was promptly opened again by a party sent expressly for the purpose.

I have left unreported the execution of many smaller works of minor importance, a description of which would only needlessly lengthen this report. I am now preparing a list of public works, and an approximate estimate of their cost, proposed for execution during the ensuing year, and will forward the same at the earliest opportunity for the approval of his Honour the Superintendent.

I have, &c.,

JOHN BLACKETT,

Provincial Engineer.