

sanitary reform has been introduced with the best results, and it is a cause of congratulation that the inhabitants are becoming fully alive to the dangers attending the neglect of the public health.

The Council had a Ratepayers' Roll formed during the year, but owing to some slight technical imperfection, they have been obliged to set it aside and apply to the Provincial Council for further powers, which have lately been obtained. The rental of rateable property in Christchurch may now be set down at about £90,000 per annum; the number of houses about 800; and the population about 5,000. When these figures are considered in connection with the fact that eleven years ago Christchurch was not, and that since that time the city has risen without the aid of adventitious circumstances, we may well congratulate ourselves on the result.

Lyttelton, in the hands of a similar corporation, although in a more impracticable situation, has also been wonderfully altered for the better. The demolition of unsightly buildings, and the introduction of asphalt pavement, with the changes effected by the progress of works connected with the railway, are the most prominent features of this improvement. These operations have stimulated private enterprise in an extraordinary degree. In Christchurch, buildings have been erected, and are going up on every side. Among the most noticeable of these may be mentioned the new Music Hall, a commodious brick building, capable of containing about 500 people; the Mechanics' Institute, a large and handsome edifice; the 'Times' buildings; one or two new hotels; the Bank of Australasia; and numerous other unfinished buildings, in which more durable materials are superseding, to a great extent, the use of timber. A new hospital at Lyttelton, and a gaol, lunatic asylum, and immigrants' barracks at Christchurch, have been, or are in the course of being added to the public buildings of the province. The towns of Kaiapoi in the north and Timaru in the south partake of the benefits derived from general prosperity. The customs returns of the latter port show an extraordinary increase in local and foreign trade. An imperfect system of landing and shipping cargo has hitherto greatly retarded the progress of this important outlet for the produce of the southern portion of the province, but the Government having lately taken the direction of the port into its own hands, and organized an efficient lighterage staff, the best results may be anticipated. Rangiora and Oxford, towns in the north, though little heard of as yet, are silently rising into importance, and other villages scattered over the province are laying the foundations of future greatness.

The opening out of the back country has been diligently prosecuted. The Great South Road has been formed and metalled throughout the greater part of its length. Experiments made at the Rakaiā, have clearly demonstrated the practicability of bridging that great barrier to the flow of traffic from the south. Ferries have been established on some of the rivers fed by the lakes in the remote Mackenzie Country. A contract is in hand for blasting a road along the north bank of the Waitaki, so as to open up a dray track to the Hakateramea.

In the North of the Province still more important results have been attained. The permanent line of Road to the Hurunui, through the Weka pass, is nearly completed, and will soon be open for traffic. A large gang of men, principally immigrants, lately arrived from Lancashire, are now employed constructing a road to the West Coast, from the Waikari plains to the Teremakau, the only practicable route to the river Grey. In connection with this road is the melancholy history of the drowning of its projector, and two men under his direction, in Lake Brunner, noticed at length elsewhere. The Oxford Road has been formed and metalled. Drains have been constructed on an extensive scale in the Rangiora and Papanui swamps, and are doing their work satisfactorily. Several bridges have been thrown across the Waimakariri, one of which, an iron bridge, over the north branch of the river near Woodford's mill, is worthy of notice, as being the first iron girder bridge in the colony. White's bridge, a private speculation, occupying the site of Felton's ferry, has been erected and opened,

and is a very creditable work. All the principal, and many branch roads have been improved and maintained in the highest state of repair. But the improvements which have been effected in this department are so numerous as to prevent a more than passing notice of the most important.

Mr. Dobson has resigned the office of Provincial Engineer, finding it impossible to fulfil the duties of that office and at the same time properly superintend the railway works. Mr. Dobson has been so long connected with the province, that it is not easy to reconcile the mind to the notion of his sudden withdrawal. No man in the province, in or out of office, has been more intimately connected with its progress; not one has had an equal amount of work thrust upon him. He has deserved well of the province as a faithful efficient servant. It is to be hoped that his present office (Railway Engineer) will be more profitable and less onerous than his last.

The Lyttelton and Christchurch Railway, before which all other works yet undertaken, sink into comparative unimportance, is being pushed forward with unexpected rapidity. The portion of the line extending from Christchurch to Ferrymead is, at the time of writing, nearly completed. Locomotives, carriages, and other working plant are on the spot; a goods-shed at the Christchurch terminus is in course of erection; a depôt at Ferrymead is finished; a commodious and well-built wharf, furnished with approved appliances for the reception and delivery of cargo is also completed, and the working of the line for three years is secured by lease to Messrs. Holmes and Co., whose well-known business qualifications guarantee a successful and satisfactory management of the enormous traffic which must soon pass over it. So that before this Almanac is in circulation, unless some unforeseen accident should prevent it, the first railway in Canterbury will be in active operation, and the country at large reaping the first fruits of a provident foresight, which, in the midst of innumerable physical and speculative obstacles, could boldly plan, and skilfully execute what must eventually be the very corner stone of our prosperity. The Moorhouse Tunnel is advancing with amazing rapidity. The main drive has been made its full size, with the exception of a very small portion—for a length of considerably over 1200 yards. The brick linings through the soft ground at both ends of the tunnel are nearly completed, the whole of the work below rail level is of masonry, above this height the walls and arch are built of brickwork set in Portland cement. At the Heathcote end alone, nearly a million of bricks of excellent quality, manufactured on the spot by the contractors, have been used in this work. There have been the usual tunnel rumours of flooding, want of ventilation, &c., but the work has not been stopped for a single day since its commencement by the present contractors. At the Lyttelton end of the tunnel a large area of land is being recovered from the sea with the earth that is being cut away to form the site of the proposed new Custom House.

A Commission, appointed by the direction of the Provincial Council, have reported on the best means of obviating the most serious difficulty which has long been felt in providing adequate wharfage accommodation for the rapidly increasing amount of foreign and colonial shipping at Lyttelton. Much important information has been elicited, and one of two plans for extensive deep-water jetties recommended, the adoption of either of which will involve a very large outlay; they have, in consequence, been referred to England for the decision of the most eminent engineering talent which can be procured. The immediate and most pressing want will be in some measure modified by the extension of the two existing wharves, one of which is private property, and the materials for the additions to the latter are fortunately on the spot. Some slight alleviation of the inconveniences now experienced, therefore, may be almost immediately expected.

The Electric Telegraph has been working without intermission since its construction in June, 1861. It has been truly successful in a commercial point of view, and of incalculable benefit to the public. A large plant is now due from England, for its extension to Otago, where similar action has been taken by the