

Progress On Big Bridge At

Tarata

The largest construction in hand in Taranaki, the Waitara River bridge near Tarata on the Inglewood-Purangi highway, has progressed so far that yesterday one of the contractor's employees could cross the river from shore to shore. He walked the last piece between two piers on a huge pole, part of the last 65-foot span.

The highway which carries heavy traffic, travels through rich farm country. It passes through an attractive native reserve and winds over the Tarata Saddle, where about one mile is unsealed. This, however, according to the Inglewood County Council's engineer, Mr. E. H. M. Adams, is to be sealed.

Beyond the saddle, where the road reaches the Waitara River about 12 miles east of Inglewood, is the old bridge, built in 1897. Although the totara poles are apparently in good order, the structure is supported by cables, and loads are restricted to six tons and to speeds of 15 miles an hour.

Cement, Timber

The new concrete bridge consists of four spans, the middle ones 65 feet long and the outer ones of 48 feet. According to the contractor, over 600 cubic yards of cement and over 40,000 superficial feet of timber will be used in the construction.

So far 180 yards of concrete have been used for the three piers and the abutment at the western shore. This abutment, together with base of the centre pier have been laid by the Inglewood County Council gangs. The work has taken almost a year.

The base for the centre pier was laid

where the water is 22 feet deep at low level. This work involved letting three concrete cylinders with a six foot diameter into the river bottom. The cylinders were sunk to about nine feet by air pressure and were later filled with concrete.

Since the contractor took over about 10 months ago three piers have been completed. The pier at the east shore stands on eight 36-foot concrete piles. A 14-foot deep solid concrete block forms the base for the pier at the west end, and 10 44-foot poles form the western abutment.

Skeleton Ready

Yesterday the last lap of the preparation work was started when two two-ton wooden trusses were carried across the last remaining gap by means of a hand-winch. This will be followed by the construction of the face work, the preliminary to the concreting of the deck later on.

When the face work is completed the skeleton of the bridge—struts, counters and Tiebolts—will be ready, and the boxing work for the concreting can be started. It is hoped that the concreting of the bridge's deck will be started in three or four months.

The deck will be considerably higher than that of the old bridge, and will be clear of floods. When floods occurred in former years it was no unusual happening for the water to flow over the deck of the old bridge.

Floating Logs

Favoured by the weather, the builder is ahead of the schedule. Once or twice the river has risen and huge logs floating downstream threatened the boxing of the pier foundations, but no harm has been done.

The contractors, who have been specialising in bridge-building for 20 years, should complete the job before December, when their contract with the Inglewood County Council runs out.

A second bridge over the Waitara River on the same highway may soon be built. The highway crosses the river again at Purangi, about 23 miles east of Inglewood.

ry of how Jewish leaders had a
started their "Scarlet Pimper-