

During the year a total length of 33 miles 74 chains of railway was opened for traffic. The following table contains particulars of the sections :—

Railway.	Section.	Length.	Date opened for Traffic.
Whangarei-Kamo Extension ...	Whakapara-Waiotu ...	M. ch. 3 29	21st December, 1898.
Waikato-Thames ...	Paeroa-Thames ...	19 20	19th December, 1898.
Otago Central ...	Kokonga-Ranfurly ...	11 25	14th December, 1898.
	Total ...	33 74	

Appended hereto is a coloured diagram showing the length of railway opened each year since the commencement of the public works.

WHANGAREI-KAMO RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Hukerenui Section (11 m. 25 ch. to 14 m. 57 ch. ; length, 3 miles 32 chains).—This section was completed for traffic and handed over to the Working-Railway Department on the 21st of December last. The further extension of this line has not yet been authorised by Parliament, and, therefore, though plans, &c., are ready, the proposed extension to 16 m. cannot be put in hand.

HELENSVILLE-NORTHWARD RAILWAY.

Tahakeroa Section (46 m. 36 ch. to 49 m. 54 ch. ; length, 3 miles 18 chains).—This section has been resurveyed, and formation works for the first two miles have been well advanced towards completion. Contracts for ironbark and native timber have been let, and the latter has been delivered, and the necessary ironwork for the bridges is being procured. The land-plan survey is in progress and about half done.

Komokoriki Section (49 m. 54 ch. to 56 m. ; length, 6 miles 26 chains).—A start is being made with falling and clearing the bush on the first two miles.

GRAHAMSTOWN-TE AROHA RAILWAY.

Thames-Paeroa Section (0 mile to 19 m. 20 ch. ; length, 19 miles 20 chains).—The reconstruction and completion of this section was sufficiently well advanced to enable it to be opened for traffic on the 19th of December last. Since then the several works on the section have been for the most part finished, and it is expected that the whole section will be completed by the end of this month. A telegraph-line has been constructed from the Thames to Paeroa.

NORTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY.

North End.

Mokau-Poro-o-tarao Section (34 m. 43 ch. to 49 m. 7 ch. ; length, 12 miles 43 chains).—This section has been maintained during the year, and is in fair order.

Ohinemoa Section (49 m. 18·79 ch. to 53 m. 53 ch. ; length, 4 miles 34·21 chains).—Very considerable progress has been made with the earth-work on the first three miles of this section. The country is very treacherous, and requires a considerable amount of draining to insure the stability of the works. The draining done so far appears to be fairly successful.

South End.

Makohine Section (22 m. 40 ch. to 33 m. 40 ch. ; length, 11 miles).—The tunnel at 33 m. has been completed. The only work now being done on this section is the flattening of the slopes of the papa cuttings between 33 m. 5 ch. and 33 m. 20 ch.

Makohine Viaduct.—The concrete foundations were completed in September last. The work of manufacturing the piers was begun in August last ; an electric light installation was fitted up in December last, and work has since been carried on night and day. The drilling of the component plates and angle-sections of the piers and the fitting of them together is now well advanced, the bases, anchor-girders, and bolts, the columns and main-face diagonal braces being all well advanced, and a start will shortly be made with the erection of the pier D. A considerable amount of work has been done in drilling the plates, angles, &c., for the centre-span and cantilever girders.

Mangaweka Section (33 m. 40 ch. to 40 m. 40 ch. ; length, 7 miles).—Nearly all the heavy works on this section are in hand, and considerable progress has been made with many of the cuttings, culverts, &c. Three out of the four tunnels on the section are in hand, and, in addition to the approach cuttings, about 23 chains of 8 ft. by 8 ft. headings have been driven in the three tunnels, the sheds and plant for making concrete blocks for tunnel-lining have been removed from Powhakarua to 35 m. 56 ch., and the work of making blocks for the tunnel-arching is begun. A service-road from the Rangitikei River to the sheds has been cut. It is proposed to deviate the line from about 36 m. 51 ch. to 36 m. 70 ch., and substitute a tunnel for a bridge, some heavy cuttings and other works. The overhanging cliffs and the steep slope to the river below the line would make the works at first proposed somewhat insecure.

Paengaroa Section (40 m. 40 ch. to 50 m. 40 ch. ; length, 10 miles).—The felling and clearing of the bush on this section was finished early in the year, and the earthworks and culvert construction have been put in hand up to 44 m. 50 ch., and most of the lighter work has been finished. Deviation surveys to improve the alignment, &c., have been made at Taihape Township. The works have been reduced, and a better station-site for the township obtained.