

During the financial year a total length of 10 miles 30 chains of railway was opened for traffic, as shown in the following table:—

Railway.	Section.	Length.	Date of Opening.
		M. ch.	
Helensville Northwards ...	Kaipara Flats—Tauhoa ...	2 45	June 11, 1907.
Gisborne—Rotorua ...	Karaka—Puha ...	1 75	May 20, "
North Island Main Trunk, south end	Taihape—Mataroa ...	5 70	June 1, "
		10 30	

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

The mileage opened this year appears small. This is due to the fact that the North Island Main Trunk line has been the chief work in hand, on which is a length of 43 miles 78 chains at the north end, and 40 miles 60 chains at the south end, of which 18 miles 12 chains was opened to Waiouru on the 30th June last, still incomplete on 31st March, 1908. The incomplete parts are more than seven-eighths done. Further openings are being held over till the whole is ballasted and can be opened at the same time for traffic.

OPUA—GRAHAMTOWN (58 miles).

Kawakawa Southwards Section (7 m. 16 ch. to 19 m. southwards from Opuā Wharf; about 11 miles 6½ chains long).—On the first 8 miles the line is fenced, the rails are laid and ballasted, the station buildings at Scoria Flat Station—about half-way—are completed, and the section is ready to hand over for traffic. Of the remainder, along 2½ miles the formation is completed, bridges are erected, and the line is ready for platelaying; on the last mile the bush has been felled and cleared, cuttings are in progress, and most of the timber is delivered for the three bridges required. Considerable floods have been experienced here, which have done some damage and delayed the work somewhat.

19 m. to 27 m. 6½ ch., a distance of 8 miles 64 chains, now forms the gap between the two ends. Very little beyond felling bush on about 2 miles and getting ready to start earth-work has been done, but everything is now in readiness to go on with greater vigour. On the completion of this length the two ends of the railway will be joined up, and the working of the line brought under one staff.

From 27 m. 6½ ch., which is the southern end of the survey from Kawakawa, and the northern end, or 21 m. from Kamo, the Towai Section—5 miles in length—starts, and goes southwards to Hukerenui, the present terminus of the opened railway. This section is now formed for nearly 4 miles, and the rest is in hand. Some of the bridges have been erected, the timber is on the ground for the rest, and platelaying will be started almost immediately.

Grahamtown Extension (2 miles 30 chains in length, exclusive of wharf).—This line is, now roughly formed for nearly its whole length, except that there is a large amount of stone protection required on all the banks, a good deal of widening to be done at Grahamtown Station, and a large number of slips in the cuttings still to be relieved and taken out. The bridge over the Whangarei Harbour and the small bridges on the line have been completed. The wharf has not yet been started, and no platelaying has been done.

HELENSVILLE NORTHWARDS.

Tauhoa Section (59 m. 75 ch. to 62 m. 40 ch.; length, 2 miles 45 chains).—This section from Kaipara Flats Station, which was nearly finished last year, was completed and handed over to the Railway Department on 11th June, 1907, and opened for traffic.

Hoteo Section (62 m. 40 ch. to 66 m.; length, 3 miles 40 chains).—This section, with its tunnel and three bridges through the Hoteo Gorge, has been completed during the year, including the station buildings at Wayby. It was handed over to the New Zealand Railway Department on the 13th May, 1908, and finally opened for regular traffic on the 18th May following.

Wellsford Section (66 m. to 69 m. 18 ch.; length, 3 miles 18 chains).—The formation from Wayby to Wellsford was about half-done last year, and is now nearly finished, but bad slips in the heavier cuttings and serious subsidences at several important banks have delayed its final completion. The rails are now laid, however, and some of the ballasting done at the beginning of the line. The station buildings and the necessary cottages for the employees are being erected at Wellsford. This section should be ready to hand over for regular traffic before Christmas, but the handing-over of the line will depend on the state of the weather and the progress made in overcoming the slips.

Te Hana Section (69 m. 18 ch. to 72 m. 45 ch.; length, 3 miles 27 chains).—The whole of the cuttings and banks on this section are in progress and about half-done.

The siding from Te Hana Station to the wharf, to be built on the tidal creek adjacent, is in hand.

Kaiwaka Section (72 m. 45 ch. to 81 m. 39 ch.).—Work has been started on the first 2 miles of this section.