

*Kaipara.*—The Kaipara line was opened for traffic to Henderson's Mill on the 21st December last. There then remained but a short subsection (about eleven miles) to complete communication between Auckland and Kaipara, at Helensville, a distance of about forty miles. I am glad to say that this remaining section has since been completed, and the line was opened for traffic throughout from Auckland to Helensville on the 18th July.

*Auckland-Waikato.*—Of considerable interest to the colony at large is the advance (since the date of the last Statement), on the southern side of Auckland, to Awamutu, a point within three miles of the southern boundary of the confiscated territory in the Waikato District. The line thus extended is now close on one hundred miles in length, and, with the Kaipara line, will form a continuous railway of one hundred and forty miles.

*Waikato-Thames.*—Some progress has been made with this line. From the Auckland-Waikato Line at Hamilton, the formation towards Morrinsville is finished for a distance of fourteen miles, and the remaining four miles of the section are in hand. No part can be usefully worked until the bridge over the Waikato, at Hamilton, is erected. The ironwork for it has been already shipped. At the other end of the Thames-Waikato line, a contract has been let for the formation between Grahamstown and Kopu, where a deep-water wharf can be obtained.

*Napier-Wellington (Northern Division).*—The northern division of the trunk line between Hawke's Bay and Wellington has been lengthened by four miles thirteen chains, ending at Makatoko, opened last year. The gap in the trunk line is thus reduced to about eighty miles. The exact position of a portion of the work remaining to be constructed within the Seventy-Mile Bush has not been yet determined.

Some work has been done on the southern division of this railway, but no extension has been effected, and the northern terminus remains at Masterton.

*New Plymouth-Foxton.*—The northern division of this trunk line, being the portion from New Plymouth to Hawera, a length of about fifty-one miles, is completed; twelve miles, between Ngaere and Normanby, were opened for traffic during the last financial year, and the remainder will be opened in a few days.

The southern division of the New Plymouth-Foxton line, being the length between Hawera and Foxton, has now a total extension of ninety-eight miles, of which nineteen miles between Kai Iwi and Waverley have been opened during the year. The length remaining to unite Waverley and Hawera is twenty-five miles, of which the precise direction between Manutahi and Hawera is as yet undetermined. The present surveyed line passes near the coast, but we consider that it would be preferable to adopt one further inland if it should turn out to be economically practicable. The Wanganui Wharf has been finished, and has a total frontage available for vessels of about 940 feet. Steps are being taken to provide necessary station buildings on the reclamation, and to bring the new station into proper working order.

*Foxton-Wellington.*—The earthworks on this part of the trunk line (the total length of which is about seventy miles) were begun in the neighbourhood of Wellington by the labour of the "unemployed"; but funds not being available for its continuation, the works have been discontinued. The House will be aware that, with a view to carrying on the project, a Company has been initiated in Wellington. The promoters have been in treaty with the Government for terms, including the grant of lands on the line, of the earthworks executed, and of materials already provided. The Government propose also to undertake the definition and survey of the whole line, and, in any arrangement which may be made, to reserve to the colony the right of purchase. The completion of this work would open unbroken railway communication between Wellington and the whole Wanganui and Taranaki country, by a line of two hundred and forty miles. This matter will come before the Legislature in connection with a Bill to be introduced, empowering grants of land for purposes of this kind.

*Required to complete Trunk Line.*—Unsurveyed intervals of one hundred and twenty miles on the west, and one hundred and sixty miles on the east, separate the extremity of the Waikato line at Awamutu from Waitara (Taranaki)