

APPENDIX B.

ANNUAL REPORT ON RAILWAYS IN THE NORTH ISLAND BY THE ENGINEER IN CHARGE.

The ENGINEER in CHARGE, NORTH ISLAND, to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 30th June, 1878.

I have the honor to forward annual report on railway works executed during the last year:—

The total expenditure on railways in the North Island, up to 30th June, 1878,	...	...	...	£2,472,440
was, exclusive of preliminary surveys	...	...	...
And the amount of contracts let, and other liabilities	...	...	...	321,247
Total of expenditure and liabilities	...	...	...	£2,793,687

The first table below shows the number of miles opened for traffic and now under construction in the North Island, with the expenditure and liabilities; and the second table (*see* end of report) consists of a list of the railways, and all the contracts, completed or in progress, with the times of completion, &c. The total number of miles opened for traffic during the year is 99 miles 38 chains:—

Name of Railway.	Expended to 30th June, 1878.	Liabilities on 30th June, 1878.	Total Length authorized.	Open for Traffic.
NORTH ISLAND.				
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	M. ch.	M. ch.
Kawakawa	26,603 19 4	848 14 7	8 19	2 68
Kaipara-Puniu	876,966 14 5	77,808 2 9	143 71	111 77
Napier-Manawatu	355,388 19 5	31,745 14 11	102 24	64 1
Wellington-Masterton	538,093 0 3	114,710 16 0	66 12	27 7
Waitara-Patea	137,035 3 10	13,967 10 8	33 33	19 73
Patea-Manawatu	538,352 17 11	82,166 10 8	107 78	85 57
Total	2,472,440 15 2	321,247 9 7	461 77	311 43

NORTH ISLAND.

KAWAKAWA RAILWAY.

During the year the only work of construction which has been executed is the renewal of the breastwork at the present landing at the cranes. This has been done by the lessees, but has not yet been inspected for the purpose of making a valuation of the cost which will be defrayed by the Public Works Department. The flood openings, reported on last year as being necessary, have not yet been put in; the line has, however, been free from destructive floods during the year.

KAIPARA-PUNIU RAILWAY.

Sections of Line Opened.—During the financial year three sections of the Waikato Railway have been opened for traffic—viz., Mercer to Newcastle, on 13th August; Newcastle to Hamilton, on 19th December, 1877; and Hamilton to Ohaupo, on 4th June, 1878: in all, 50 miles 62 chains.

Newmarket-Helensville (Helensville Contract).—So little progress was made by the contractor on this work that it was formally taken out of his hands, and the work was carried on by the department until near the end of April, when the timber breastwork in the river at Helensville showed such signs of weakness, by bulging forward for a length of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ chains, that the filling in behind it was discontinued. It would appear that, from motives of economy, this work had been designed as a solid wharf with a timber facing; but it is now evident that a portion of the width of the wharf will have to be constructed of open timber framing and decking well braced and tied, as the mud forming the bed of the river is of such a depth and so soft as to be unable to carry a heavy filling of earth.

The timber work already in place will not be lost, but will form part of the amended design, which will shortly be put in hand.

Auckland Contract (9 miles 61 chains).—The works on this contract are rather backward, but, as there are nearly twelve months of contract time yet unexpired, there is every probability the work will be finished within contract time.

Waitakerei Contract (12 miles 65 chains), between end of Auckland Contract and Riverhead.—This work, which includes formation, permanent way, and buildings, was advertised for public tender. A change, however, in the direction of the line having been decided on—viz., a reversion to the line as first recommended by the Engineers—the advertisements have been withdrawn, but tenders will shortly be called for the work as amended.