

PAPERS RELATIVE TO PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT A RAILWAY BETWEEN NEW PLYMOUTH AND THE NORTHERN PART OF THE PROVINCE OF WELLINGTON.

No. 1.

W. K. HULKE, Esq., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Auckland, New Zealand, 13th July, 1864.

I have the honor of submitting for the consideration of the Colonial Government, the following proposal for the construction of a railroad in the Province of Taranaki, and which will form the main trunk line of road through that Province, connecting it at the same time with the Province of Wellington at its northern boundary.

The great desirability of such a work must be so apparent that I need not occupy your time in pointing out the great importance it would be to the Provinces of Taranaki and Wellington, independently of the many advantages the Colony at large would enjoy from it.

Now although the first cost of a railroad exceeds that of a metal road, yet it will be found in the end much cheaper. The extra expense being more than covered by the high price that would be given for land in its vicinity.

The country through which it is proposed to make the line is particularly adapted for agricultural pursuits, and which country, unless such a work is executed, must be simply used for grazing purposes, and this would be a great impediment to the country being speedily occupied by settlers. Besides this important fact, the cost of transporting farm produce over a great extent of metal road effectually prevents all profitable farming. In the case of a railroad this would not occur, as an occupier of land, residing from sixty to eighty miles out, would thus be placed on the same footing as one living only twenty miles out on a metal road.

With these few remarks, I have the honor of submitting the following proposition for the consideration of the Colonial Government, believing that it will receive every attention that such an important subject deserves, and if found practicable, be entertained with favour:—

Firstly.—The promoters of the undertaking require that every facility be granted them to obtain a rough survey of the country through which it is proposed to carry the line, and would suggest the desirability of such rough survey being executed by one of the local surveyors now in the employment of the Government, when such survey may become practicable.

Secondly.—That if after executing a survey, the promoters find the country favorable for the formation of a railroad, they will be prepared to form a Company to carry out the undertaking on the following basis:

That a substantial permanent way be formed (single), capable of running a locomotive of not less than fifteen tons weight, with the necessary carriages.

That the cost of such permanent way do not exceed the sum of £4000 per mile. The Company to be subsidised by land to be selected by the Company in blocks, and the Company to have the priority of choice: the land to be issued to them at one and a half acres for the pound sterling. You will perceive that by such a system of selection (blocks), all the frontage would not be taken up by the promoters, but the Government, holding the remaining portion in their hands, would obtain such an increase of price as would cover the extra cost of railroad over the construction of a macadamized road.

I have, &c.,

W. K. HULKE.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

No. 2.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to W. K. HULKE, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, 19th July, 1864.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 13th instant, relative to a railway at Taranaki.

The Government has given the subject its very careful attention. It cannot in the present position of affairs commit itself to any definite expression of opinion on the subject, but it is prepared to place the services of a surveyor at the disposal of those on whose behalf you write, for the purpose of commencing a rough survey, so far as it may be possible at present to execute one. I cannot learn with certainty here that Mr. Hursthouse, whom you mentioned, is at this moment in the Government Service; but if he is not, probably his services can be obtained for this purpose.

I have, &c.,

W. Fox.

W. K. Hulke, Esq., New Plymouth.

No. 3.

W. K. HULKE, Esq., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 22nd July, 1864.

Not having received an answer to my former communication prior to leaving Auckland, I have the honor to request that all letters that the Colonial Government may favor me with shall be