

there is no doubt that it would be of vast importance as a military work, and would ultimately be equally important in extending the settlement of the country, as it would open up a large tract of rich land. The cost of constructing this line would, from its position, be greater than that in rear of Mount Egmont, as supplies could not be so easily obtained. It would be at least £150 per mile, and if more than ordinary difficulties occurred, it would exceed that sum.

Forest Land for Settlement on conditions.

At the termination of the mountain road, on the New Plymouth side, there is a considerable quantity of forest land fit for immediate settlement. It is distant about eight miles from the Waitara township, which will at no distant period be the outlet for a large district. Ten thousand acres of this forest land has been awarded to the Puketapus, a hapu of the Ngatiawa Tribe; and if it could be purchased from them, at say 1s. per acre, it would be a good policy to give it away along with the adjoining land to actual occupiers, on the condition that they made the road along one-half the length of their frontage at once, and within two years to fell and clear the bush on their land abutting on the road to the depth of say five chains, and lay it down in grass before they received a grant. There are numbers of enterprising settlers, both in Taranaki and Nelson, who would take this land on these or similar conditions; and as the actual value of the land to the Government does not exceed 5s. per acre, I think it would be exercising a wise discretion to consolidate the settlement of the district, and extend the progress of cultivation, at such a small cost to the revenue.

Recapitulation of Road Work.

Patea to Waihi	... 25 miles,	cost and two bridges	... £1,500
Waihi to Stoney River	... 50 "	earthwork and culverts	... 1,500
Waihi to Mataitawa, in rear of Mount Egmont	... 40 "	fellng forest, culverts, &c.	... 4,000
Waitara to White Cliffs	... 20 "	two bridges	... 1,000
Mountain Road to Taupo and Waikato	... 90 "	fellng forest, culverts, &c.	... 15,000
Total	... 225 "		£23,000

A large portion of this work would extend over more than one year, especially the road in the direction of Taupo and Waikato. The road from Patea to Waihi, and thence by the coast to New Plymouth, would be the most immediately beneficial for the advancement of the settlement of the confiscated lands. The mountain road partakes more of the nature of a work of defence, and though tending to the advancement of the settlement of the country, its immediate effect would be a military one. The whole of these lines offer the opportunity of securing the co-operation of the Natives in their construction, and by giving them, on contract, specific portions of road, great economy would be effected in their construction. There are also portions of the work on which the European settlers could be employed with advantage when greater expedition was required. The time for commencing this work appears to me, as regards the attitude of the Natives, singularly propitious, and the opportunity should not be sacrificed. The time of year is also approaching when work of this nature can be most advantageously proceeded with. I have therefore little doubt that, by the exercise of judicious promptitude, before the next Session of Parliament such progress shall have been made in this direction towards the permanent pacification of the Taranaki Province by means of roads as will be a source of gratification to the settlers immediately concerned and to the Colony generally.

No. 3.

Major NOAKE to the Honourable the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Militia Office, Patea, 18th June, 1870.

I have the honor to report, for your information, on the progress made in my district since your last visit. With your permission I will begin from the period when the Ngatiporou (numbering 140 men) were removed from Patea to Waihi; the latter post being, in my opinion, the most important in the district.

In October, after being abandoned some twelve months, I re-occupied this post, and by so doing at once formed a cover for settlers to re-occupy their lands in these advanced districts. To further advance the confidence thus engendered, you decided that blockhouses should be built at Hawera and Manutahi for the protection of settlers, and that ten-acre allotments should be laid off around them, in order that they might erect their homesteads under the protection of the blockhouse, and look after their more distant farms in comparative safety. As the first fruits of these arrangements, the settlers, who throughout the war had, for the most part, been serving in Volunteer Corps, were now induced, under the improved aspect of affairs, to return to their properties and assist in building the blockhouses and defences, lay off the ten-acre allotments, open up the line of road, &c. The results have, so far, been most successful.

At Hawera, which is five miles south of Waihi, there is now a population of 25 settlers, 5 women, and 8 children. They have built already six houses, and many others are in contemplation; 500 acres have been sown with English grasses this season; 80 acres are being ploughed for crops; they possess 350 head of cattle, besides horses, carts, and general agricultural implements; they have several chains of fencing done, and contemplate erecting, this season, about 800.

What may be said of Hawera applies equally to Manutahi, which is situated half-way between Patea (or Carlyle) and Hawera, about ten miles from either place.