

PAPERS

RELATIVE TO

THE PATEA DISTRICT.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND OF
HIS EXCELLENCY.

WELLINGTON.

—
1870.

PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE PATEA DISTRICT.

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM by Mr. Fox.

THE Waitotara District, on the south side only of that river, was formerly purchased from the resident tribes by Governor Browne and Mr. McLean, very ample reserves being made for the Natives. This purchase did not include the densely wooded and somewhat rugged inland country through which the course of the Waitotara River runs before it meets the open and level land approaching the sea, which formed the principal subject of the purchase.

Before it was occupied by settlers, the campaigns under Generals Cameron and Chute occurred.

The country north of the Waitotara River, and as far as the Waingongoro River, belonging to Natives who fought against the Queen in those campaigns, was at their termination confiscated, as well as some of the reserves on the south side of the Waitotara River. Nearly all the Government land in both districts was subsequently surveyed for free grants to Military Settlers, interspersed with Native Reserves. The former were, for the most part, distributed to members of the Colonial Forces. On the latter, rebel Natives who had submitted were allowed to locate themselves, intermixed with the military allotments.

Before the outbreak of June, 1868, a great part of the Waitotara Block south of the river had been occupied by settlers, some of whom had made very considerable investments and improvements. Messrs. Moore and Currie had erected dwelling-houses and other buildings worth £3,000; others had very substantial houses, while many had large numbers of cattle and sheep. Considerable cultivations had also been commenced.

North of the Waitotara, the settlers, though numerous, had made less progress, but many of them had erected homesteads and made improvements. A considerable quantity of stock was owned by them, and most of them risked all they possessed in the world. There were, I believe, more than one hundred homesteads altogether north of Kai Iwi Stream, the southern boundary of Waitotara Block.

The township of Patea or Carlyle had been established at the mouth of the river, and that of Wairoa (inland) between the Waitotara and Patea Rivers.

The Pakakohe, the Ngaruru, and other Native hapus lived partly on the reserves which had been set apart for them within the limits of the confiscated and purchased blocks; partly beyond those limits, on the banks of the two rivers, in what was considered an inaccessible and certainly was an unknown country. The reserves were restored to them on the express pledge that they would remain loyal.

Such was the condition of those districts before the late outbreak.

On visiting the district a fortnight ago, I found its condition to be as follows.

The whole block was without European inhabitants except at (1) Wairoa, where a few families under shelter of a redoubt had held their own and protected much of their stock during the entire period of disturbances; (2) Patea, in which township about 100 inhabitants had remained during the same period; and (3) garrisons of Volunteers, of about 40 at each, on pay at Weraroa, Wairoa, Manawapo, and Patea. One or two settlers had reoccupied land in the South Waitotara Block, and one or two houses were being rebuilt there. The same may be said of the country within five or six miles of Patea.

As regards Natives, they were entirely gone from the district. A considerable number had surrendered and been placed in prison in Wellington, where they awaited trial. Others had been placed by the late Government under the nominal bail of Honi Pihama, near Opunake, some miles north of the block; and others had found refuge on the central Wanganui River, where the friendly (or half-friendly) Natives profess, I believe, to be answerable for them.

The pas (many of them very fine ones) and cultivations, with all the crops and live stock on the two rivers, for some sixty or seventy miles up, had been utterly destroyed by Major Noake and Captain Kells, in the expeditions which they made up those rivers after Titokowaru had retreated from Taurangaika. Consequently there may be said not to have been, at the time of my visit, a Native of the rebel tribes between Waingongora and Wanganui. A small body which had been allowed to locate themselves south of Waingongora, had, just before my visit been removed to the north of it by the Honorable Mr. McLean's orders, and a party of nine Putiki (Wanganui) Natives and one rebel Native (who had been on bail among them) were found by me at Pakaraka, on the South Waitotara Block. These I ordered back to Putiki, and they went, though the rebel is reported to have since broken parole and returned to Titokowaru.

Immediately on my arrival at Wanganui, and again at Patea, I was waited upon by deputations of the dispossessed Colonists who were desirous of knowing what the Government would do to enable them to return to their farms with some feeling of security and a prospect of their being able to remain there.

In the course which I then determined to adopt to meet the wishes of these settlers, I was guided, 1st, by the fact that the House of Representatives had voted £10,000 for the express purpose of assisting them to return to their farms; 2nd, by the general expression of a desire on all sides of the House that they should do so,—only, with a caution to the Government not to allow such dispersion as might weaken their tenure on the district.

I found the country settlers who had been driven out of the Patea district very ready to return on receiving encouragement from the Government, and some assistance towards defending themselves. Understanding that the Government intended to locate a defensive force of East Coast Natives (Ngati-poros) at Waihi, near the Waingongoro River, the settlers proposed that the Government should erect a block-house capable of protecting, say, twenty families, at some spot not far from the Native force; and should allot to them small holdings, say ten acres each, around such block-house, on which they might erect cottages, and from which, as head-quarters, they might work their farms further off, which they considered they could very well do.

The first difficulty which presented itself was the absence of any Government land on which the plan could be carried out. After consultation, however, with Major Noake and the settlers, and after inspecting the spot, I determined to take a portion of the Railway Reserve near the abandoned Canada Redoubt, as it seemed in every way suitable for the purpose. After the decisions of the House of Representatives on the subject of compensation, however, I felt myself constrained to refuse to give the ten-acre allotments required by the settlers; but they were quite satisfied to pay a rent of one shilling an acre for them (the same as had been offered and accepted for the Railway Reserve before the outbreak), on a lease for seven years, with a right of purchase on valuation during or at the end of the term. It was arranged that the Government should find the material for the block-house, which should be erected by the settlers, who should be placed on Militia pay for the time. This will however cost the Government nothing except the price of the materials, as they are already most of them on pay as Volunteers at the Manawapo post, which under this arrangement can be abandoned. Major Noake has suggested a plan for a redoubt and block-house suitable for the purpose. Another and similar settlement might be formed between Patea and Manawapo, near Mr. Ball's farm, if a guarantee of a sufficient number of families were given; and others elsewhere might follow. At Wairoa, south of Patea, a township with redoubt had been formed before the outbreak, and, as already mentioned, the settlers held their own during the whole period of disturbances, though completely surrounded by the rebels for many miles round. It is my belief that had the Patea settlers who held the Canada Redoubt been encouraged by the Government, the Waingongoro frontier need never have been abandoned, and the destruction which swept over the district might have been avoided. Wairoa will not now require any Government aid.

In discussing these arrangements with the settlers, both at Wanganui and Patea, I found one condition absolutely necessary, namely, that the Government should give an assurance of its determination not to allow the rebel Natives to return to the district. I consider the fact of their having been allowed to do so after General Chute's campaign was a fatal error; and when the outbreak of 1868 occurred, it at once placed, or rather found, a formidable section of the enemy in the midst of the settled country, and in the rear of the Colonial Forces. It is not to be expected that settlers would reoccupy the country from which they had been driven if this course were again to be adopted. But there is another and very weighty reason why it should not be allowed. Though peaceful and permanent settlement could not be hoped for if the Natives were allowed to return, it is certain that many of the more adventurous settlers who have been driven from the district, but who still remain in Wanganui, would return to it on their own terms and at their own risk. What this means may be estimated from the report of a conversation which I had with some of them before I was in office, and which has been repeated to me substantially since. I was asked if it was true that the late Government intended to allow the return of rebel Natives on submission. I replied, that I had understood it was their intention. "Then," was the answer, given in a significant manner, "they will not be long there." This simply meant, that settlers rendered desperate by the sight of the rebels enjoying the country from which they had been driven would rely on the rifle for redress, and that a desultory war of races would clear the district from the obstruction which the action of the Government might place in their way. It is impossible for any one who has talked with these settlers, and knows how deep a feeling the losses inflicted upon them by the rebels have created in their breasts, to doubt that the threat thus plainly hinted at would be assuredly carried into execution. For the sake of the Natives themselves, they ought not to be allowed to return to the country which they have justly forfeited by repeated acts of rebellion, some of them after having been twice permitted to return to their allegiance and to regain possession of their land.

I had no hesitation under the circumstances in assuring the settlers that, if they returned to their homes, the Government would do all in its power to keep the rebel Natives from coming back to the district. I believe the task will not be difficult. The entire destruction of the pas, cultivation, and stock, for a distance of 60 to 70 miles inland, has been effected as already stated. Occasional patrols up the Rivers Patea and Waihi, and through the connecting paths between them, can hardly fail to prevent the re-settlement in these parts of any of the rebels. The idea is, I believe, acquiesced in by the friendly Natives above referred to, who have sections of them "under bail," while a considerable number have been carried away from the district altogether.

Such is the general outline of the policy which I conceived it my duty to adopt in order to carry out the wishes of the House of Representatives. Some details which I considered requisite to carry that policy into effect I will now mention.

It is, I believe, a conclusion at which nine out of ten Members of the Assembly have arrived, that one of the main causes of the late outbreak was the division of authority which existed in the district. The conflicting action of a Commissioner resident at New Plymouth, a Military Commandant resident at Patea, and a Resident Magistrate perambulating the district, rendered it impossible that anything but confusion could exist or any but disastrous results follow.

I propose to avoid such a state of things for the future by vesting the undivided authority in Major Noake, who commands the Militia in the district including Wanganui. There being no Natives in the district, except the Ngati-poro garrison, the services of both the Commissioner at Taranaki and the Resident Magistrate may be dispensed with. I propose to instruct the former not to interfere with anything south of Waingongoro, unless requested to do so in writing by Major Noake. I propose to remove Mr. Booth, the Resident Magistrate, altogether, and I would appoint Major Noake (who already holds a Resident Magistrate's commission) to be Resident Magistrate for the district, with

some small additional pay. He has competent and able interpreters in the Volunteer and friendly Native Forces, and will require no other assistance in that direction. In case of his absence, or to assist him on ordinary occasions, it is desirable that at least one ordinary Justice of the Peace should be appointed. Mr. Wray, a surveyor, who executed the survey of the military allotments of the whole district, who was formerly in the Indian Service, and who is now acting as Quartermaster at Patea, is a gentleman who, I believe, is well qualified for the Commission of the Peace, and I recommend his appointment.

I propose also to instruct Major Noake to receive applications from such settlers as may wish to avail themselves of the advance of £10,000 voted by the Assembly. He should advertise for applications to be sent to him according to a prescribed form, and he should report on the merits of each case, which, from his local knowledge and the means of information within his reach, he will be able to do with sufficient accuracy for such a purpose.

At the township of Patea I found the population very hopeful and inclined to enterprise. A deputation waited on me and brought several subjects under my notice. Among other things I was applied to grant a lease of a Native reserve of 600 acres and a water power, with a right of tramway between the two, and a right (not in monopoly) to cut flax on Government reserves, on behalf of a projected Flax Company, which has already raised a considerable subscribed capital and is sanguine of success. I arranged this matter, as will appear by correspondence, in a way which I hope will encourage the action of the Company, while I have sufficiently protected the rights of the Government.

Application was also made to me to have the Patea made a port of entry. Some statistics have been furnished, which I will bring under the notice of the Commissioner and Inspector of Customs, and, if necessary, further consult the Cabinet.

Before leaving the district I had the satisfaction to see a portion of the Ngatiporo detachment located at Waihi and thoroughly satisfied with the location, and the remainder had nearly arrived there when we returned to Patea. Reports since received are very satisfactory. Their residence at Patea for several weeks had somewhat demoralized them, and they were not willing to leave the town. But firmness exercised by Major Noake, the day before my arrival at Patea, settled the matter, and they were all cheerful and obedient when I was there. They expressed a great desire that the Defence Minister should visit them on his return from Auckland.

The medical officer in charge of these Natives is reported by Major Noake as not performing his duty towards them, and I heard and saw quite enough myself to be certain that it was so. It will be necessary to remove him; and it is proposed to offer the appointment to Dr. Walker, now on the East Coast, but, who it is believed, it was recommended by Colonel Whitmore should return to Patea.

I have only to add that the Patea and Waitotara Settlers are a very fine body of Colonists, and, should they be encouraged and supported by the Government as they deserve to be, they can hardly fail to regain a position of prosperity, and to prove a great addition to the strength of the West Coast, by the reoccupation of the district in which they have cast their lot.

WILLIAM FOX.

1st November, 1869.

No. 2.

MEMORANDUM by Mr. Fox.

IN continuation of my previous Memorandum of November last, on the Patea and other West Coast Settlements, I have now to state, for the information of Ministers, that early in January I again visited that part of the Colony, and am glad to report that I found everything progressing in a very satisfactory manner. I beg to direct the attention of Ministers to the following points:—

1. In my previous Memorandum I intimated that it was an essential condition of any attempt to induce the Colonists to return to the districts from which they had been driven by Titokowaru (or which I should rather say they had been compelled by the late Government to abandon before the advance of Titokowaru), that no Natives should, for the present at all events, be allowed to return there, or to the immediate proximity of the lands which it was desirable to reoccupy. This policy has been strictly and efficiently carried out by Major Noake, in command of the district. The Ngatiporo Contingent had, however, not long been located at Waihi when they became aware that small parties of Titokowaru's men were creeping back to within a distance of even four miles from the Waihi Redoubt, and had commenced numerous plantations just on the northern side of the Waingongoro River. While reconnoitring in that locality, the Ngatiporo fell in with a party of rebels at a place called Ngapuhi, not six miles from the redoubt, where they had several acres of potatoes planted; and on their attempting to escape with loaded firearms in their hands, two men were shot and one woman captured.—See Report of Captain Blake appended (Enclosure 1). The potatoes, which had been quite recently planted, were taken up, carried to Waihi, and used by the Ngatiporo; and several other plantations were destroyed. A similar event occurred several miles up the Waitotara River, when one Maori was severely wounded and a woman captured by a party of Volunteers from Wereroa, under command of Captain Kells.—See his Report, also appended (Enclosure 2).

These events happening at the moment when the Honorable Mr. McLean was in expectation of communications with the King party in the neighbourhood of Waikato, some apprehension was felt lest they might have created alarm in the minds of those Natives, or disturbed Mr. McLean's negotiations. There appears, however, no reason for supposing that they had any such effect; while their influence locally has been most beneficial. The rebels who lost their lives were ascertained to be some of the worst adherents of Titokowaru; they were well armed and provided with ammunition; there was no doubt that their return to the neighbourhood of the settled country was for purposes of mischief; and in the Waitotara case, at least, the man had been warned both by friendly Natives on the Wanganui River and by his own wife, who was captured, that he went where he did at his own

risk, and was very likely to be shot. The subject was brought under discussion during my visit to Upper Wanganui immediately afterwards, and the unanimous verdict of all the Natives there was, that the sufferers "brought it on themselves." In justification of Captains Blake and Kells, I feel bound to state that, though their men acted somewhat impetuously, and went beyond the letter of the instructions which I had left with them, by firing before actual resistance was offered, they were acting in strict accordance with the spirit of those instructions, which were that no rebel Natives were to be allowed to return either within our frontiers or so near to them as to make their presence a source of danger or alarm to the returning settlers. In deference to the wishes of the Native and Defence Minister, I have since directed the discontinuance of the reconnoitering parties across the Waingongoro, or far up the river; but it is satisfactory to learn, as I have, that the employment of such parties and the effect of the events referred to have been to deter any more of Titokowaru's people from repeating the experiment they had commenced, of crawling back to their old haunts, under the very fences of Ngutu-o-te-Manu, and almost within long range of our redoubts.

The friendly Natives on the Wanganui River, however, expressed a desire that some boundary should be fixed in their direction beyond which armed reconnoissances should not be carried on by us. They observed that the upper waters of the Waitotara approach to within a few miles of the Wanganui River, at Jerusalem and at other points, and that they had always been in the habit of fishing in the former river. In continuing this practice, they would now evidently run a great risk. One idea involved in this proposition was very satisfactory—namely, that all the land between such "aukati" and the sea belonged to us, and that neither the expelled nor friendly Natives should trespass on it. Boundaries in this direction were proposed, which, as far as I am advised, would not be unsatisfactory; but I thought it better to leave the question to be disposed of by the Native Minister when he visits the Wanganui River, and I declined to come to any decision about it at present. An additional reason for this is, that some of the up-river Natives assert claims to portions of the confiscated lands formerly in possession of the Pakakohe and Ngarauru; and probably it will be the best course to enter into some treaty for the general cession of *all* claims to these lands, when the boundaries can be finally fixed, with a view to future ownership and occupation. For the above reasons I think that any armed reconnoissances made by us, particularly up the Waitotara River, should be made in conjunction with friendly Natives, who may prevent ambuscades by, and, if possible, collisions with, any of the rebel party who may be induced to return. But I think it will still be the duty of the Government not entirely to abandon this precautionary system, but to take steps from time to time which may afford an assurance to the returning settlers that the rebels are not within any dangerous proximity.

The Ngatiporo Contingent, who arrived at Waihi at the time of my previous visit, have since strengthened the redoubt, and the position is now one which ought to be impregnable to small arms, and probably none better could be selected for the defence of the frontier. The present contingent appeared in excellent spirits, and had no complaint to make, except that they would prefer a more active life. They have done very little towards growing food for themselves, and nothing towards a permanent residence there. They expect to be relieved in March by another party of the tribe. Some of them will, I believe, volunteer to remain. Major Noake paraded the force for inspection the morning after my arrival. They went through their drill extremely well, but I cannot think that in bush fighting they would be found to attach much value to it, or to put much of it in practice. The alacrity which they exhibit in performing their evolutions is no doubt attributable to habits acquired in the practice of their own war dances and hakas.

2. I found the steps taken for the location of the settlers had made quite as much progress as I could have anticipated. Two excellent ball-proof iron and timber block-houses, capable of containing 200 men each, but which might be defended by a tenth of that number or less, had been framed in Wellington, on designs furnished by Major Noake and some of the settlers, and sent up in pieces. I found them in course of erection and very nearly completed; one at Hawara, about three miles south of Waihi, the other at Manutahi, some ten miles further south, all within signalling distance of each other, and commanding a large stretch of country. Around each of them there had been surveyed twenty-five sections of ten acres each, on which the returning settlers will erect their houses (some are already in frame), and cultivate temporarily within a few yards of the block-houses, as indicated in my previous Memorandum.

Major Noake has received and reported on applications made by the settlers for assistance from the fund of £10,000 voted by the Assembly. As sufficient time has elapsed to enable as many to apply as are likely to do so at present, I think the vote should be divided among them. It will not do more than meet the requirements of those who are gone or are going back to the district, and perhaps the cost of erecting the two block-houses, which it would seem legitimate to charge on that fund, as being themselves a contribution towards enabling the settlers to reoccupy in safety. I intend, therefore, to make immediate arrangements for the distribution of this money, on the security proposed by the Assembly being given to the Government, forms for which I have instructed the Attorney-General to prepare.

3. Ministers are aware that a very large portion of the confiscated land between Waitotara and Waingongoro Rivers, say forty-five miles in length, has been surveyed into sections averaging about sixty acres, which have been given to discharged members of the Colonial Forces, not to hold on military tenure, subject to the liability to be called on to defend their district, but solely as a return for past services. A few of them had been occupied, and some of the owners are now returning to their land as settlers. The owners of others have not returned, but perhaps yet may do so. But a far larger portion of these sections has been sold by the Military Settlers to whom they were awarded, and are now the property of absentee owners, whom it is very difficult in general to discover. These lands have as yet borne none of the burdens which ought to be provided for out of the land fund of a country in course of settlement. They have contributed nothing towards public works, and they provide the Government with no resources for the further development of the country, or any means for making it attractive to new comers. Fortunately there never was a country which held out greater inducements to the settler, nor in which costly or even ordinary public works were less necessary. But so far as the

land has been thus given away, Government has deprived itself of the usual means of establishing a population; while, no condition of residence having been attached to the ownership, the gratuitous gift of land neither has attracted nor will attract a population, except so far as the land may gradually and at enhanced prices pass into the hands of occasional purchasers.

The Government has, however, still at its disposal certain blocks within the above limits—which, in the aggregate, amount to some 100,000 acres—which, from their situation, ought at an early date to be available for sale and settlement, and productive of the means of colonization. First, there are certain portions of land, confiscated under the New Zealand Settlements Act since 1865, which, for one reason or another, or without reason, were not surveyed when the Military Settlers' lands were given out. These amount to about 30,000 acres, mostly very good land, and if surveyed in moderate-sized and small blocks, would soon find tenants and purchasers.—See Report of Mr. Wray, appended (Enclosure 3). I propose at an early day that these blocks shall be surveyed and offered to the public on terms to be hereafter settled. 2. The Railway Reserve, a continuous piece of land, half a mile wide, running the whole length of the block, which it is presumed was intended to provide the means of constructing as well as the locality of a railway. If there is any reasonable prospect of such a road being so constructed—and I cannot but think that there is—it would be a great pity to dispose of this reserve otherwise than on temporary lease; but if there be no such prospect, then it would be immediately saleable if broken up into suitable farms, as it consists entirely of first-class land, and runs through the centre of the district. I think it would be a mistake to dispose of it at present, except under temporary arrangements. 3. There are also several blocks of picked land, amounting to say 20,000 acres, which were, under conditions, reserved to the rebel Natives after the war of 1865, when they were injudiciously allowed to return to the district and re-settle among the colonists. By their second act of rebellion they have again forfeited these lands, and they are substantially at the disposal of the Government. I feel that it would be a very great mistake to permit the twice-committed rebels to return to them. They will therefore fall in some way into the hands of the Government, to be utilized by it. Considering that the rebel owners of these lands are now excluded from them; that nearly one whole tribe are undergoing sentences of imprisonment from three to seven years in Otago Gaol after conviction of high treason, and that the other tribe are located on the Wanganui River, where our friendly allies seem quite willing to keep them, it appears to me that very little difficulty ought to exist in coming to some arrangement with the Wanganui River Natives, who have themselves claims over these lands, and who can control their rebel owners, whereby a cession may be made for a pecuniary consideration, which need not be of a large amount. From the conversation which I had with the up-river Wanganui Natives during my late visit to them, I believe that the Native Minister would find little difficulty in negotiating such an arrangement; and I recommend it to the immediate consideration of the Ministry, as affording, if successful, a perfect security for the peace and quiet possession of the West Coast between Wanganui and Waingongoro, if not all the way to Taranaki.

Besides these rural lands there is the township of Carlyle (Patea), the greater part of which is already surveyed and pegged off; the rest I have directed to be immediately prepared. I think it ought to be offered to public competition as early as possible. There are many squatters on it already, who should have the value of their improvements allowed them, in the upset price, wherever they have been of a *bonâ fide* character. The upset prices, as fixed by the Commissioner of Confiscated Lands, Surveyor, and Superintendent of Taranaki, seem to me almost to amount to a gift of such a town as Carlyle cannot fail to be; but as the township is only surveyed on a small scale, and as the Government has a large reserve alongside of it, and another exactly opposite, on the south side of the river, the land revenue will no doubt, at a future day, reap the advantage of the present liberality of the Government, which it is desirable should be exercised on the ground that every inducement should be held out for the recolonization of a district which has suffered so great a blow, and still labours under so many causes of discouragement. I think the town of Carlyle as at present surveyed should be sold by auction, at the upset prices put upon it as above, as soon as the necessary notices shall have been published in the *Gazette*—say from two to three months hence.

The Native Minister having terminated the engagement of the Confiscated Lands Survey Staff which resided at New Plymouth, I have found it necessary to arrange with Mr. Wray, a gentleman who executed a large part of the contract surveys of the district, and who holds the office of Quartermaster in the Colonial Forces, to execute such survey works as I have had to direct to be undertaken. I have obtained from Mr. O. Carrington, the late Surveyor of Confiscated Lands at New Plymouth, the working plans of the Patea country, and I placed them in Mr. Wray's charge. I think, so far removed as Patea is from New Plymouth, that so long at least as the General Government in any way continues to administer the affairs of the district as a confiscated country and held under protection of a large Constabulary and Volunteer force, the Survey Department, large or small, ought to be conducted at Carlyle, and that all land sales ought to take place there and nowhere else. The intending purchaser at Patea will generally, for the present, proceed there from the south; and if, before he can purchase or inspect the maps, he is compelled to go on to New Plymouth, which is not now very accessible, it will be a great barrier in the way of settlement. The arrangements which I have made with Mr. Wray are entirely of a provisional character; but so long as the General Government retain the administration of the district, I believe it will be judicious to retain him in charge of the Survey Department, his previous minute local knowledge and general ability qualifying him for the duty.

4. Next to the security of the district and the reintroduction of population, comes prominently forward the question of transport and locomotion. Very few districts in New Zealand present such great facilities in this respect as that between Wanganui and Taranaki. The whole line may be described as absolutely level, there being no elevations higher than a few feet, and no breaks, except the descent into and ascent from a few creeks and small rivers. Proceeding north from Wanganui, there are as follows: 1 and 2, the Kai Iwi and Okehu Creeks, nine and ten miles from Wanganui, the first requiring some side-cutting to approach the ford, the other a bridge, which may cost £200 to £300. 3. The Waitotara River, twenty miles from Wanganui, with a span of eighty feet on the surface of the water, which could be easily bridged, but where a good punt has been established under

arrangements made by me with Captain Kells, capable of taking over a four-horse coach. A few chains of side-cutting were requisite to approach the river on each side, which are already completed by the labour of the Wereroa party of Volunteers under Captain Kells. 4. The Whenuakura River, two miles south of Patea (Carlyle) Township, crossed by a punt provided at cost of ferryman. 5. The Patea River, crossed by a punt also provided by the ferryman, with approaches cut by the Volunteers from Wairoa, under Captain Hawes and Lieut. Kenna. These comparatively insignificant works are all that are necessary to be effected between Wanganui and Carlyle. The general surface of the soil, though of the richest quality, is so porous and holds so little water, that for a considerable time at least no metalled road need be made. If in winter it should get a little stiff or dirty in places, the unfenced country alongside will afford sufficient space for the traveller to pick a cleaner track, while the coach and dray will meet with no impediment whatever.

Beyond Carlyle to the north, the facilities appear to be equally great. The work required to be done is so minutely described in a Memorandum which has been obligingly drawn up by Mr. Kelly, M.H.R., that I cannot do better than append that document for reference (Enclosure 4). The greater part of it applies to the country beyond Waingongoro, with which I am not myself personally acquainted. At Waihi I had an interview with Hoani Pihama, a friendly chief from Oeo, accompanied by Ngahini and Hukinui, friendly chiefs formerly of consequence in the rebel district, but now engaged in directing road parties on the line described by Mr. Kelly between Waingongoro and Opunaki. They are working southwards, and in a few weeks will have reached the former river, when I hope they will then be induced to assist in erecting a bridge across it.

In accordance with a wish expressed by several of the Ministers, I have arranged with Messrs. Shepherd and Co. for the establishment of a line of mail coaches between Wanganui and Patea. I found it difficult to arrange satisfactory terms with them for only the current financial year, as it was not worth their while to provide the necessary plant and make the costly arrangements essential to such a line unless for a longer term. I have, therefore, in full confidence that the district will continue to progress, and that every month will lessen the risk of interruption between Wanganui and Taranaki, entered into arrangements for a period of three years. Messrs. Shepherd and Co. agree to run a four-horse coach from Wanganui to Patea twice a week, carrying all mails, for £600 the first year (deducting the proportion which would be due for January, as the work will not commence before February), and £500 for each of the two succeeding years. I also agreed to let them, rent free, a block of 200 acres, adjoining the Ferry at Kaipo, with a purchasing clause at £2 an acre, to be paid at the end of the term, and conditional on the performing their agreement. They will erect stables and make paddocks immediately, and make the place a sort of head-quarters for the establishment. On the whole, I consider the terms favourable to the Government, while it will enable Messrs. Shepherd to establish themselves in a position which will greatly facilitate their operations.

A punt and accommodation-house being required at the Ferry, I arranged with Captain Thomas Kells to establish both, at his own cost, and to undertake to keep them going for seven years, on condition of his receiving a lease, free of rent, with purchasing clause at £2 per acre, of 100 acres adjoining the Ferry. This also I consider a satisfactory arrangement for the Government, though one which will no doubt ultimately be very advantageous to Captain Kells.

On the whole, I had every reason to be satisfied with the progress which had been made towards the resettlement of the West Coast. The foundations of further progress have, I hope, been firmly laid; and when Messrs. Shepherd and Co.'s coaches are running twice a week,* the telegraph wires in operation, the township of Carlyle sold, the blocks of rural land before referred to brought into market, and the colonists who are already there backed by new comers shall have erected their houses—all of which I have reason to hope will be effected before the end of May—I think an amount of peaceful progress will have been made on which the Government may look with satisfaction, as a contrast to the desolation and destruction which a year ago were the only features of the scene. If the work of restoration goes on as well for another year, the district will by that time have attained a much more advanced state of prosperity than it enjoyed before the rebellion.

5. On the 12th January I returned to Wanganui.

Here I was glad to learn that Mr. Field, C.E., who some weeks before had started to explore a route alleged to exist between Wanganui and Taupo, had returned. He had attained his object, and found a perfectly feasible route through a light bush and Koromiko country; commencing at the mouth of the Little Wanganui Stream, about six miles above the town, reaching the Mangawhero, which it follows for several miles, then crossing a low hill to the head waters of the Wangaeahu, and debouching into the open plain at Murimutu. From that point to the spurs of Ruapehu and Tongariro there is absolutely no impediment. From the latter point to Tokano, on the Lake Taupo, I am assured by Dr. Hector and Mr. Crawford, the difficulties are quite inconsiderable. Mr. Field's explorations, however, only extended to Murimutu, a distance of fifty miles from Wanganui, where the Taupo country may be said to commence. After conferring with Mr. Field, and inspecting his report and a careful sketch-tracing, I arranged with him to undertake the construction of a good track for packhorses as far as Murimutu, by means of Native labour. I had previously spoken to Topia and all the Natives at the meetings I had held on the river early in December on the subject, and had found them not only willing, but zealous that the road should be made. I now saw Hare Tauteka and Wirihana, who live at Taupo, and near Murimutu, and are highly connected on the Wanganui River; and by Mr. Buller's assistance a party was immediately formed, tools procured, and by the following Monday the work was commenced. I have since heard of its satisfactory progress from Mr. Field, who finds the route a better one than he even expected.

The terminus of Mr. Field's line, at Murimutu, will meet the terminus of another rough track which already exists between Ranana, on the Wanganui River and Murimutu, and which the Natives on the river are very desirous should be improved and even turned into a dray-track. I need not point out the great change in the Native mind which this proposal exhibits, nor the desirability of the request being acceded to, viewed in a defensive aspect. I have directed Mr. Booth to take an early opportunity of exploring this track, and reporting upon it.

* NOTE.—Since the above was written they have commenced running.

6. I now proceeded to Rangitikei. While at Patea I had received letters from Noa Te Rauhihi and other Natives, informing me that the opposition to the progress of the surveys had ceased. I was glad to hear, from personal inquiry on the spot, that this was so, though there was some uncertainty in the minds of my informants about it. Mr. Buller, by my instructions, therefore visited the district a few days after I had left it, and has reported that, in consequence of a letter from Tawhaio to the obstructors, in which he directs them to abide by the decision of the Land Court, there will be no further opposition. The surveys were then recommenced, and are so far progressing satisfactorily and without interruption. On learning this, after conference with the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, it was determined to release Meritana, who had been imprisoned in Wanganui Gaol on a conviction for destroying a Trigonometrical Station, and a pardon has since been issued.

7. Leaving Rangitikei on Monday, the 17th January, I went on to Foxton on the Manawatu. Here I was met by Mr. Stewart, C.E., of the Provincial Government service, and Mr. A. Burr, formerly in charge of the road works carried on in this district under the Provincial Government. Accompanied by them I rode through the district to a point beyond Palmerston, about twenty-five miles inland from Foxton. My object was to inspect the partially constructed road, which, when properly finished, will rank as one of the great national works of New Zealand, being the only connecting link possible between the East and West Coasts south of Taupo. Whether regarded as a means of military defence, or as an inlet for colonization and settlement into a vast tract of most valuable land, or as a route for the traffic between the two sides of the island, which will otherwise either not exist or must go round by Cook's Strait, the importance of this road cannot be over-estimated. It runs in a nearly straight line from the sea coast on the west to the summit of the Ruahine range of mountains, a distance of about forty miles, through a timbered country practically dead level, and the very richest character of agricultural soil. At least 100,000 acres are of that description, and perhaps 100,000 more of second class, either by reason of inferior quality or locality. It abuts on the north upon a block of nearly similar size, chiefly of open land, but with large tracts of excellent bush towards the hills and northern extremity lately purchased from the Natives, and which is commonly known as the Manawatu-Rangitikei block, famous in the annals of the Native Land Court. The two blocks contain not much if any less than half a million acres, and may be regarded as the two first divisions of that vast tract of magnificent country, embracing Rangitikei, Turakina, Wangaehu, Wanganui, Waitotara, Patea, Waimate, Taranaki, and Waitara, which extends in one unbroken stretch from the Manawatu River to the White Cliffs, forty miles north of New Plymouth.

The road to which I have referred runs nearly parallel to the Manawatu River, its importance commencing at Ngawakarau, about two miles beyond Orowa Bridge, where is the head of the navigation, some thirty-five miles from the mouth by the windings of the river, and about twelve from Foxton across country. From Ngawakarau ten miles of this road, perfectly straight, have been cleared a chain wide, and constructed through the bush. Ten or fifteen miles more have been cleared but not constructed; and about ten miles more connect the Rangitikei-Manawatu block with the main road at Palmerston at right angles—also cleared but not formed.

The work having been commenced from the Palmerston end downwards towards the sea, I found that owing to want of funds it had been left untouched for about a mile and a half between Orowa Bridge and Ngawakarau, and, being through a wet and heavy bush, is for a great part of the year almost impassable on horseback, and quite impracticable for drays, thus rendering access to the country above and to the partially finished road which penetrates it quite impossible. The worst consequence of this is, that this fine tract of country lies almost entirely unoccupied; while the partially finished road across to Hawke's Bay would be almost useless if wanted on an emergency.

This line having been one of those indicated when the House of Representatives was asked for the vote of £30,000 for military roads last Session, I felt no hesitation in at once taking steps for the completion of the mile and a half which I have described as being an insuperable barrier to traffic beyond; and also for the improvement of the track through the sandhills and swamps through which the inland country is approached from Foxton for about ten miles. I arranged with Mr. A. Burr to organize road parties of Natives residing near the work, and to proceed under the superintendence of Mr. Stewart to execute these portions of the work, which I hope may be done before the commencement of winter. The cost of both pieces will probably not exceed £2,000, which of course will be chargeable on the vote for £30,000.

I have said that it is impossible not to recognize this road as a great national work, and it is one the construction of which would do more perhaps towards consolidating peace and opening the way for the settlement of a large population of hardy and industrious farmers, than any which could be devised. The work, if completed as it ought to be, would be one of considerable magnitude. It was roughly estimated by Mr. Stewart, that to complete it to the top of the mountain as a metalled road, allowing for the work already done, would cost from £20,000 to £30,000. This, however, is not a very large sum—in fact no more than the outlay on each of several bridges now being constructed in the Colony. The Provincial Government of Wellington has not at this moment the resources to effect such a work; but considering that there are on the line of road some 100,000 acres of first-class land, saleable at £1 an acre, and as much more of second class, saleable at ten shillings, surely the amount might easily be raised on the security of that noble estate. The additional value which would be given to the land by the existence of the road, would be the least advantage gained. The certainty that a large population would soon flock into it, and the benefits of connecting Manawatu, Wanganui, and Wellington with Hawke's Bay, are of far greater importance; and these are results which concern not only the two Provinces directly interested, but the whole Colony, by increasing its resources, and giving stability to its prospects of peace. If the Provincial Governments of Wellington and Hawke's Bay could see their way to raising the means for this work and carrying it into effect by any such process as suggested, I think it would be the duty of the Colonial Government to lend all the assistance it may be able towards enabling them to do so.

WILLIAM FOX.

1st February, 1870.

Enclosure 1 in No. 2.

Copy of a Letter from Lieutenant BLAKE to Major NOAKE.

SIR,—

Waihi, 27th October, 1869.

I have to report, for your information, that I left Waihi at 6.45 a.m. this morning, with Lieutenant Maka, Ensign Aropeta, and thirty-six Whanau Apanui, Captain Piniamino, and nine Ngatiporou, for the purpose of scouting up General Chute's track to the Waitara.

Reached Araukuku at 8.20 a.m. by a good dray-track from Waihi; this place is about two and a half miles in from edge of the bush; here we saw several large clearings of potatoes; drays may be got to within a quarter of a mile of these. Natives propose taking up these potatoes, if they can get drays to cart them to Waihi.

On getting to the Rori at 8.55 a.m. we turned off on a path leading to a kainga named Ngapahi. When within 300 yards of this place I heard shots fired by the scouts in advance; on coming up to these I found they had shot two Hauhaus—Wikiriwhi and Hāmi—and caught an old woman. Wikiriwhi had a good double-barrelled gun and a pouch full of ammunition; two women, a child, and three men got away.

Aropeta says that these two would not have been shot but for their attempting to escape. These people had about three acres newly planted with potatoes. We burnt thirteen whares.

Araukuku is about four and a half miles from Waihi, Te Rori about six miles, and Ngapuhi seven miles.

The woman taken prisoner says that Titokowaru is preparing to come this way in December, and that he has plenty of ammunition.

The people that were in Mawhitiwhiti were taken away by Titokowaru about the end of September, 1869.

Major Noake, Commanding Wanganui and
Patea Militia District.

I have, &c.,

R. T. BLAKE, Lieut.,

Commanding No. 9 Div. A.C.

P.S.—The three men that escaped were armed with double-barrelled guns; one of the two men was shot by Pini Pururangi, and the other by Wi Patene.

M. NOAKE.

Enclosure 2 in No. 2.

Copy of a Letter from Captain KELLS to Major NOAKE.

SIR,—

Wereroa, 19th November, 1869.

I have the honor to report that I proceeded up the Waitotara River, in two canoes, at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, the 16th instant, in command of force as per margin,* and reached Pourakou at 3 p.m., where I stopped all night, after ten hours' hard pulling, and an hour's rest for refreshments.

I started again next morning at 3.30 o'clock, and reached Perounui at 2 p.m., after stopping upwards of two hours at the kainga and calling at several other places on the way. I returned to the kainga the same evening at 7.30 o'clock, and camped for the night.

I left the canoes at a bend of the river about a mile below Perounui, and I went inland through the bush, so as to cut off the retreat of the outlaws by land, if there were any at the settlement. I found the place unoccupied, but I saw signs of native cultivation on the opposite side of the river, and on going over I found about twenty kits of seed potatoes, about a quarter of an acre of taro planted, and a considerable extent of ground ready for planting, and I also found footmarks and other signs that the Natives had but just quitted the place. On going up a creek opposite Perounui, in company with four men, I came suddenly in sight of two Natives, a man and a woman, trying to force a canoe over a log up the creek. The man, who is an old rebel named Tukarawa, ran off, and as he was getting out of sight into the bush he was fired upon and fell wounded. I sent one of the party back for a doctor for him, and I proceeded on up the creek, believing that other outlaws were trying to escape in that direction. When I returned to where I left the wounded man, I found that he had made his escape into the bush close by before the doctor arrived. I regret that the man escaped, but when I left him I thought he was too badly wounded to get away, and I was anxious to secure others if possible. The woman I brought with me, and I will send her to town by the first conveyance.

I found two canoes at Perounui, and from the circumstances I judged that there was a number of Natives in the neighbourhood, and it made me more anxious to secure the wounded Native, dead or alive, to prevent his carrying intelligence. One of the canoes is a new one, and capable of carrying fourteen men; and the other is only an old one, but capable of carrying eight men. I brought both canoes home with me.

On my way up the river I found seven whares erected at a clearing above Pourakou, and seven kits of potatoes. The whares were capable of accommodating about fifty adult people.

I found twenty whares erected at a place the name of which I do not know, between Pourakou and the kainga, capable of affording accommodation to upwards of a hundred men, but no sign of cultivation. I found twelve whares at the kainga, capable of affording accommodation to a hundred men. The whares were all of a temporary construction, but substantial of the kind, and apparently, to me, erected for the temporary accommodation of the inhabitants on their return to the river, or for the accommodation of persons coming to cultivate. I found no ground ready for cultivation anywhere except at Porounui, and here there were no whares at all erected, and so I concluded that the Natives came from a distance in canoes to cultivate. I concluded that the Natives came by canoes because there were no regular or indeed any other tracks leading from the clearings inland. I destroyed the whole of the seed potatoes and most of the taro cultivation found at Porounui before leaving that place, and I destroyed the whares at the different places and the seed potatoes at Pourakou on my way down from

* 1 sergeant, 14 rank and file, Veteran Volunteers; 1 constable, Armed Constabulary.

the kainga, which place I left at 3 p.m. on the 18th instant, and arrived at the redoubt at 5 p.m. the same day.

I have, &c.,
Major Noake,
Commanding W. and P. Militia District.

THOS. KELLS, Captain,
Wanganui Veteran Volunteers.

Enclosure 3 in No. 2.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. C. A. WRAY to Major NOAKE.

SIR,—

Survey Department, Patea, 18th January, 1870.

I have the honor to forward return showing estimated area of confiscated lands between Waitotara and Waingongoro Rivers.

I have taken an average distance of five miles from the beach throughout as the limit of available lands. In some parts of the country (from Tangahoe River to Waingongoro) the available lands would stretch much further inland, but as it has never been surveyed, and we have no knowledge of its extent, I have not considered it necessary to take it into consideration in this return.

Three blocks of land, consisting of about 137,800 acres, are I believe at the present disposal of the Government, and might be cut up and sold at once.

The first of these, the Railway Reserve, consists of about 12,000 acres of first-class land, and runs through the centre of surveyed blocks. The next, which I have called waste land, is situated in the Okotuku block. That portion to southward of Military Settlements includes a good deal of swamp and sandhill, but from its position, and the fact of there being a considerable quantity of good land in it, would, I have no doubt, fetch a fair price; the other portion, to eastward of Military Settlements, and having frontage to Waitotara River, is first-class land.

The 4,800 acre piece between Carlyle and Kakaramea includes township of Carlyle and suburban allotments, and might, if required, be laid out on the ground ready for sale.

The block of 8,400 acres which I have described as waste land between Patea and Whenuakura Rivers, has not, to my knowledge, been treated as confiscated land, further than that the Railway Reserve and public roads have been run through it. The Natives who occupied it were Tauroa's hapu of the Pakakohe Tribe, now suffering imprisonment.

The Native Reserves on the maps are shown much further back than has ever been surveyed, but I have thought it best in my estimate to confine myself to the limits we have actual knowledge of.

There is some very superior land in these blocks, which I presume have now reverted to the Government.

I beg to forward for transmission to the Hon. Mr. Fox, a finished plan of my survey at Hawera, on a scale of ten chains to the inch, accompanied by my charges for the same.

I have to inform you that Mr. G. W. Williams, surveyor, a gentleman employed for some years in the Government Survey Department at Auckland, has joined me, and that surveys will in future be carried on by us jointly.

I have, &c.,

Major M. Noake, Commanding Patea Militia District,
Patea.

C. A. WRAY, Surveyor.

ESTIMATED AREA OF LANDS in PATEA DISTRICT, between Waitotara and Waingongoro Rivers, the external boundaries of which have been surveyed, and which includes MILITARY SETTLEMENTS, GOVERNMENT, and (available portion) NATIVE RESERVES.

Descriptions of Block.	Where Situated.	Remarks.	Estimated Area.
Railway Reserve ...	Between Waitotara and Waingongoro.	This is a strip of land half a mile in width, running through entire district.	Acres. 12,000
Waste land ...	Okotuku Block, southward and eastward of Military Settlements.	This block is, I believe, at the present disposal of Government.	21,000
Government Reserve ...	Between Carlyle and Kakaramea.	Includes Township of Carlyle and suburban allotments—the latter not yet marked off on the ground.	4,800
Waste land ...	Between Patea and Whenuakura Rivers.	This block has not been treated as confiscated. It was in possession of Pakakohe Tribe. (Railway Reserve and roads run through it.)	8,400
Military Settlements ...	Between Waitotara and Waingongoro Rivers.	45,000
Native Reserves ...	Chiefly between Tangahoe and Waingongoro.	In estimating area of Native Reserves, I have merely taken the average distance of about five miles from the beach. These Reserves are shown on the maps as extending further inland, and consequently of larger dimensions, but as they have not been actually surveyed, and we are not acquainted with the quality of the lands, I have shown only that portion of these Reserves, the external boundaries of which have been surveyed.	10,000
Total			101,200

Patea, 19th January, 1870.

C. A. WRAY,
Surveyor.

Enclosure 4 in No. 2.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. T. KELLY to the Hon. D. McLEAN.

SIR,—

Wellington, September 4, 1869.

In accordance with your request, I have the honor to enclose a Memorandum, in reference to the construction of roads in the Province of Taranaki, which appear to me to be desirable to provide for defence of the settlements, and to extend the occupation and cultivation of the country.

As the construction of roads into the interior is one great feature of the policy of the present Government, I have no doubt that no unnecessary time will be lost before the preliminary steps are taken to initiate this great and important work.

Had one tenth of the money which has been wasted on unproductive Native wars been employed in the construction of roads penetrating the fastnesses of the interior; the disaster which the Colony has suffered during the past year would have been rendered impossible.

I hope that we are entering on a new era as regards our dealings with the Native race, and while ever ready to punish aggression by means of organized forces, that we will depend more on the pick and shovel to conquer and hold the country.

The Hon. D. McLean, Defence Minister,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
THOMAS KELLY.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS NECESSARY FOR MILITARY PURPOSES AND THE EXTENSION OF
SETTLEMENT IN THE PROVINCE OF TARANAKI.

Patea to Waihi twenty-five miles.

The road from Patea to Waihi, a distance of twenty-five miles, requires but little outlay to make it fairly passable, if bridges are made over the Tangahoe and Maniwapo Rivers, with the addition of side cutting to make the approaches easy. Simple lattice bridges, such as have recently been in the course of construction in the New Plymouth district, if built on piles of heart of matai or totara, would last with little repairs for many years, at a cost not exceeding £5 per foot forward on roadway. Before the disturbances occurred at Patea the Provincial Government had sections taken of both rivers with a view of bridging them, the General Government at that time being inclined to contribute to the cost, which was estimated at £1,000. No ford can be found on the main line as laid down on the map, as the river bottoms and the banks consist of a soft clay, which soon cuts up and renders dray traffic impossible.

Coast Road, Waihi to Stoney River—fifty miles. Stoney River to New Plymouth—twenty miles.

The coast line from Waihi to the nearest New Plymouth settlement at the Stoney River is from fifty to sixty miles, and could be made practical for ordinary dray traffic at a comparatively small expense. I venture to state that £1,500 would be sufficient for the purpose if the Natives living along the line could be induced to take the work on contract, when laid out by a competent road surveyor. The road from thence to the town of New Plymouth, twenty miles, is made, and the rivers bridged.

Mountain Road, Waihi to Mataitawa—Forty miles.

The construction of a line of road through the forest in the rear of Mount Egmont, from Waihi to Mataitawa, is of importance as a military work, as, if constructed, it would cut off from the interior the disaffected Taranaki tribes under Te Witi. This line would be about forty miles in length, of which thirty-five would be through dense forest. Before the construction of this line was commenced, it would be desirable that the country should be well explored by a competent surveyor, as such a proceeding would tend to greatly reduce the expenditure, and result in the production of a better road. It is often found, in laying off roads in the forest, that if great care is not exercised by the surveyor, unnecessarily steep gradients have to be used. This is especially the case around the base of Mount Egmont, as the land is cut deep by numerous rivers; and great care is required in selecting crossing places to avoid steep banks, which involve heavy cuttings to make a passable road. The forest should be felled for a width of two chains, and a track cleared, free from logs and stumps, a width of twenty feet. According to the cost by contract of similar work at New Plymouth, this could be done for about £60 per mile, and to make the necessary cuttings, culverts, and fords, would take about £40, making a total cost of £100 per mile for a rough dray road through forest land.

Waitara to White Cliffs—Twenty miles.

The coast road from Waitara to the White Cliffs, in the direction of Mokau, requires a small expenditure to make it easier for dray traffic. The beach forms a good means of communication for a portion of the distance, but as little or no work has been expended on the approaches to it, there exists many dangerous obstructions. The expenditure of some £50 in quarrying through a rocky point on the beach would make a greater length of it available at half-tide. There are two rivers, the Urenui and the Mimi, which are great obstacles to dray traffic,—the former owing to the ford being deep, and the approach to it a wide flat of soft mud, covered at half-tide. The latter can only be crossed at the mouth on the beach at low water, and is dangerous in consequence of numerous quicksands. It would cost about £300 each to bridge these rivers, and the improvement of the road would cost about £400.

Road to Waikato and Taupo—Ninety miles.

The line of road from Taranaki to Waikato and Taupo will be found to lie between the Waitara and Wanganui Rivers; and would branch off from the road in the rear of Mount Egmont about midway, and strike about due East at its commencement, afterwards trending to the North-east. As this country is very little known to either Natives or Europeans, it would require to be very carefully explored before any definite route was decided on. As this line would penetrate the very heart of the country,

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 "	felling forest, culverts, &c.	... 4,000
Waitara to White Cliffs	... 20 "	two bridges	... 1,000
Mountain Road to Taupo and Waikato	... 90 "	felling 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.

The country north of Carlyle to Manutahi, contains about 30 settlers, a few dwelling-houses, about 600 or 700 head of cattle; a great amount of fencing will be completed during this season. There is a large proportion of land laid down in grass, and a considerable portion will be in crop this season. Those who are not employed on their farms are engaged in contract work on the roads, under the Road engineers.

The Patea Flax Company has not made that progress expected of it. Although they have cleared a portion of their lands and have begun to fence, they have as yet no building erected or machinery on the ground.

Carlyle has improved and increased rapidly within the last few months; it now contains many good substantial buildings, and its population will be about 150—including men, women, and children.

At Wairoa, where a few months ago we had a garrison almost blockaded in its redoubt, there is now a rapidly increasing population of industrious and enterprising settlers, numbering about 140, who have erected 29 dwellings, have 1,100 acres laid down in grass, about 700 fenced in, will have a considerable portion in crop, and several hundreds of chains of fencing completed this season. There are sawyers at work in the bush, and the material is used up for building as fast as it can be cut.

Since you visited this district, the inland road has been opened to enable the coach to carry passengers and the mails twice a week from Wanganui to Patea; and the telegraph has been established. No doubt the establishment of Sheppard's coach and the telegraph have contributed in a great degree to the progress made. It needs but a railway now to open up the vast resources of these magnificent districts. I believe it could be accomplished at comparatively little cost, as the country is well adapted naturally, having few engineering difficulties.

I have, &c.,

M. NOAKE, Major,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

Commanding Wanganui and Patea Districts.
