

No. 10.

His Honor J. D. ORMOND, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Napier, 18th November, 1870.

I have the honor to enclose, for your information, copy of instructions sent to Mr. Bold, desiring him to arrange with the Rotorua Natives for the formation of the part of the main line of road from Taupo to Tauranga, which is described in my telegram to Mr. Bold. You will observe that I have taken care to exclude the portion of road near Niho o te Kiore, in respect to which there might possibly be some objection raised by Ngatiraukawa.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

J. D. ORMOND.

Enclosure in No. 10.

MEMORANDUM to Mr. BOLD, Taupo.

MR. LOCKE has handed me letter from Ngatiwhakaue and Tuhourangi, stating they have agreed to the road from Rotorua to Niho o te Kiore and on to Taupo, and asking for employment. I think we should take advantage of this, and start the work from Rotorua towards the Niho o te Kiore. At same time as this, telegrams go to the hapus before named, saying you will visit them, and start the work. I do not think it desirable to arrange for the construction of the whole road, so please contract with Natives for portion, say ten or twenty miles, according to the country, commencing at Rotorua, and coming towards Niho o te Kiore, and avoid for the present the part of the road near Niho o te Kiore, about which there might be question. You will understand what I mean.

Please have written agreements with Natives, and arrange for lump sum as in parts of road already contracted for. It will be desirable to employ both the hapus who have written, if they wish it. Te Manihera and Ohiwi are, I believe, the principal men. Mr. Maling will be available for this, as well as other works. I know you are getting your hands full of work, but I rely on your starting the Rotorua Road, as it is very important.

Napier, 18th November, 1879.

ORMOND.

No. 11.

Mr. HEALE to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Inspector of Surveys' Office, 23rd December, 1870.

Referring to my letter of the 5th instant, on the road from Tauranga to Taupo, and to my previous report on the same subject, in all of which I intimated doubt as to whether the line which has been adopted, rather in consequence of the posture of Native affairs at the time of its commencement, than on engineering grounds, would ultimately be the main line to Taupo, I have the honor to inform you that, having had occasion to make some stay in Tauranga on Native Land Court business, I took the opportunity, both by personal examination and by inquiry, to clear up some doubts I still entertained as to one or two topographical points, and I am now able to lay before you a definite report on the whole subject.

The shortest practicable route from Tauranga to Taupo would pass by the west side of Rotorua Lake, proceeding on by Parekarangi, Ohinemutu, and Niho o te Kiore, the distance being only seventy-six miles. To reach the west side of Rotorua Lake, near Puhirua, the choice lies between the three routes shown on the accompanying tracing. The first and most obvious of these is that by Pye's pa and Maenene, coloured brown; this only crosses one small stream, and a cart road already exists as far as Pye's pa, where a military station was kept up for several years, to which stores were always sent by dray. This old road required to be slightly diverted in two places, and a few cuttings and fillings to be made, and beyond the redoubt a considerable but not difficult gully had to be crossed. The whole of the works required for these would not have cost more than £1,600, which would have made it an excellent road to the edge of the forest, about thirteen miles. Within the forest it would proceed for about six miles over ground without particular difficulty, and there join the line which has been surveyed, by Oropi.

The second line, by Oropi, tinted pink, is the one which has been adopted. It involved two heavy side cuttings with gradients of 1 in 11, and an embankment across a deep swamp within three miles from the township, a bridge over the Waioroi River in the same vicinity, a considerable one over a branch of it at Whakapaukarakia, and then again over the Waioroi a short distance within the forest.

All the works on this road, as far as the first bridge over the Waioroi, have been completed by the military, and the remaining portions to the edge of the forest have, according to your directions through Mr. Clarke, been advertised for tender at Tauranga, the estimated cost of them being £1,850. With these works it will make a fair road, but by no means equal to one by Maenene.

The third line, tinted yellow, crosses the Kopurererua Bridge (completed) at Judea, and runs along a very level table land to the edge of the forest near Akeake, and, but for two considerable gullies which cross it, it would have been the best of the three; but since I now find, contrary to my original impression, that this road also would have to join the line surveyed by Oropi a few miles within the forest, or at all events to cross the Mangorewa River in the same difficult ravines, I am clear that it presents no advantage over the line by Maenene.

It will be seen, then, that all these tracks unite at a distance of about twenty miles from Tauranga township. From the point of junction the road runs for the most part over slightly undulating table land, of a light and dry, but exceedingly fertile character, having a pumiceous subsoil, and covered with very heavy forest of taua and rimu. Over such land roads may be made without difficulty, as very little drainage is required, and experience proves that the pumice subsoil stands a moderate wheel traffic perfectly well without metal; but unfortunately these level uplands are intersected by ravines of a very formidable character. The worst of these is the one in which the Mangorewa River runs: this is only 20 chains wide above, and is 460 feet deep, so that it is only by sharp turns and divergencies and considerable side cuttings (fortunately in soft tufa) that we have been enabled to find a crossing, with