

According to this you will see that the work has been taken considerably lower than my estimate, but it must be borne in mind that it is doubtful if the Natives complete the work in the Mangorewa Valley, where the rock lies. They have agreed to try, and I trust, by our finding them some powder, that the work will be done by them, as the rock is very soft; in the event of their not succeeding, they are quite willing to allow Europeans to do it.

After our return here we endeavoured to arrange with the Ngaiteahi and Ngatimahine Tribes for this end of the forest, from Oropi to Te Rerenga,* eight miles and three-quarters, but were not successful, as the Natives were very obstinate and determined, demanding 5s. a day, or £300 a mile. We of course could not give in to them, for by so doing the Natives on the Rotorua side would immediately make a similar demand, which would increase the price materially. Mr. Jordan, the contractor for the works this side of Oropi, asked if he could tender for this portion of the road. I informed him I could not exceed the £200 per mile; he subsequently put in a tender for the eight miles and three quarters, and the whole of the bridges through the forest (including those on the Rotorua side), for £3,180. This I thought a very good thing for the Government, and at once consulted with Mr. Clarke, who, after going into the calculations, perfectly agreed with me, and at once commenced a communication with Wellington on the subject, and I am happy to say the Government have agreed to it. My estimate for this portion of the work is as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
45,600 cubic yards side cutting, at 6d.	1,140	0	0
Small cuttings, 18,400 ditto, filling and formation, at 6d. ...	460	0	0
Chipping, 1 chain wide, and clearing centre of road, 700 chains, at £1	700	0	0
Bridging, 106 feet, at £3	318	0	0
	£2,618	0	0
<i>European Labour.</i>			
Total estimate of work through forest from Oropi to Te Rerenga	2,618	0	0
From Te Rerenga to Rotorua side	3,887	17	0
Inspection	200	0	0
	6,705	17	0
Contract to Puhirua Natives	£1,600	0	0
Say for Maori tools, &c.	100	0	0
Mr. Jordan's tender	3,180	0	0
Inspection	100	0	0
Amount required to be authorized	4,980	0	9
Amount less my estimate	£1,725	17	0

These works are to be estimated as each mile is completed at the rate of 80 per cent.; the balance, 20 per cent., to be paid on the completion of the whole works.

These contracts will commence about the 10th instant. Will you please arrange and have the money for them. Mr. Jordan is sure to push on his end of the work.

I will make a specification, contract, and bond, for Mr. Jordan to sign as soon as possible.

John Blackett, Esq., C.E., Acting Engineer-in-Chief,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
A. C. TURNER,
Resident Engineer.

No. 27.

MR. TURNER to MR. KNOWLES.

Public Works Office, Tauranga, 1st May, 1871.

SIR,—

I have the honor herewith to forward tracings of the survey of that portion of the Tauranga and Taupo Road from Puhirua (Rotorua) to Niho o te Kioire, together with schedule, showing amount of work now under contract and ready to let, and detail estimates for the same. Tracings from Oropi to Puhirua* have been forwarded.

I am going inland on the 3rd instant, to try and settle with the Natives again. (The Hon. J. D. Ormond has instructed Mr. Maling to accompany me as interpreter, as he thinks it desirable arrangement should be made.) The Tuhourangi demands were very exorbitant, they refusing to take less than £4,000 for the work from Te Hemo to Niho o te Kioire, my estimate being £2,547.

The Ngatiwhakaue requested me to arrange with them from Waititi to the Hemo, but I could do nothing with them, as they wanted day pay. From what I can learn, there has been a clerical gentleman doing great harm with the Natives, saying they were working too low.

Should the Natives not come to terms, would the Government be willing to allow Mr. Jordan to take the work at the estimated cost? The Maoris have written and telegraphed, asking him to take it, and employ them by the day. Mr. Jordan has had a conversation with me on the subject, and states that, after he examines the line of road, and satisfies himself that the estimate is sufficient, he would take it. Should the Natives still hang back, I would advise this, as Mr. Jordan would have a few Europeans employed, as he now has on his new contract; and I feel sure that the work would be better done and bridges well built. This is work that cannot be left to competition, as the land belongs to Natives.

Will you reply to this, either one way or the other, to Rotorua; I will then know how to act. I fancy this letter will reach you before much can be done.

John Knowles, Esq., Under Secretary, Public Works.

I have, &c.,
A. C. TURNER.

P.S.—The span at Niho o te Kioire, Waikato, is 120 feet; very deep water, varying from 22 feet to 32 feet; banks, 4 feet on south side (rock), 22 feet on north side (very soft rock); 130 foot truss bridge would do here, of one span. There is very good building stone for abutments on the spot.—A. C. T.

* For direction of road from Oropi through the Mangorewa Forest to Puhirua on to Rotorua Lake, see plan enclosed in Mr. Heale's report, page 10.