

line by Oruanui and Niho o te Kiore, and that I would recommend the making that part of the line by Native labour under contract.

Note.—Section 2 of this letter, relating to the road through the Seventy Mile Bush to Manawatu, has been extracted, and will be found in that section of the papers.

3. The next road to which I will call attention is the road between Wairoa and Poverty Bay. It is very desirable to improve the communication between these places, and the roads connecting them are almost impassable. I say roads, for there are two; the one by the coast, and the other inland by Te Reinga, and both important as military roads.

A portion of the East Coast Road passes through heavy bush, which is reported to me as very bad indeed. The clearing a line through this bush, bridging a few of the creeks, and making side cuttings here and there, would improve this line as much as is necessary, and I think a sum of about £500 would be sufficient for the purpose.

The inland road from Wairoa to Poverty Bay, by Te Reinga, is the better line, and was generally used before the disturbances. Any work of importance on the line between Wairoa and Te Reinga would be on the road to Waikare-Moana, and might be given to the Wairoa Military Settlers, who were recommended assistance of this kind by the House of Representatives. A sum of £1,000 might be profitably expended on the road from Wairoa to Te Reinga and towards Waikare-Moana; and for the remainder of the road to Poverty Bay, including the main line through the inland portion of the Poverty Bay District, another sum of £1,000 would be well expended. If these roads are assented to I should propose to employ Mr. Whitty (the officer who did such good service lately in connection with the Waikare-Moana expedition), to superintend them, for which he is well suited, and knows the country thoroughly between Poverty Bay and Wairoa, and its road requirements.

I think I have in this report brought under notice the road works which are most important, and, when informed of the decisions of the Government in respect of them, can supply such fuller particulars as may be needed.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
J. D. ORMOND.

Enclosure 1 in No. 30.

Mr. BOLD to His Honor J. D. ORMOND.

SIR,—

Napier, September 14th, 1870.

I have the honor to submit, for your information, the following report on the road works in this district, with estimated cost of those in progress and those recommended to be undertaken.

Tapuaeharuru to Runanga.

The contract entered into with Poihipi for opening dray communication on this section is now determined and the final payment has been made. The portions I deemed incomplete have been finished as satisfactorily as could be expected, considering the difficulties under which the work was executed.

In future contracts it will, I think, be found advisable to fix a price for each kind of work at per chain or yard cube, &c.

The side cuttings, being chiefly through pumice, suffered from the late unusually heavy rains; those near Opepe have been restored by the Constabulary stationed there.

Near Runanga four creeks require bridging and two require new approaches: those at present existing have not been well laid off and are unnecessarily steep for drays. The item £120 is required for these works. The item £150 is intended to cover the cost of extraneous labour, either European or Native, required in maintaining cuttings and executing any work at a distance, and to which it may be found inconvenient to send Constabulary. The item £410 is the estimate cost of the two bridges across Rangitaiki and Waipunga; which sum includes supply of timber, ironwork, and carriage. The timber for these bridges is now in course of delivery by the bullock teams belonging to the Government. The recent bad weather has protracted the completion of these works, but it is anticipated they will now soon be ready for traffic.

With exception of the creeks near Runanga, the road will require but little labour to be kept in good order, and equal to traffic demands. A small party going over the entire length occasionally, would suffice to preserve it in good condition. In winter there are several portions which become very soft and swampy, and would be all the better if drained; but as the road is not confined in these places, they can very well be left until more pressing works are finished.

Runanga to Titiokura.

With reference to this section, I would propose that the road in the vicinity of Tarawera be laid off for a dray road. Same plan could be observed at Runanga. Of the thirty bridges, three-fourths are required south of Tarawera. The estimates for them contemplate bridges twelve feet wide, of squared and sawn heart of totara or matai. The large bridges across Waipunga (at lower crossing), Au Au, and Wainone Creeks, it is proposed should be dray bridges.

The erection of the Waipunga Bridge at the span named is dependent upon whether satisfactory gradients can be secured along a trial line, I propose cutting on the left bank. In case the line is successful, I would recommend that the bridge be constructed wide enough for drays. The cost of such a bridge would be covered by the sum named in estimate. If, on the contrary, the trial line proves unfeasible for road, then the erection of a bridle bridge of larger span is the alternative, at probably the same cost. The urgent demand for these bridges was lately evinced by the high floods in the rivers, which impeded traffic for a week at a stretch.

The erection of these works can only be satisfactorily performed by skilled labour, and as there happens to be now a competent class of competitors in the neighbourhood, it would be well to put the work in hand without loss of time. The work let in small contracts will be found more economical than in large contracts, as past experience here has shown.