

## KAI IWI TO PATEA DISTRICT.

No. 79.

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

SIR,—

Wanganui, 3rd December, 1870.

I have the honor to report that I have inspected the inland line of road from Wanganui to Waitotara, with a view of determining whether a wooden tramway could be laid along it with advantage. I find that the grades and curves are too frequent to admit of the safe or economical working of a tramway; but the road, if completed, would make an excellent coach road, and could be opened for coach traffic in about seven weeks.

The works required are—cutting and removing scrub from formation, and clearing out water tables; also the erection of a few new culverts and small bridges, and the completion of the metalling. The estimated approximate cost of the work is about £1,600, Mr. Hales's original estimate being £1,300, which sum, however, did not include two large culverts and other works.

Authority will be required by Mr. Hales to expend this amount, as, although he was informed by letter that the Government would act on Mr. Stewart's recommendation that this line of road should be adopted, he was not authorized to commence work upon it. I should strongly recommend that this authority be given, and that the work be commenced forthwith. The specifications are already prepared, and tenders could be called for at once, the work to be done by contract, in short lengths.

The present coach road passes along the beach for a certain distance, which part can only be travelled when the tide is out. This renders the travelling on this part of the road very uncertain and irregular, and this disadvantage will be obviated by opening the inland line.

I have, &amp;c.,

Hon. Mr. Gisborne, Minister for Works,  
Wellington.

JOHN BLACKETT,  
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

P.S.—Instructions given to Mr. Hales to proceed at once with this work.—J. BLACKETT, C.E., 5th December, 1870.

No. 80.

EXTRACT from Report from Mr. BLACKETT to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Auckland, 15th December, 1870.

I have the honor to inform you that I arrived here to-day, having come from New Plymouth to Onehunga by the steamer "Taranaki," and beg to forward the following outline report of my proceedings since I left Wellington.

In reference to the survey of the railway line, I have left instructions with Mr. J. T. Stewart to proceed with that portion of it from the Manawatu Gorge to Wanganui, and have authorized him to engage a party to cut a line through the bush from near the gorge to the Oroua River, the party to consist of a surveyor and two men. This line will greatly assist and forward Mr. Stewart's operations.

I have given instructions to Mr. W. Hales to proceed with that part of the line from Wanganui northwards to Waingongoro. In this he will be assisted by Mr. Hogg, who is now employed in laying off road work; and, as regards the portion of the line from Waingongoro to New Plymouth, I have arranged that Mr. O. Carrington shall proceed with it, as soon as he is informed by Mr. Parris that he may do so. He will, of course, require the assistance of a surveyor, possibly more than one, as there is a long stretch of country in which progress will necessarily be slow.

*Inland Line of Road: Kai Iwi to Waitotara.*—The work necessary for opening this road was advertised for public tender in Wanganui before I left. Tenders to be received up to the 15th December, and work to be completed in six weeks from the date of the tenders. To accomplish this more readily, the work has been divided into several small contracts, the estimated cost of which, including two large culverts, is £1,600. This sum does not include the remainder of the metalling which will be required.

From the Waitotara to the Waingongoro the principal works required to open the road for dray or coach traffic are bridges over the Manutahi, the Tangahoe, and the Waingongoro Rivers. Sections of these and other rivers, which it seems desirable to bridge, southwards to the Kai Iwi, have been taken, and plans and estimates of the cost of each are now being prepared by Mr. Hales, including those on which punts are now at work (excepting the Patea), which will be submitted to you as soon as they are ready.

It will be also necessary to have metal put on all the cuttings during the summer, the principal being those to the Manutahi, Patea, Whenuakura, and Waitotara Rivers.

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*Note.*—The remainder of this report relates to the road between Patea and Taranaki, and will be found in the Taranaki section of the papers.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

I have, &amp;c.,

JOHN BLACKETT.