

would involve heavy cost in construction. An average would probably be £8,000 per mile throughout, the total distance being about 108 miles. Grades of 1 in 50 might be obtained; and the greatest altitude to be surmounted would be about 1,800ft. above sea-level.

3. *Gisborne to Opotiki* (about 75 miles).—A railway between these places would branch from the line last described about sixteen miles from Gisborne, and its course would lie over a succession of hills and valleys of a very rugged character. It would cross two ranges, each about 2,300ft. high, and would require for this purpose at least two tunnels, one short one of a few chains, the other about twenty chains long. For about forty miles the country is exceedingly broken, and in many places quite equals the Manawatu Gorge in this respect. The cost over this portion would be fully £12,000 a mile, the remainder probably about £7,000, giving an average of £9,000 to £10,000 per mile.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF LAND, &c.

1. *Napier to Gisborne*.—The country between these places on the route described as generally open country, covered with fern, tutu, and ti-tree, with bush in the gullies; but no timber for constructive purposes is to be obtained. It varies exceedingly in character, from first-class land in the Te Arai and Wairoa Valleys to the poor pumice-land at the Mohaka. It is generally suited for pastoral purposes, being very much broken, except at the northern end, near Gisborne, where a considerable quantity of good flat land exists of a high character.

2. *Gisborne to Kawakawa Roadstead*.—The country along this route is generally open country, covered with fern, tutu, and ti-tree, with patches of bush at greater or less intervals; but there is hardly enough servicable timber (for the construction of bridges and culverts) available. Nearly the whole may be considered of a character to make good sheep- and cattle-runs. Except in the Gisborne, Tolago, and Waiapu Flats there is very little agricultural land; but a great deal of the rolling downs is well suited for fruit-growing. All the hills along the route are, with scarcely an exception, formed of stratified papa rock of various degrees of hardness, but too soft for road- or railway-metal; and, although a railway would not pay working expenses for many years, it appears to be the only means to open up the back-country.

3. *Gisborne to Opotiki*.—As far as the Motu, situated about half-way, the hills consist of papa, and the land is similar to that north of Gisborne. From the Motu to Opotiki the hills consist of clay-slate. The land, although very much broken, is good, and grass sown along the bridle-track thrives well. There is some totara, a great quantity of large-size rimu in the Motu bush, and small-leaved birch on the ranges. The Opotiki Valley contains some fair agricultural land.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF THE SURVEY OFFICERS, FURNISHED BY THE SURVEYOR-GENERAL.

No. 1.—*Napier to Gisborne*.

THE estimate of stock taken from Hawke's Bay for the lands in course of settlement in the Wairoa and Cook Counties is two hundred and seven thousand sheep per annum. The export from Wairoa to the Auckland market is six thousand sheep per annum.

The agricultural land in the immediate vicinity of the Town of Clyde is good, and would support a large population. In the past grain has been successfully grown, but has been neglected for many years; still, there are now signs that the Natives are sowing large areas. Hops promise to yield good returns; there are two plantations in picking. The Wairoa is locally noted for its fruit. The production of maize is considerable. The stock-carrying capacity of the district when grassed, including good land with bad, and taking a mean, may be set down at two million sheep.

The district that would be opened out by a railway is essentially a pastoral country, and will not support a population at all proportionate to its area. Out of a total area of 1,176,517 acres, there is only one-nineteenth of agricultural land.

The carriage of all produce and goods to settlements north of Tongioio being by water, a railway in the interior on Mr. Rochfort's line could not compete against the water-carriage for the trade of the sheep-stations fronting the seaboard. There are few roads at present formed that would act as feeders to the railway—the country in this respect seems neglected; but this is, no doubt, due to the cheap water-carriage, and to the fact that the land is not of the first quality, and does not offer any great inducements to settlers.

Particulars are given on the maps. The value of the unoccupied Crown lands may be taken at 5s. an acre, or £37,422 10s. for 149,690 acres.

Matawhero No. 1. — Flat, light soil mostly in grass. Nos. 4 and 6, and small blocks on east side of Waipaoa—Alluvial deposits, all under cultivation. Small blocks on west side of Waipaoa—Alluvial deposits, all under cultivation.

Te Arai No. 2, *Rakaukaka*, and *Pipihakaoa*, &c.—Alluvial flats. The ground rises somewhat quickly towards Trig. Station No. 101, and thence on towards Tarewauru.

Tarewauru, *Waiwhakaata*, and *Tauohiro*, &c.—The line, passing near the Arai Stream, would pass generally through small flats intersected by ridges, the land still gradually rising. There are small bushes, the land mostly being open, with broken hills on either side of the stream.

Mangapoike.—The line crosses the main range—some 2,000ft. high—near the eastern boundary, in open fern-country, and, passing down the Mangapoike Valley in bad broken bush-