

owing to so many of the natives being away with Kemp, and the rest busy getting in their crops, he had not been able to get the new hands as yet. Ultimately, four of those who had come for their pay agreed to stay till relieved by others, and, as Aperahama was himself going to the Horowhenua meeting, he left another man to hunt up substitutes, four of whom made their appearance on Thursday, and some others are daily expected. I also, in conversation with Aperahama, objected to the men leaving, as they have hitherto done, without leave, and often without even any notice, and he promised that in future he would arrange so that my permission must be obtained for any man's leaving.

During the week we have completed the cuttings at the streams, and are engaged in forming the road to the Paheru, most of which will be completed to-day. On Wednesday, we found a splendid seam of gravel right over the road. A soft place at the base of a cliff about 40 feet high required to be made good with fascines and earth, and, as the easiest way of obtaining the latter material, I sent a few of the men to throw it down from the top of the cliff. On removing the surface soil, we found the gravel immediately below it, and not only got what we wanted for the soft place, but gravelled several chains of the cutting which seemed likely to cut up with traffic. The seam has been excavated to the depth of six feet without reaching the bottom. In fact, I think it will prove to be from 15 to 20 feet thick, and, as it is so situated that the gravel on being dug falls at once on to the road, it will be very valuable.

There have been constant heavy showers during the whole week, which have not only impeded the earthwork, but have prevented my burning off the fern, &c., beyond the Paheru. It appears to be clearing, however, so that I hope to be able to carry on the leading line in the beginning of the week, so as to get fairly into the bush.

I have, &c.,

H. C. FIELD,

W. Buller, Esq., R.M., Wanganui.

Engineer in charge of Mangawhero-Taupo Road.

Enclosure 2 in No. 67.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. FIELD to Mr. BULLER, R.M.

Mangawhero,

SIR,—

19th April, 1870.

We have now got the road completed to about 30 miles from town, and have between 15 and 20 miles more to reach the plains. It is not easy to say how long it may take to finish this, for though it is far less difficult than most of what we have done, there is no telling what number of hands we may have to do it with. At the beginning of this month our 20 men had melted away to three. The following week we had five. For three days at the end of last week there were eleven; and now there are only six, and some of these may take it into their heads to start off to welcome the taua. It is most annoying, and sets all calculation at defiance. My son and I can select and cut through about half a mile per day, and 20 men steadily working ought to be able to keep close behind us; but when we are short handed it hinders us every way, as I cannot push on with the line without getting too far off to overlook the work, so have to slacken my speed, and set my son to help the men, in order to be able to attend to them.

I shall be in town, weather permitting, on Monday week, and shall be glad if you can make it convenient to come up with me on my return, so as to see the line and the country yourself.

I have, &c.,

H. C. FIELD,

W. Buller, Esq., R.M., Wanganui.

Engineer in charge of Mangawhero-Taupo Road.

No. 68.

Copy of a Telegram from Mr. BOOTH, R.M., to the Hon. W. Fox.

Wanganui, 5th April, 1870.

LEFT Kennedy's Upokonga Hotel for Mr. Field's camp at 6 a.m., Saturday, 23rd ult.; reached the camp at 9.45 a.m., distance 18 to 20 miles. Length of cutting done 15 miles; the most difficult part of the road is the first eight or ten miles. There are two or three bad gorges, one in particular, Huripari, is all but impassable, and will in winter be quite so, unless something is done to improve it. The cuttings through stiff blue clay, which has worked up into tenacious mud, up to the horses' knees. An attempt has been made to corduroy the cuttings in one place with fern trees, but a stream which has burst out in the middle of the road has carried the foundation away. I think the cuttings through the gorges will have to be widened, and perhaps fascines of manuka will be better than fern trees. There is no metal in the gorges I have mentioned. I think Mr. Field has taken a great deal too much pains with the road in places where it required little or nothing doing to it. In the valley of the Mangawhero, there are miles of perfectly flat land which only require the fern and manuka to be cleared away, and here the road is most elaborately finished, every little hummock carefully removed, and in many places drains cut and fascines laid down. I would respectfully recommend the Government to send a trustworthy man to take charge of the road party, which would leave Mr. Field at liberty to go on ahead of the rest, and to lay off his road line with proper gradients. He complains that being obliged to be constantly with the road party, he had not time to make so careful a survey as he would wish. In one place the road has been taken a mile and a half round where an easier direct track might have been found. Mr. Field says there is from 15 to 20 miles of road still to make. The road passes through a part of country which will be available for farming purposes. I do not think there will be any difficulty in having the rest of the work done by contract.

JAMES BOOTH, R.M.