

No. 12.

Mr. BLACKETT to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Auckland, 6th January, 1871.

In my letter of 26th December, 1870, I reported to you that I had gone over the proposed line of railway, Auckland to Waikato. Since then I have carefully examined the ground in and around Auckland, with a view to avoid the very expensive works connected with a tunnel, unfinished, and some heavy slips situated at each end of the tunnel.

Two other lines present themselves, which I propose to have carefully surveyed and the comparative costs estimated before deciding on the exact line.

I have examined all the plans, surveys, and sections which have been made for this railway, some of them very recently, and some yet unfinished; the latter for the extensions beyond Drury have been executed by four different surveyors, but I do not find that any one individual is responsible for the correctness of the work.

There will be required also several considerable alterations in the direction of the line, principally to reduce the cost of construction by adopting easier ground, besides the alterations already described in Auckland itself.

There will also be required a general plan of the line as altered, showing how it affects the different properties along its course.

The work yet to be done in order to produce proper working plans and sections, with specifications and estimates for the work, will really involve a complete resurvey of the line; and seeing the necessity of intrusting this to one individual, who shall be responsible for the completeness and correctness of the work, I sought the services of Henry Wrigg, Esq., C.E., who has accordingly tendered for the whole, and undertakes to have it complete, say within fifteen or sixteen weeks.

His tender at the rate of £25 per mile being thought reasonable has been accepted, and he will commence the survey without delay. I have directed his attention specially to the necessity for having the trial lines surveyed and levelled, that is those in Auckland, as soon as possible, and the results, with estimates, &c., forwarded to the Public Works Office, Wellington, for your consideration.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works,
Wellington.JOHN BLACKETT,
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

P.S.—I have been much delayed in Auckland by wet weather and other causes, and start for Thames to-day.—J.B.

No. 13.

Mr. BLACKETT to Mr. WRIGG.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 9th February, 1871.

In a conversation with the Hon. the Minister for Works, he informed me that he distinctly understood in reference to the Auckland and Waikato Railway that all the plant in the hands of the Provincial Government would be placed at the disposal of the General Government, in order to reduce the cost of construction as much as possible. Should we therefore be able to use the old rails, &c., as far as Onehunga, it will make a material difference in our estimate. I think you had better take an opportunity of seeing Mr. Gillies about this, so that we may have the option of using the rails, &c., should we desire to do so.

I have, &c.,

Henry Wrigg, Esq., C.E., Auckland.

JOHN BLACKETT,
Acting Engineer-in-Chief.

No. 14.

Mr. WRIGG to Mr. BLACKETT.

SIR,—

Auckland, 4th March, 1871.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication under date of 9th February, 1871, No. 26.

As I did not return from Pukekohe until yesterday, I was unable to reply in due course. I now find Mr. Gillies is absent, and will be for some days; but upon his return I shall see him. I have, however, already obtained from the Provincial Government a list of all the plant and rolling stock, and the invoice cost of the same. These, I have no doubt, will be handed over if you desire it, and instruct me on what conditions I am to receive them. At present there is a cost of £2 2s. a week to the Provincial Government for a care-taker. If you accept the transfer, this cost will be a charge on your Department I presume; and as the checking of the list which they produce will be a most costly affair, I shall accept them, if you so instruct, subject to final stock-taking, if the conditions of transfer require this.

I have, &c.,

John Blackett, Esq., Engineer-in-Chief, Wellington.

HENRY WRIGG.

No. 15.

Mr. WRIGG to Mr. BLACKETT.

SIR,—

Auckland, 13th March, 1871.

I have the honor to inform you, in further reference to your letter dated 9th February, and No. 26, that on my return from Pukekohe I waited on Mr. Gillies, according to your instructions, regarding the railway plant at Newmarket.