

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

EAST AND WEST COAST AND NELSON (MIDLAND) RAILWAY

(GENERAL REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF ON THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 27th May, 1886.

I have the honour to forward herewith a full report by the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief on the East and West Coast and Nelson Railway, and on the country traversed and affected by it. Four maps accompany the above report.

I have, &c.,

JOHN BLACKETT,
Engineer-in-Chief.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.

The ASSISTANT ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF to the ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF, Wellington.

Wellington, 7th April, 1886.

SIR,—

In accordance with your instructions, I have the honour to submit the following general report on the proposed East and West Coast and Nelson Railway, and the country it is intended to accommodate.

GENERAL.

Scope of Report.—The aim of the report is to give a correct idea of the proposed works and the present state of settlement, together with an account of the resources of the country that bear on future settlement and the prospects of the railway. Some of the information having already been published piecemeal in the numerous reports relating to the subject, I purpose, so far as statements of facts are concerned, to make this report an epitome of all that have preceded it, as well as a record of my own observations.

Former Papers.—For facility of reference, I attach hereto (Appendix A) a list of the principal reports and other documents relative to the whole question of railway communication in the northern and western districts of the Middle Island.

Fresh Explorations.—In order that I might be able to lay the whole matter before you as clearly as possible, you instructed me to make a further examination of the country. I accordingly did so, devoting seven weeks to the work, and going to every place with which I previously was not intimately acquainted. Practically, I have seen every part of the country that is calculated to contribute directly or indirectly to the support of the railway.

Maps.—This report is accompanied by a series of four sketch maps intended to elucidate the various points dealt with:—

- No. 1, Settlement Map, shows where the population is located, and the lands sold and leased;
- No. 2, Land Map, shows the arable flat, arable hilly, and open pastoral lands;
- No. 3, Forest Map, shows the forest lands, divided into the various kinds of timber;
- No. 4, Mineral Map, shows the location of the various mineral deposits.

The different boundaries shown on the maps, and areas calculated therefrom, are, of course, only approximate, extreme exactness being impossible without minute and expensive surveys. It is,