



NORTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY: 15 FT. WATER TUNNEL CARRYING TAIHAPE STREAM UNDER RAILWAY EMBANKMENT, AT 43 MILES 52 CHAINS FROM MARTON JUNCTION.

Bryce; and his successor in office, the Hon. Mr. Ballance, was able to negotiate an arrangement whereby a strip of land one chain wide along the whole route, where it traversed Maori land, with additional widths at stations and elsewhere where required, was presented to the Government free of cost.

EXPLORATION SURVEYS.

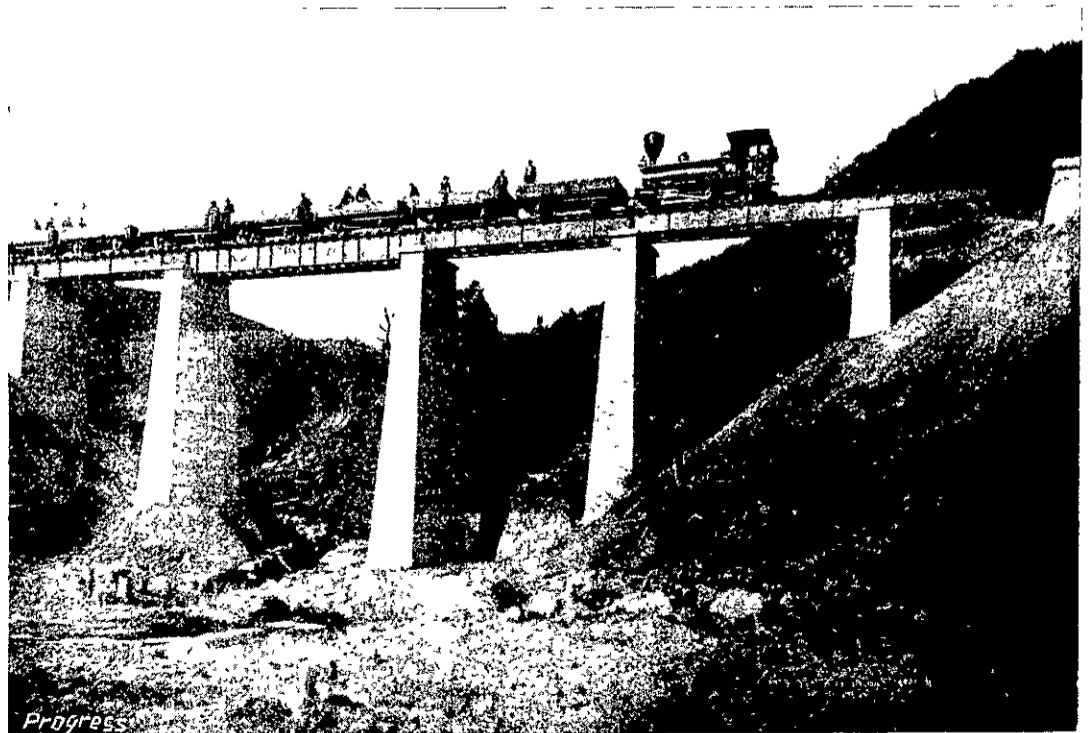
The way was now clear for the establishment of through railway communication between the two provinces, and the project was taken up with much enthusiasm. Exploration surveys to ascertain the best available route were put in hand in three different directions. A line to connect with the existing railway system of Taranaki appeared to be the most favoured. Very little was known by the authorities of the nature of the country in the interior of Taranaki, so that exploration had to be made of the whole of the area from Stratford northwards to Te Kuiti. Dense forest was met with in every direction, and the topographical features were mainly sharp ridges and narrow gullies, so the work of exploration was long and tedious. Mr. C. W. Hursthouse was in charge of one party on the Taranaki side, another part of the country was examined by Messrs. R. W. Holmes and Morgan Carkeek, all of whom are still in active service under the Government. Investigation of what was called the Central Route was made by a party under the direction of Mr. John Rochfort, about the same time; and, so that no possibilities might be overlooked, a line was also explored by Mr. G. P. Williams, now of Christchurch, which took a more easterly direction from Te Awamutu and connected with the southern railway system at Hastings, in Hawkes Bay. Mr. Williams was allowed to go through his survey in peace, his only complaint being that in examining the Maori country he found that the work occupied twice as much time as it should, owing to the dilatory habits of his native assistants, and the difficulty of moving about anywhere without constant long talks with them. Mr. Holmes' progress was interrupted by natives once; Mr. Rochfort's party was stopped at Karioi, and he was told that if he persevered he would be shot. Some dispute about a sale of land, in which one of his chammen played a part, was the cause of the trouble which was settled by a long korero and the discharge of the offending assistant, the tribe afterwards helping Mr. Rochfort to cut his survey line through their lands.

ASSAULT ON MR. HURSTHOUSE.

Mr. Hursthouse had a far more disagreeable experience in the northern portion of the country, and for a time it was feared that the incident in which he played a leading, though unwilling, part might result in fresh hostilities between the

rares. In March 1883, by direction of the Government, he set out from Alexandra (now known as Pirongia) with Mr. W. Newsham, as assistant, to explore the country from Te Awamutu south and westward towards Waitara in Taranaki. They were unable to obtain a guide, so were compelled to attempt the undertaking alone. They got as far as Otorohanga by the evening of the first day, where they were told by the resident natives that they would not be allowed to go further, and must return. This they refused to do, telling the Maoris that their orders were to go on to Mokau, on the way to New Plymouth, and that they intended to do so. Mr. Hursthouse had been provided by the Hon. Mr. Bryce, Native Minister, with a letter addressed to the chiefs whom he was likely to meet in the course of his exploration, asking them to assist him in the undertaking. This letter he presented to the natives, who held a meeting that night and decided that, notwithstanding the request of the Native Minister, they would not allow the party to proceed further. Next morning after breakfast the party started on their way southwards, but were arrested, brought back to where the Maoris were assembled, and told that, whatever their personal feelings in the matter might be, they could not allow the

exploration to go on. Mr. Hursthouse told them he could not listen to this, and that unless he was taken back by force he would continue his journey; whereupon the Maoris told off two of their number, Aporo and Rawhiri, as an escort to convey the two men back to Alexandra. Thus Aporo was the man who had, some time prior to the Maori war, headed the party who broke up the printing press in use at Te Awamutu by Sir John Gorst. On arrival of the party at Alexandra Mr. Bryce was communicated with and informed of what had taken place. He went to Alexandra and arranged with Wahanui and Rewi Maniapoto, the principal chiefs of that part of the country, that the exploration party would start again on the following Wednesday; meanwhile, messengers were to be sent in advance of the party to tell those on the road that they were to be allowed to pass unmolested. The party, with Wetere te Ringaranga as guide, made a second start from Alexandra on Tuesday, one day before the time arranged. They breakfasted at Te Kopua with the chief Wahanui, who, in reply to an enquiry if the date of departure made any difference, said: "All days are Wednesdays while you are with Wetere." On arrival at Otorohanga the party were informed by Aporo, their recent escort, that, although the road as far as that point was open to them, they would encounter opposition further south. At a place called Te Uera on the afternoon of the same day, Te Mahuki a native of doubtful reputation, and some thirty others, who were waiting on the side of the track, called out to the travellers to stop and go back. This invitation was declined by Wetere, upon which Mahuki called upon his followers to arrest the two white men. A scuffle ensued, during which the surveyors were pulled off their horses amidst great clamour and excitement. They were then taken a short distance and told by Mahuki to return. Wetere te Ringaranga replied that they would not do so. Thereupon the Europeans' coats and haversacks with their contents were taken from them, and, at Mahuki's command the prisoners were taken to Te Kumi, about a mile distant, where they were placed in a cooking-house, their hands tied behind their backs, and their ankles secured by chains. Wetere, the guide, seeing that further resistance was useless, left for Alexandra, the nearest telegraph station, and managed to get a message through to Mr. Bryce, then in Auckland, who took immediate action for the release of the prisoners. With Messrs. Hursthouse and Newsham, a Maori named Te Haire, one of Wetere's followers, was imprisoned, but was not tied up, and it was through his good offices that the two Europeans were able to obtain some food and drink. They remained in the uncomfortable position described



NORTH ISLAND MAIN TRUNK RAILWAY. BRIDGE OVER WAITEA RIVER, AT 127 MILES 45 CHAINS FROM MARTON JUNCTION; ONE STEEL GIRDER SPAN OF 22 FT., FOUR OF 33 FT., AND ONE OF 44 FT. CREEK BED TO RAIL LEVEL, 55 FT.