

From Puhirua to Ohinemutu the road is easy, and then we fall into the track above mentioned, leading by the Horohoro.

The advantages of this road are as follows:—

1st. It takes its departure from the best harbour in the Bay of Plenty, on the shores of which is situated a settlement, with abundance of good land.

2nd. It can throw out two branches into the Patetere plateau, one by Kaimai, a few miles to the right of its entry into the bush; the other by the foot of the Ngongotaha Mountain, near Ohinemutu, the track taken by the Hauhaus after their defeat by Colonel McDonnell in 1867.

3rd. Up to Pye's Pa block-house the road is already available for drays.

4th. It is watered throughout, with the exception of the Otane Wainuku Bush, in which wells can be sunk.

5th. I believe the inhabitants of Tauranga, alive to the importance of this road, would assist towards its completion.

6th. It would establish a rapid communication between Tauranga and Ohinemutu, and enable supports to move quickly in case of necessity.

7th. It affords a short and easy means of access to the Hot Lakes, and will, before long, be the cause of the establishment of a sanatorium on their shores, and attract many visitors who would not take the more circuitous route.

8th. If no objection is raised to the cutting, a small force will be sufficient to protect the travellers by it.

The distances of each line are as under:—

First Line.

Matata to Kokohinau (by water) ...	...	...	...	...	20 miles
Kokohinau to Arowhata Ho ...	...	...	...	...	41 "
Arowhata Ho to Tapuaeharuru ...	...	...	...	...	52 "
					113 "

Second Line.

Maketu to Ohinemutu ...	...	...	...	...	35 miles
Ohinemutu to Nihi-o-te-kieore ...	...	...	...	...	26 "
Nihi-o-te-kieore to Tapuaeharuru ...	...	...	...	...	23 "
					84 "

Third Line.

Tauranga to Puhirua ...	...	...	...	...	30 miles
Puhirua to Ohinemutu ...	...	...	...	...	8 "
Ohinemutu to Tapuaeharuru ...	...	...	...	...	49 "
					87 "

These distances are, of course, measured on the map, which gives none of the devious windings of the road.

It is without the slightest hesitation that I recommend the adoption of the third line.

But a short time will elapse before the Ohinemuri and Upper Thames country will be thrown open to the Pakeha; once this done, there will be nothing to prevent prospecting parties from exploring Tauranga, the back country of which has already given good indications.

With a gold field to the North-west, with a probability of mineral resources close to it, with its splendid harbour; with its fine land, and with an easy communication by Taupo with the Kaimanawa, Tauranga must eventually prosper, and, by its prosperity, add to the general improvement of the country. And not the least cause of its prosperity will have been the road leading from it to the interior. No amount of road-making will benefit Maketu, either as a commercial town or as a strategical point. Tauranga, on the contrary, is the key to the interior and to the Upper Thames. In days past I advocated the formation of a road from it by Matamata to Maungatautari; this however was not feasible. Now I believe that, what with the ejection of the leading rebel from the King's territory, what with the presence of our forces in Taupo, what with a touch of the same feeling which seems to have animated the West Coast Natives, the poor remnants of the hostile tribes at the back of Tauranga will welcome an opportunity offered them to come in and cease from mischief; especially, as before remarked, if the Upper Thames Natives consent to open up their country.

I have no doubt that, in the course of years, the Patetere plateau will be the line of communication between Auckland and Taupo. At present the best road is *via* Tauranga. I believe that there will be found to be but little difference in estimates for making this or the one by Maketu.

Defence.

If my surmises are correct, I should say that, on the completion of the road, two posts, each of twenty-five men, one at the entrance of the bush, the other at Puhirua, would be amply sufficient.

As traffic increases, and hostility diminishes, even these will be abandoned. The temper of the Natives can be easily gauged while making the road. Among them there is a chief, named Penetaka, who has never been concerned in any atrocities; he has always fought us fairly, I have heard that he is anxious to come in. Should he do so, he would be of great assistance in keeping his tribe quiet.

On the second line no posts would be needed. A few mounted police, to check the appropriating tendencies of any light-fingered gentry, would suffice.

In each of these cases I suppose that a post exists at Taupo, somewhere about Tapuaeharuru.

The first line I would not undertake to keep safely open under 500 men, distributed from Matata to Taupo. My last letters from Tauranga speak of Te Kooti as having once more thrown himself into