

APPROXIMATE ESTIMATE.

M.	c.								£
70	68	of easy work, at £2,500 per mile	..	..	..	..	..	..	177,125
22	0	of moderate work, at £4,000 per mile	..	..	..	..	..	..	88,000
19	20	of heavy work, at £5,000 per mile	..	..	..	..	..	..	96,250
10	0	of very heavy work, at £7,000 per mile	..	..	..	..	..	..	70,000
0	72	of tunnelling, at £900 per chain	..	..	..	..	..	..	64,800
123	0	formation, including bridges, culverts, tunnels, contractors' road, &c., at £4,034 per mile	..	..	..	..	..	..	496,175
123	miles	of permanent-way, rolling-stock, stations, &c., at £3,200 per mile	..	..	..	..	..	..	393,600
19	miles	of central route from junction to Te Awamutu, as per Mr. Rochfort's estimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	89,403
Total									<u>£979,178</u>

SATURDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER, 1884.

Mr. Ross, Surveyor, examined.

851. *The Chairman.*] The Committee have been informed, Mr. Ross, that you have been employed to survey part of the line between Stratford and Te Awamutu: is that the case?—Yes.

852. Are you familiar with the distances on this map [produced]?—Yes.

853. Will you state to the Committee which part of the line you have surveyed?—I surveyed from Stratford up to about fifty-one miles up the line.

854. In what manner did you survey it? Was it a survey with theodolite, or a reconnaissance survey only?—It was a reconnaissance survey only, with levels taken with the barometer.

855. Is this line marked out in any way on the ground?—The actual line is not marked out on the ground, but there is a track.

856. What width of track did you cut?—A track two or three feet in width is cut through the bush.

857. Is that track anywhere near where this line is laid down?—Yes; it is close alongside.

858. Referring to the section on this map, may I ask whether you took the aneroid heights?—Yes.

859. How close did you take them? Did you take them any closer than is shown on this map?—Yes; there were some intermediate ones taken.

860. Have you taken any cross-sections?—No.

861. Do you feel sure, from what you know and from what you have seen during the survey, that you could get the inclines that are marked on here?—Yes.

862. Do you think they could be improved upon?—Yes; but at a greater cost.

863. Do you consider that you have selected and surveyed the cheapest line that can be got there?—Yes.

864. Did you make any estimate of the cost of these fifty miles?—Yes.

865. Where is that estimate?—It forms the first part of Mr. Holmes's estimate.

866. Did you calculate the quantities?—No.

867. Then, how is the estimate made?—From a general estimate, according to the roughness of the country.

868. What did you take as your average?—The average cost in other parts of the country of the same sort of work.

869. Is that average taken from railways in the Taranaki District?—In different parts of the Island where I have been.

870. In going through those fifty miles, did you see any signs of any ballast?—No.

871. Anything fit for ballast?—No; there was no sign whatever.

872. What sort of average, then, did you put on for that? Did you make any difference on account of that?—No.

873. Referring to this map (No. 6), how far from Stratford is the land held in private hands, so far as you know of your own knowledge?—I have seen the clearings about as far as seven miles.

874. It is in private ownership for about seven miles?—I have seen the clearings there.

875. Starting at that point, will you describe what sort of country this is that the line goes through: in fact, you had better take it from the beginning?—Up to twelve and a half miles the country is very good and flat.

876. Fit for agriculture?—Yes, I think so.

877. Is it bush land?—Yes.

878. Is it heavy bush land?—No, light bush.

879. And is it pretty flat?—Yes.

880. For what distance on either side of the line?—For several miles.

881. Well, continuing from 12½ miles?—Up to about thirty miles the country is good, and more hilly; good grazing land principally.

882. What is the width of the Mangaotuku Valley?—The bottom is only a quarter of a mile to half a mile wide.

883. And how do the hills rise out of that: are they steep?—No, not very steep; they rise to a height of about 500 feet.

884. How are they in comparison to the hills round Wellington: are they steeper?—They are not so steep as those.

885. And you think that would all make good grazing land?—Yes.

886. Is it covered with bush now?—Yes.

887. What sort?—Principally tawa.

888. That is not good for cutting?—Not for saw-mills.

889. Is there much timber fit for saw-mills?—Scarcely any. It is light bush principally.

890. *Mr. Fulton.*] Tawa generally grows on good land?—Yes, I think so.