

SESS. II.—1884.
NEW ZEALAND.

NORTH ISLAND TRUNK RAILWAY

(REPORT OF MR. MORGAN CARKEEK, DATED 27TH JULY, 1884, ON THE WESTERN ROUTE).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 15th October, 1884.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House the report of Mr. Morgan Carkeek, referred to in paragraph 1662 of the minutes of evidence annexed to the report of the North Island Main Trunk Railway Committee."—(Mr. Samuel.)

MR. MORGAN CARKEEK to the CHIEF SURVEYOR, Taranaki.

SIR, -

Otaki, 27th July, 1884.

In reply to your telegram of the 25th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the country between Stratford and the depot on the Makuri River consists of good undulating bush land, well watered by the Patea River and its tributaries; the bush contains plenty of rimu and kahikatea timber, of good sawing quality. From the Makuri to the Mangaotuku the soil is poor, and the country for a short distance is rather rough, being a narrow steep range, about 500 feet high. The Mangaotuku Valley for the next seven or eight miles consists partly of light bush and partly of open fern clearings, of light but good soil; the flats, although narrow, are surrounded by low hills, about 300 feet high, with easy side slopes, covered with tawa and other light bush, easily cleared. For some distance now, the valley is covered alternately with kahikatea bush and swampy patches of scrub; the hills on both sides being still low, and covered with light bush and scrub. The valley gradually closes in, and becomes near the source of the stream a mere swampy gully; the hills also increase in height from 300 feet to about 600 feet, with steep side slopes; so that here the dividing range between the Mangaotuku and the Makahu is a succession of razor-back ridges, covered with black birch. Crossing by a low pass to the Makahu the country improves, and continues good for some miles down the Makahu and up the Pohukura; the flats, although narrow, are covered with bush, which contains plenty of kahikatea and some rimu fit for sawing; the soil is good. Towards the head of the Pohukura the country becomes rough, with high bush ranges on both sides, with steep side slopes and gullies, ending in papa-rock cliffs. This country continues for some miles to the Wangamomona River, a branch of the Wanganui, when the country again improves. The Wangamomona Valley is narrow, the soil is good on the flats, covered partly by manuka and other scrub, and partly by bush, which contains good rimu, fit for sawing. From the head of the Wangamomona to Tahoraparoa the country is broken, consisting of low hills, covered with tawa and other light bush, and in some parts manuka and other scrub; the soil is not good. From Tahoraparoa to the Tangarakau the soil is bad, and the country rough, consisting of razor-back black-birch ranges, divided by narrow deep gullies, with steep sides and papa-rock cliffs. The country continues bad up the Tangarakau River; coal is, however, plentiful here, and similar to that now being obtained at Mokau. Leaving the Tangarakau, and crossing over to the Eao, the country improves, and continues good up the Ohura River; but of this portion of the country you have a full report by Mr. A. Rawson.

I have, &c.,

MORGAN CARKEEK,
Authorized Surveyor.

T. Humphries, Esq., Chief Surveyor, New Plymouth.