

1890.
NEW ZEALAND.

MIDLAND RAILWAY.

PROPOSED DEVIATION NEAR LAKE BRUNNER (CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 25th June, 1890.

Ordered, "That all papers and correspondence that have passed between the Midland Railway Company and the Government re deviation of the Midland Railway at Lake Brunner be laid before this House."—(Mr. SEDDON.)

No. 1.

The ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF and GENERAL MANAGER, Midland Railway Company, to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

DEAR SIR,—

Christchurch, 4th December, 1890.

I enclose plan of the Lake Brunner district which will be affected by the New Zealand Midland Railway. Upon this the contract line is shown on the western side of the lake, and was surveyed by Messrs. Mollison and Dobson, connecting with Mr. Napier Bell's survey of the Arthur's Pass line at or about the point marked E on plan.

I enclose a longitudinal section of this line from Stillwater Junction to point marked E. From this you will see that the line has to pass over a summit of 193ft. above the flats of Stony Creek, and 188ft. above water-level of Lake Brunner, rising with a ruling grade of 1 in 55 from west to east, and 1 in 50 from east to west. I need hardly point out that such a summit would be a constant source of expense in working this line; and, with the view of obtaining a deviation to obviate this, I have made a careful examination of the surrounding country, including the district to line east of Lake Brunner, with the result that, as far as I can see without careful survey, a deviation of the line can be obtained giving marked advantages. The deviation in question would start from a point at Stony Creek marked A upon the line as laid out; keep upon flat ground, crossing the Arnold River at point B, passing up the east bank of the river to the shores of Lake Brunner, which it would traverse for about three-quarters of a mile, cross the Crooked River at a point about two miles from the mouth, follow the course shown by dotted lines in red, joining the full red line near Lake Poerua, and connecting with contract line again at point marked E. An approximate longitudinal section of the proposed deviation is shown by a line dotted red upon the tracing of longitudinal section, giving a very favourable comparison with black line of contract section. The advantage of proposed deviation would be: First, to obviate the summit, which in practice means lifting and lowering the train-load 193ft. higher than necessary each journey, thus increasing cost of working and reducing speed of running. Doing away with this summit would be a permanent and important advantage in all future lines. Secondly, the line would be about three-quarters of a mile shorter, and would probably be less costly to construct. Thirdly, owing to the Arnold River being about 12ft. to 20ft. deep, and flowing slowly (about half a mile per hour) for about three miles from its exit from the lake, it forms a natural harbour or storage-pond for timber in bulk, which can be conveyed to this point from all parts of the lake. The eastern bank, along which the deviation line would pass, is by nature rendered favourable for permanent sawmill sites: this has an important bearing upon the early development of the timber trade of the district. Fourthly, the lands upon the east side of the lake are good in quality, and some settlements now exist which would rapidly increase upon the construction of the line to Lake Brunner.

Under clause 4 of the contract, the company cannot deviate from plans of the line from Springfield to Brunnerton without the consent of the Governor; therefore, before incurring the cost of further survey, I beg to ask you, if, upon completing the survey of proposed deviation, the advantages named are shown to exist, the necessary consent will be given. Being anxious to proceed with the survey and construction of this line at once, I ask the favour of your early reply.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT WILSON,
Engineer-in-Chief and General Manager.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.