

MESSRS. HATRICK AND CO.'S PLANT.

In response to a letter we addressed to Messrs. Hatrick and Co., it was stated amongst other things that over £60,000 was sunk in steamers, wharves, workshops, wire ropes in the river for hauling, cargo-sheds, men's shore quarters, Pipiriki House, and the Houseboat. It was further stated that the annual cost of running the service, including 5 per cent. on the capital invested, was £15,000, and that the steamers covered over 54,000 miles annually. We were not in a position to verify any of the figures supplied by Messrs. Hatrick and Co. A list of the steamers employed in connection with the river service and their tonnage is given [not printed]. In addition to these steamers there is a slipway and repairing workshop at Wanganui, hauling-wires on the rapids, several sheds for goods along the river erected either wholly or in part by Messrs. Hatrick and Co., wharves, Pipiriki House, the Houseboat, and other property. As the scope of our inquiry did not include any question of the acquisition of the service, we did not think it necessary to go into details in connection with plant. A word should be said regarding the wire ropes laid down in the river for hauling up the rapids. These ropes wear out in about two years, and have to be replaced. The ropes have been laid down in the river by Messrs. Hatrick and Co. If an opposition service were running the ropes would have to be taken over by the River Trust, and compensation, presumably, paid to Messrs. Hatrick and Co. Two sets of ropes could not be laid down on the rapids, as they would foul and become unworkable.

THE CONTRACT.

The present contract is for the carriage of mails thrice weekly between Wanganui and Pipiriki throughout the year, and thrice weekly between Pipiriki and Taumarunui from the 15th November to the 15th May, and twice weekly from the 16th May to the 14th November, and as often as any extra steamers may run during these periods. Attached to the bond are schedules of passenger fares and goods freights. The former is full, comprehensive, and, having regard to all the circumstances, equitable. The schedule for goods traffic is a mere shadow of a tariff, particularly with regard to the down-river trade. We quote hereunder the schedule in full:—

The maximum charges for fares and freights shall be the following, viz.:—

	FARES.		Settlers.		Tourists.	
			Single.	Return.	Single.	Return.
			s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Wanganui to—						
Upokongaro or <i>vice versa</i> , Quarries, Kauwhaike ..	2	0	4	0	2	0
Raorikia or <i>vice versa</i>	2	6	5	0	2	6
Ramahiku, Tupapa, or <i>vice versa</i>	2	6	5	0	5	0
Pungarehu, Parekino, Pukerimu, or <i>vice versa</i> ..	3	0	6	0	6	0
Te Rimu, Pitangi, or <i>vice versa</i>	3	6	7	0	7	0
Opokopoiti or <i>vice versa</i>	4	0	7	6	7	6
Ohui or <i>vice versa</i>	4	6	8	6	8	6
Atene or <i>vice versa</i>	4	6	9	0	9	0
Ahu Ahu, Te Tuhi, or <i>vice versa</i>	5	0	9	6	9	6
Koroniti or <i>vice versa</i>	5	0	10	0	10	0
Galatea, Kawanui, Matahiwi, or <i>vice versa</i> ..	5	6	11	0	11	0
Ranana or <i>vice versa</i>	6	0	12	0	12	0
Jerusalem, Kaiwaroa, or <i>vice versa</i>	6	6	12	6	12	6
Pipiriki or <i>vice versa</i>	7	6	15	0	15	0
Rangitautahi, Tapapa, Ngaporo, or <i>vice versa</i> ..	10	0	20	0	17	6
Manganui-o-te-au, Arawhata, or <i>vice versa</i> ..	10	6	20	0	18	0
Rananui, Tuke, Parauui, or <i>vice versa</i>	11	6	22	0	19	0
Whangamomona, Tangarakau, or <i>vice versa</i> ..	17	6	35	0	25	0
Puketapu, Nikotapu, or <i>vice versa</i>	20	0	40	0	27	6
Aukete, Kirikiriroa, or <i>vice versa</i>	22	6	45	0	30	0
Retaruke, Te Rata Road, Mangaohutu, or <i>vice versa</i>	25	0	50	0	32	6
Tawhata, Houseboat, or <i>vice versa</i>	27	6	50	0	35	0
Opatu or <i>vice versa</i>	27	6	50	0	35	0
Otu-iti or <i>vice versa</i>	32	6	52	0	40	0
Kokakoriki or <i>vice versa</i>	32	6	52	0	40	0
Kokakonui or <i>vice versa</i>	34	6	53	0	42	0
Paparoa or <i>vice versa</i>	36	6	55	0	44	0
Aukopae, Te Maire, Otunui, or <i>vice versa</i> ..	38	6	58	0	46	0
Hikimutu or <i>vice versa</i>	39	6	60	0	47	0
Towhenua or <i>vice versa</i>	40	0	60	0	47	6
Taumarunui or <i>vice versa</i>	42	6	65	0	50	0

The maximum fare between Taumarunui and Pipiriki shall not exceed 40s. for a single ticket and 50s. for a return ticket.