

ORDER OF REFERENCE No. 3.—AS TO CONVERTING THE TRAMWAY TO A STANDARD RAILWAY.

We have already stated under a former heading that the tramway is not at all similar to the New Zealand standard-type railway, and it cannot be brought into such a condition as would render it suitable for incorporation into the general railway system of New Zealand except at enormous cost. This cost has been estimated for us by the Chief Engineer of the New Zealand Working Railways at approximately £600,000, as under :—

ESTIMATED COST OF BRINGING THE TRAMWAY TO NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT STANDARD FOR SECONDARY LINES.

Cuttings to be minimum width of 15 ft. ; embankments to be minimum width of 12 ft. Curves, minimum radius, 5 chains. Gradients, ruling gradient 1 in 35, eased for curvature. Bridges to be suitable strength for all railway wagon stock. Rails to be 55 lb. per yard. Structures to standard clearances. Stations to New Zealand Railways standards. Dwellinghouses for railway staff.

*Formation, Track, and Structures.*

Putaruru to 19 m. (near Kopokorahi) :—

(a.) Cuttings and embankments—	£	£
Widening cuttings and embankments, 5 m. to 19 m. ...	6,500	
Relocation, 6 m. to 7 m., and near 10 m., at £5,000 ...	7,500	
	—	14,000
(b.) Bridges—	£	
470 ft. at £10 ...	4,700	
Culverts ...	500	
	—	5,200
(c.) Track : New track (55 lb. rails) at £3,100 per mile, less value of existing rails, &c., £500 per mile : 19 miles at £2,600 (say) ...		50,000
(d.) Clearances : Altering existing structures to standard clearances ...		100
(e.) Stations—	£	
Standard flag stations, five at £1,200 ...	6,000	
Roading ...	1,000	
	—	7,000
(f.) Water-services ...		500
(g.) Fencing—	£	
Fences, eleven miles at £240 ...	2,640	
Cattle-stops, twenty at £30... ..	600	
	—	3,240
(h.) Dwellinghouses : Houses for staff, eight at £800 ...		6,400
		86,440
Contingencies ...		8,560
		95,000

19 m. to 46 $\frac{3}{4}$  m. (near Oruanui) :—

New construction and location, 28 miles at £16,000 ...	£	
Contingencies ...	448,000	
	22,000	
	—	470,000
Total, Putaruru to Oruanui ...		565,000

*Rolling-stock for Whole Line to Taupo.*

Engines, three at £10,000 ...	£	
Passenger-cars, four at £1,300 ...	30,000	
Wagons, twenty at £400, twenty at £600 ...	5,200	
Vans, two at £700 ...	20,000	
	1,400	
	—	56,600
Contingencies ...	3,400	
Proportion of this for Putaruru-Oruanui Section (say) ...		35,000
Gross total ...		£600,000

The cost of altering the existing railway from 46 $\frac{3}{4}$  miles (the proposed junction of an extension to Taupo) to Mokai has not been included, as this portion of the railway would probably be worked as a branch for the purposes of the Timber Company.