

And, with the like advice and consent, and in further pursuance of the said power and authority, I do hereby confirm the said Commission as further extended by these presents.

Given under the hand of His Excellency the Governor-General of the Dominion of New Zealand; and issued under the Seal of that Dominion, at the Government House at Wellington, this thirty-first day of July, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-two.

D. H. GUTHRIE,
Minister of Railways.

Approved in Council.
F. D. THOMSON,
Clerk of the Executive Council.

REPORT.

To His Excellency Viscount Jellicoe, Governor-General of the Dominion of New Zealand.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, the Commissioners appointed by Your Excellency on the 16th May, 1922, to inquire and report upon a request for the construction and working of a railway between Rotorua and Taupo and connecting with the present Government railway at Rotorua, have now the honour to report as follows:—

A preliminary meeting of the Commission was held at Wellington on the 30th May, 1922, at which an itinerary and other details were arranged, and at later dates public sittings were held at Auckland, Rotorua, Reparoa, Taupo, and Wellington. In the course of our journeys we traversed the country lying between Rotorua and Taupo, of the nature of which country your Commissioners had some previous knowledge.

The Commission held nine public sittings and examined thirty-six witnesses. At the public sittings Mr. E. E. Vaile attended to represent the Rotorua-Taupo Railway League and the Waiotapu Settlers' Association. Mr. G. O. Bayley watched the interests of the Taupo Totara Timber Company (Limited) at the sittings at Auckland and in the Rotorua and Taupo districts. Sir John Findlay, K.C., represented the Taupo Totara Timber Company at Wellington, and subsequently addressed the Commission. Mr. Vaile also addressed the Commission.

A transcript of the evidence and addresses is attached hereto, together with the various appendices. The maps to which reference is made are also forwarded herewith.

Evidence was tendered that a railway from Rotorua to Taupo would serve a very large area of land, variously estimated at from 1,250,000 to 2,000,000 acres, lying adjacent to the route of the desired railway, round Lake Taupo, and to the south-eastward of the lake. This area includes a large acreage of Crown and Native lands at present unoccupied and unproductive, as well as occupied country the productivity of which is greatly restricted by the absence of suitable means of transport. The evidence indicates that for the development to a state of productivity of this great area of land it is essential that artificial manures and other requisites be delivered on the farms, and the produce of the farms be taken to the markets, at a much more moderate cost than is possible with the present means of transit.

It is also stated that the thermal activities of the Taupo district, if made more cheaply and easily accessible, would attract increasingly large numbers of visitors, and that the climatic conditions there are of the best in the North Island and specially suitable for invalids.

There are some 17,000 acres of indigenous forests, the timber from which can be taken out by a railway from Taupo to Rotorua, and there are also along the route 27,568 acres of Government forest plantations, which will be extended to 35,000 acres within the next four years. The pumice country has been proved to be specially suited for the growth of timber-trees.