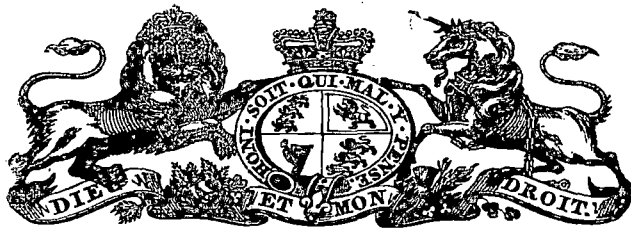


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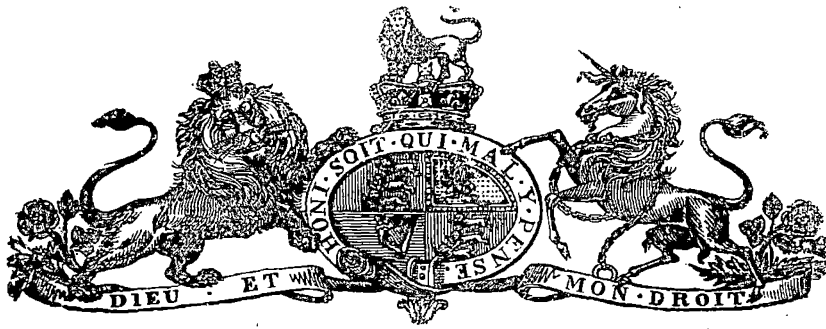
1890.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

SHEFFIELD RAILWAY CONNECTION :

REPORT BY GENERAL MANAGER TASMANIAN
GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.



SHEFFIELD RAILWAY CONNECTION.

*Tasmanian Government Railways.
General Manager's Office, Launceston, 28th June, 1890.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to state that, in compliance with your instructions to report on the various proposals for connecting the Sheffield District with the Railway system, I visited and made a very careful inspection of the district, traversing it in all directions.

I am led to the conclusion that if a branch line is to be constructed, the best route is the one from Railton to Sheffield; I would suggest taking it as far as the Promised Land.

The map accompanying this report, you will observe, is divided into three areas, each coloured separately. With regard to the area coloured yellow, if the Don Tramway were connected with the Western Line at the Don Heads, it would meet the requirements of that portion of the district. In consideration of the concession, I think it likely that good terms could be made in the matter of freight for farmers with the Don Company. That portion of Barrington and the Nook coloured pink is in easy reach of the Western Line by good roads. At one of the most distant farms—a large one—I found the teams had delivered their loads at Tarleton, returned, and loaded up again by 1.30 P.M. With regard to the country to be served by the proposed line from Railton to Sheffield, you will observe from the map that it embraces an area more than twice the size of the other two. Promised Land, Paradise, the Valley of the Dasher, and portions of Barrington and Nook would be served by the Railton-Sheffield branch, and the large area of land to the westward across the Forth, extending into the Wilmot district, would be brought within carting distance of a railway. The extension of the line beyond Promised Land to the Wilmot is, I take it, impracticable, on account of the deep ravine at the gorge of the Forth. A good bridge has now been erected at this spot, and, for a comparatively small outlay, a good road can be completed.

The extension of the Chudleigh Line from Mole Creek to Sheffield has nothing, as far as I can see, to recommend it. The requirements of the district demand the most expeditious and economical method of carrying produce to a port of shipment, and this would not be gained by a service to Deloraine. The Chudleigh line, at present working under exceptional advantages as to engine power, is costing twenty shillings to earn nine shillings; and I cannot see that any very great increase of traffic is to be anticipated. Under these circumstances, I furnish an estimate of receipts and expenditure for a line between Railton and Sheffield only.

In connection with the estimate of receipts, regard must be had to the fact that the goods traffic will be "journey continued" traffic only; that is to say, consignors will not pay a minimum rate to Railton and then re-book to destination; they will pay only the difference in extra mileage. For instance, instead of carting to Railton, as at present, and booking by rail to Formby, farmers will place their produce on the train at Sheffield and pay for 8 miles additional.

The receipts of the line under existing circumstances may be estimated to amount to £1650. The expense of working the line I estimate at £2300. In arriving at my estimate of receipts I find that my figures are well borne out by a Stock and Crop Return of the district kindly furnished me by Mr. John Hope.

FRED. BACK, *General Manager.*

