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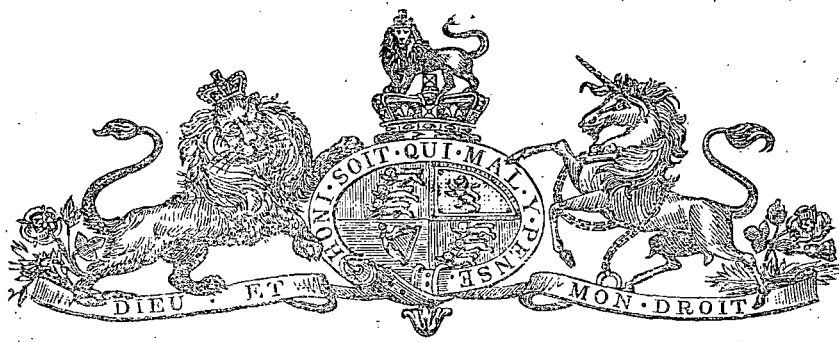
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WEST COAST DISTRICTS:

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR-GENERAL.

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



## WEST COAST DISTRICTS.

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### REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR-GENERAL.

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*Survey Office, Hobart, 27th January, 1891.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to place before you the following Report of my recent visit through the West Coast Districts.

I left Hobart on the 3rd instant per s.s. *Bellinger*, and arrived at Strahan on the following day. After examining the position of the allotments recently sold in Strahan, I made enquiry into the prospect of disposing of some more sections at the next land sale with encouraging results.

It will, I think, be advisable to hold such sale at Strahan, for although the prices realised may be less than if the sale was held in Hobart, I think the convenience of the local and *bonâ fide* residents should be studied to that extent. The allotments surveyed have been well set out and pegged, as well as trenched at the section corners.

It is quite a question whether the Government would not act wisely in making a road along the edge of the bay from the present town to the lots to be offered, before the sale takes place. Probably the Town Board would render some assistance. The cost should not exceed £400, and, if carried out, persons could then approach the Cemetery Reserve without resorting to boats; and inasmuch as there appears to be no likelihood of the Cemetery being removed, this would be a great boon to the people in the District.

I inspected a spot on the Crown Reserve, section C1, at the entrance of a small inlet (shown on the plan of Strahan), and on the east side of same, with a view to suggesting that an area be set aside as a slaughtering-ground.

The present arrangements for butchering are situated in front of the railway near the house recently occupied by Mr. T. B. Moore, which position is highly objectionable, and prejudicial to the health of the community.

The site recommended is, I think, a suitable one, being to some extent retired, on the edge of the bay, and affording a fair draught of bold water for boats to come alongside. At a low cost a platform and shed could be erected so that the animals could be killed over the water, and thus allow the blood and liquid matter to be carried out to sea. The matter is not within the province of this Department, but I have merely drawn attention to it so that the right authorities might take it up.

Considerable attention on the part of the Health Department will be necessary in the vicinity of Manuka Rivulet as the population increases, otherwise much fever and sickness may be looked for on account of bad drainage and the flat swampy nature of the ground.

Journeying on towards Reminé I was surprised to find the country along the railway so easy for construction,—not a single difficulty to the Henty River.

At Reminé the want of a ferry across the Little Henty was brought under my notice, and I promised to represent the matter to you on my return. I understand, however, that a punt has been despatched to meet a long felt want at this crossing-place. The present primitive arrangements are at times very inconvenient for travellers. Mr. G. Webster, of Reminé, would be willing to take the ferry.

The road from Reminé to Zeehan was much better than I anticipated from previous reports. At Zeehan I was surprised to notice such vast changes during the last year, and to find an estimated population of three thousand persons all told. Buildings of considerable dimensions are being erected, and habitations of various descriptions held under Resident Licences extend along the road for about two miles.

Here, again, unless active measures are taken to improve the sanitary condition of the place, the results to health must prove to be disastrous, and the same may be said in respect to provision against heavy loss from fire. Dried timber, shavings, and rubbish are lying about in all directions right up to the base of the wooden buildings. A Local Board of Health has been formed quite recently at Zeehan, and it is to be hoped that no time will be lost in getting out stringent regulations for the preservation of life and property, a matter that will not be very easily dealt with in a satisfactory manner, as the land is flat and swampy.

There is a very strong feeling at Zeehan and Dundas respecting a town being proclaimed at the latter place, and but for my promising to represent the case to you, and advising them that nothing further could be done, a strong deputation would have waited on me with a view to have their wishes and the requirements of the place brought prominently before the Government. I certainly think that a reserve should be made, and some allotments surveyed for disposal at the next land sale.

I had the honor to suggest to you that a town site be set aside at Dundas about the middle of last year, in pursuance of a report first obtained from the District Surveyor. This suggestion was, however, objected to by the Secretary for Mines, and set aside on the ground that it was then premature to select a site. I understood, however, from the Secretary that the site proposed would be kept in abeyance and not leased, so that it would be available if required for a town. As the selection is a good one, I would again suggest it might be adopted. I believe the course suggested will be found much more satisfactory to the people than the system of dealing with residence areas: at any rate, this appears to be the opinion of those who spoke to me on the subject.

A good deal of dissatisfaction was expressed as to the slow progress made in the construction of the road from Zeehan to Dundas, as also in respect to the very tardy way in which the construction of the railway is being carried on.

The Geological Surveyor's recent report on the mines, which report was of a very comprehensive nature, removes any necessity that might have otherwise existed for my remarking upon the mineral claims. Speaking generally, however, the prospects are very encouraging, and the Dundas field especially very extensive; but those who invest their money in the mines should be prepared to wait patiently for the results of development.

A more liberal assistance by the Government in cutting tracks to enable prospectors to carry on their work would be of the greatest service in opening up the country. Wherever this has been done (notably on Moore's track through the North Dundas country from the Dundas road), it has been availed of to the fullest extent.

After completing my stay at Zeehan, during which I travelled over a good deal of country, I returned to Reminé and proceeded thence to Heazlewood and Whyte River. The track is now dry and pretty good, but the wire for crossing the Pieman at Corinna is quite insufficient; it broke in two a few days previous to my visit, fortunately with no more serious results than a scare to the passengers and a little trouble in splicing the wire (which is merely of the ordinary electric size), to land the punt. I was informed that a proper wire rope had lain at Strahan awaiting transit to Corinna for months, to take the place of the present makeshift.

The Godkin S. M. Co. is looking well (in common with the other mines in that district), and good progress is being made with the tramway from the mine to the Heazlewood-Waratah Road.

When completed, this will be a strong piece of work. The gauge is 3 feet 6 inches, the gradients very easy—steepest, 1 in 18 I am informed,—and the rails principally of myrtle wood. I would have thought that light iron rails suited to a narrower gauge, would have been found to be more economical and satisfactory.

The road from Heazlewood to Waratah is dry, and fairly good travelling. It is being widened and metalled towards the northern end.

There is nothing calling for special remark on the remaining portion of my journey.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

E. A. COUNSEL, *Deputy Surveyor-General.*

*The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.*