

(No. 142.)



1861.

T A S M A N I A .

R E P O R T

FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTER-COMMUNICATION
BY ROADWAYS,

Brought up by Mr. Balfe, and ordered by the House to be printed,
20 January, 1862.



SELECT COMMITTEE appointed on the 22nd August, 1861, to enquire into, and report upon, the best means of facilitating Inter-communication by Roadways to the various Districts of the Colony.

MEMBERS.

MR. JOHN MEREDITH.
MR. PERKINS.
MR. ALLISON.
MR. ARCHER.

MR. KILBURN.
MR. ROOKE.
MR. BALFE (*Mover.*)

DAYS OF MEETING.

- No. 1.—3 September, 1861. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Archer, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Rooke, and Mr. Perkins.
No. 2.—5 September, 1861. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Kilburn, Mr. Archer, Mr. Allison, Mr. Perkins, and Mr. Rooke.
No. 3.—10 September, 1861. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Kilburn, Mr. Rooke, and Mr. Meredith.
No. 4.—13 September, 1861. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Rooke, Mr. Kilburn, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Archer.
No. 5.—17 September, 1861. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Allison, and Mr. Kilburn.
No. 6.—20 September, 1861. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Rooke.
No. 7.—17 October, 1861. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Kilburn, and Mr. Meredith.
No. 8.—16 January, 1862. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Kilburn.
No. 9.—17 January, 1862. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Archer, Mr. Rooke, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Kilburn.
No. 10.—20 January 1862. *Present*—Mr. Balfe, Mr. Archer, Mr. Rooke, and Mr. Meredith.

WITNESSES EXAMINED.

1. MR. RICHARD HILL, Honeywood.
2. MR. CHARLES DEGRAVES, Cascades.
3. MR. THOMAS OLDHAM, Timber Merchant.

4. A. H. MANING, Esquire, Merchant.
5. MR. ALFRED NICHOLAS, Wine Merchant.

APPENDICES TO REPORT.

1. Mr. Hill's Statistics of the Honeywood Wooden Tramroad.
2. Analysis of the Replies from the various Road Trustees and Landed Proprietors to the Queries furnished by the Select Committee.
3. Mr. Tully's Report, 9 September, 1861.

R E P O R T.

Your Committee, having met for the first time on the 3rd September, 1861, and by adjournment on several occasions since, now beg to place before the House the result of their labours.

It need hardly be observed, that the importance of the subject remitted to their consideration demanded from your Committee the greatest care and most cautious attention in conducting their investigations, so as to enable them to arrive at such conclusions as were likely to suggest some general and practicable mode of dealing with a question of such vast importance to the Colony.

Strongly impressed with this conviction, your Committee determined to avail themselves of the best means of acquiring such information upon the subject of "Road Communication" as persons residing in every part of the Colony of the greatest practical experience, and capable of forming the soundest judgment upon the subject, could afford.

With this subject in view, Circulars (a copy of which will be found in the Appendix) were addressed to the Chairmen of the Road Trusts throughout the Colony, to Magistrates, Clergymen, and others competent to afford any useful information,—and answers were respectfully invited.

To those Circulars, replies from 70 persons have been received; many of which, from the information and practical views taken by the writers, were of the utmost assistance to the deliberations of your Committee.

Five Witnesses, whose names will be found in the margin (all persons of great practical and general experience), were examined by your Committee. It would be hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of their evidence, especially that of Messrs. Maning and Hill, supported as they are by a series of well-arranged statistical data, fully sustaining all their evidence.

Mr. Hill.
Mr. Degraives.
Mr. Maning.
Mr. Oldham.
Mr. Nicholas.

For the purpose of assisting the enquiries of your Committee, they proceeded to the District of the Huon, in the *Culloden* steamer, and inspected the Wooden Tramroads which are being worked at Honeywood and Port Esperance; the first belonging to a private Company, the latter attached to the Saw-mills of Messrs. Maning & Co.

Having now briefly indicated the means which they have had recourse to, with a view of assisting their deliberations, it remains for your Committee to state the conclusions to which they have unanimously arrived.

First,—That it is highly desirable that Agricultural Crown Lands should be opened up by Roads before they are sold, inasmuch as the settlement of such Lands would be greatly promoted thereby.

In arriving at this Resolution, your Committee have had but little difficulty; for among all the Witnesses examined, and the replies received from every District throughout the Colony, there does not appear a single dissentient from the opinion it expresses.

Among the data furnished upon this subject, it would appear that on the North Coast there are about 150,000 acres of Agricultural Land, which require about 100 miles of Road to make them available for settlement; in the Midland District about 486,000 acres, extent of Road not stated; on the East Coast and South East 200,000 acres, requiring 90 miles of Road; and to the South and South-west Coast, from 20,000 to 30,000 acres, which could be opened up by from 4 to 15 miles of Road to Water Carriage—besides 70,000 or 80,000 acres readily available in different parts of the same District, by opening communications for short distances between the interior and the water.

The total of Agricultural Crown Land which could be readily made available, according to the Reports of those who favored the Committee with replies to their queries, falls little short of 900,000 acres; but this large area includes 486,000 acres situated in the Midland Districts, and which cannot be considered, under existing circumstances, as suited for Agricultural Settlements.

Your Committee have further resolved,—That the price of Crown Lands (Agricultural) would be greatly increased if they were opened up by Roads before sale.

From the evidence brought before your Committee upon this point, the loss which must necessarily fall upon the public by disposing of the Agricultural Crown Lands, in the absence of means of communication by Road or Water Carriage, must be indeed serious. The most moderate estimate formed of the loss sustained by disposing of the

Public Estate is calculated at not less than 25 per cent. ; while the great weight of evidence warrants the conclusion that the opening up of trafficable Roads through such Lands previous to sale would increase their value from 50 to 300 per cent. ; and not a few of the most experienced of our Colonists have given it as their opinion that, without some better system of Land Communication, neither the Crown Lands recently disposed of nor those now in the possession of the Crown, are worth occupying,—a conclusion fully borne out by the ruinous cost of carriage which the extremely unsatisfactory state of the Roads in the Agricultural Districts necessarily imposes, and of the reality of which your Committee have had before them the most reliable testimony.

Your Committee having come to the foregoing conclusions, the next subject which naturally presented itself for consideration was, the best mode of establishing communication between the Agricultural Districts and Markets for their produce ; and, by so doing, to promote, in the only practical and beneficial mode to the public, the sale and settlement of the Crown Lands, and to encourage the permanent stay amongst us of those who have lately become purchasers under “ The Waste Lands Act.”

Having personally inspected the working of the wooden Tramroads in the Huon District, and satisfied themselves of the comparative cost of constructing Roads in every other way suggested, your Committee have unanimously decided that wooden Tramroads are the best and cheapest description of Roads for the purpose of opening up the Agricultural Lands of the Crown, combined with ordinary Roads when necessary.

To justify this conclusion, your Committee have only to refer to the mass of unanswerable evidence supplied to your Committee upon this point. Indeed it would be impossible to dispute the soundness of the conclusion arrived at by your Committee, after reading the evidence of Messrs. Hill, Maning, Oldham, Nicholas, and others ; and to which we respectfully direct special attention.

It is well to remark that, in the Midland and other exceptional Districts where the materials for making wooden Tramroads are scarce, and consequently too expensive, and where agricultural pursuits but very partially occupy the settlers, ordinary Roads for obvious reasons are preferred.

The next Resolution requires but little elaboration or remark. General experience is but too long familiar with the propriety and justice of the conclusion it endorses :— That the character and condition of the Cross Roads throughout the Country, especially the Agricultural Districts, is extremely unsatisfactory, and the cost of carriage in many localities is enormously high.

Under such a condition of circumstances as the foregoing Resolution represents, it is not difficult to account for the decay and neglect of agriculture in many of those Districts most favored by nature for pursuing one of those employments for human skill and labour, the extension and success of which are essential to the prosperity of every great and prosperous community.

The last subject, and that which demanded from your Committee the greatest amount of consideration was, how far the State was bound to assist in providing the Road Communication required ; and from what sources, and in what proportion, the necessary means should be supplied.

Your Committee had a full appreciation of the difficulties which the neglect of former Governments to recognise and act upon the principle of applying the greater proportion of the Revenues derived from the Public Estate towards its improvement and settlement surrounded the problem submitted to them for solution ; and, after duly deliberating upon the various suggestions supplied by persons of practical experience and matured judgment, and viewing them in connection with the obvious benefits to the public, which the fullest recognition of the principle of applying the Land Fund to the purposes of opening up Roads, constructing Bridges, &c., would confer upon all the

important interests of the Colony, the Committee unanimously resolved :—That, in the case of all Lands already sold by the Crown under “The Waste Lands Act,” one-third of the amount received by sale of such Lands should be appropriated to the making of Roads, for the purpose of conveying the produce of such Lands to the nearest Shipping-place or Market ; and that all Roads through such Lands should be made under the direction and management of the Road Trustees of the Districts in which such Lands are situated.

Your Committee, in conclusion, beg leave to observe that the delay which has taken place in preparing and presenting their Report was owing to causes over which they had but little control. To the necessity for collecting as much information as possible, in order to enable them to bring their labors to some practicable and satisfactory issue—to the number of Committees which, simultaneously operating, divided the time and disturbed the attention of the Members of the Committee—and lastly, to the adjournment of Parliament, is fairly due the blame of any delay that may have taken place, and not to a want of zeal or interest in the subject upon the part of the Committee.

J. D. BALFE, *Chairman.*

Committee Room, 20th January, 1862.

E V I D E N C E .

THURSDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER, 1861.

MR. HILL, *called in and examined.*

1. You are proprietor of land at Honeywood, and owner of flour and saw-mills there? Yes.
2. You have an interest in the Tramroad? Yes, I am Manager and part proprietor.
3. What was the state of the agriculture and timber trade before the Tramroad was made? There was very little land under cultivation, not more than about 15 acres; and the timber carrying was confined to that by a single horse, owing to the difficulties of the carriage.
4. When was the Road opened for traffic? In 1857. It is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long.
5. Describe the progress of the agricultural and timber trade since? The population has increased ten-fold since the establishment of the Tramroad. It is now a settled population, for first came the splitter and his family, then he became a farmer and splitter, and cultivated a small piece of land. Previously to this, the splitters were a fitting population, following the good timber from place to place.
6. What was the cost of the Tramroad? £2568. A portion of the capital was advanced at 8 per cent.; and the Tramroad, which cost about £320 per mile, pays all expenses, and gives 9 per cent. dividend per annum.
7. What progress has been made in the trade of the District? I hand in Returns showing the traffic up to 1860.
8. Has the Tram had any effect in increasing the value of land in the vicinity? Yes; because, if some such advantage had not been given, many of the lands taken under the Pre-emptive Right Regulations would have been given up. Along the line of the Tram there are 4000 or 5000 acres of good Crown Land for agriculture, and splitting for about two miles; and there is a stream, along the banks of which the Tramroad could run. My brother went about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles along the Road, and described it all as good.
9. Will you state what is the difference in the cost of transit since the Tramroad was made? The price of cartage under the old system was nearly double what it is now. We charge 1s. for the first mile, because we have to load and unload. The second mile is only 6d.; and if the line were lengthened, the charge would be less in nearly the same proportion, as we would charge (say) 4d. for the third mile, and so on. Formerly the men worked up all the best timber, and then, because of the difficulties of cartage, came back again and worked up timber which they had before refused. A single horse could draw, on the old road, four loads of palings per diem in the summer, each load consisting of 250 palings, and the distance being 2 miles. Now, by the Tram we carry 1600 palings in a load, and go three times a day, or 4,800 palings per diem. We have two crafts constantly employed in the timber trade, one carrying 35 tons and the other about 30; besides which the steamer *Culloden* is frequently employed in carrying timber for export. I may say a third of our timber goes by the *Culloden*. The Tram is only extended, as I said, for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles; if it were extended further, it would add to the earnings of the sawyers or splitters, who now have to go back a long distance for good timber, and consequently their earnings are not now much more than they were under the old system.
10. What is your opinion of the course the Government might be advised to do in regard to advancing money for Tram or other Roads? I think if private local Companies or persons were to take up shares in such matters, forming themselves on the limited liability system, the Government might advance two-thirds of the amount required for ten years without interest. The advantage which would be gained by the Government would be that Crown Lands which are now unsaleable, owing to the difficulty of access, would acquire a value,—a much greater value than at present—I may say double their present value. All the Crown Lands on each side of the Road would be opened up; and the fact of such Roads being made would induce immediate settlement. There are portions of the Huon country which I know would thus be rendered valuable, because the land is thickly timbered, and very good agricultural land.
11. Are you in favor of iron rails? I am much in favor of iron rails, but at first wooden rails would do, say for 3 or 4 years. In our case, the Tramroads, expenses of management, building, rolling stock, and interest, did not enable us to pay any dividend for the first $2\frac{1}{2}$ years; but since then we have been paying a dividend of 9 per cent. I advanced money on the concern, and have the management. It is our practice that half the revenues of the Road go to working and repair, and the other half to the dividend. The expense of keeping our line in repair is about £50 a year; one mile of the line has to bear very heavy traffic. The line is a single one, on which two carriages are constantly going, conveying three tons each load, and going backwards and forwards three times a day. Then we have floods and fires to contend against, which add to our expenses of repair.

12. What was the cost of cartage of potatoes under the old system? 14s. a ton; now we charge 7s. 6d. I may say that the settlers about us are too poor to make the Roads themselves out of their own means; though, where branch Trams have been laid down to ours, they pay 100 per cent. for the capital; and the traffic of apples, potatoes, grain, and timber, is brought to the Market much cheaper. The easy means of access afforded by our Tram has aided in establishing the School at Geeves's Town, and also the Literary Institution at Honeywood, to which access is given readily by our Road. We are also building a School in a central spot, to which children from all around can get by Tram. Owing to the difficulty of getting at the back Crown Lands of the Huon, for want of Roads, men prefer renting Land at £1 an acre from proprietors to buying it at the same price from the Crown; and where the Tramroads have been opened up in the District Lands which were taken from the Crown under the Pre-emptive Right Regulations at £1 an acre, and which in some instances were being given up, are now selling, and have been sold, at £3 and £4 an acre.

Mr. Hill retired.

TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 1861.

CHARLES DEGRAVES, *Esquire, Landed Proprietor, called in and examined.*

[Replies to printed Questions.]

1. I think it advisable.

2. In certain Districts, such as the Huon, the good land generally lies some distance back from the river or beach; and this land is comparatively useless until a Road is made into it. I should think, from what I hear, that the Mersey country is very similar to the Huon. I think you will never be able to sell any of the back lands at the Huon unless Roads are made to reach them.

3. From my knowledge of the land belonging to the Crown, the value would be doubled.

4. I consider the ordinary Roads to be the best for general settlers, but for a private individual or Company I think Tramroads best; but they should be shod with iron plates. I have sent to England for iron plates for my Tramroad at South Bruni. A metalled Road would cost about £600 a mile; and I think Tramroads will cost about that, or more. With light iron rails, they would cost more by about £280 or £300 a mile. On a wooden Tramroad horses cannot pull a greater weight up an inclined plane than they can on ordinary Roads. In places where there is a descending Road, a Tramroad is better than the common Roads. We load about 3 tons to the waggon. I know Districts where no stone can be obtained for making metalled Roads.

5. My Tramroad at South Bruni cost £450 a mile, and is about 6 miles long.

6. No reply.

7. No reply.

8. No reply.

9. Tramroads built by Government would be a failure: I do not think they would let for as much as would keep them in repair. There is great danger to wooden Tramroads from fire, and they require to be very carefully looked after.

10. Better by Road Trustees. Tramroads should not be handled by the Government. They might be let by tender, if security could be found; but I don't think we have the class of men who would undertake such matters. Government might give grants in aid of Tramroads, and fix the maximum rate of tolls to be demanded, handing over the Tramroad to the Road Trustees. I have seen the Honeywood Tram, and I think it has an incline to the water. Our timber exports have fallen off lately, and at present there is not a larger demand for our timber in Victoria than we now supply. There is no Pastoral Land about the Huon; it is all Agricultural. I consider Mr. Tully's Report of the Country about the Huon to Southport to be incorrect. If Tramroads were made in the Huon District, and cartage were to come down, the splitters and sawyers might bring their timber into Market cheaper than at present.

MR. THOMAS OLDHAM, *Timber Merchant and Landed Proprietor, called in and examined.*

[Replies to printed Questions]

1. I have had much experience in Tramroads and their nature. I don't know the Mersey, but I know the Huon District well. I think that, in certain localities, the Government should open up Roads before sale where the Crown lands around are good.

2. Yes, I do.

3. All the difference you could possibly imagine. At present the Crown Lands are worthless, from want of means of communication; and without a Road they are useless to a settler. A man buying land without a Road would sink his capital fruitlessly. I have land down there which I have offered on improving leases for nothing, and cannot get tenants. I have some land bounded by the water, but the best land is back from the river. In Port Esperance there is a place where there is very fine land, but no Road; 8 or 10 bullocks would not draw as much as a single horse on a Tramroad, besides breakages and accidents, and being frequently up to their bellies in mud.

On my Tramroad there is very little ascent. A horse will take an empty truck, or even a ton weight back up the line; and there is scarcely any place where a Tram could not be laid. The Tramroads are most valuable in wet weather. What would cost £1 to cart with bullocks would not cost 2s. by a Tramroad.

4. Tramroads. Ordinary Roads would be money thrown away in that locality, and they cost more than tramroads, and soon get out of repair.

5. £230 to £250 a mile for mere wooden Tramroads. This would cover the cost of clearing, levelling, and placing the Tramroad fit for work. I think a metalled Road would cost four times as much as that. Wooden Tramroads are certainly very liable to fire; but this could be guarded against by clearing away the adjoining scrub, and burning it off.

6. Impassable in wet weather or winter; and this is a great hindrance to settlement.

7. Variable. In some places they cannot get cartage, and have to carry palings on their shoulders for two miles or more.

8. Several thousand acres. I should say ten thousand. It would take one line of from 5 to 8 miles long into the interior. I recommend wooden Tramroads at first, for they can easily be replaced.

9. I think the owners of property along the line should bear their share. Where it leads to Government land the Government should pay as a proprietor who would benefit by it. I should think no proprietor would refuse to pay his share. I should not myself object to do so.

10. Parties living in the locality would be the best to make such Roads. To be let by public tender is the fairest way; and they should be kept in repair by reasonable fixed tolls. Roads such as these in certain thickly-timbered Districts would increase the timber trade, and add to its value by better timber being procurable. The demand some years ago was greater than the supply; but there is no stock on hand just now, and if I were to get a large order I could not comply with it, because of the difficulty of cartage. Two ships would take away all our stock of timber, and there is no knowing when we may get a large order.

FRIDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER, 1861.

MR. MANING, *called in and examined.*

1. You are a Merchant in Hobart Town? I am.
2. You have a good deal of practical experience in Districts South of this City? Yes, I have a good deal of property there.
3. Do you think it advisable that the Government should make Roads through Crown Lands before disposing of them by sale? Decidedly, as applying to the Southern Districts.
4. Do you believe that such formation of Roads would be the means of promoting the settlement of Crown Land? Yes, to a large extent.
5. Are you not aware that the land fronting on the water is bad on the Southern side of the Island? I am.
6. What is the distance from the water's edge at which the good land and timber lies? From 2 to 6 miles. Along the valley of the Esperance there is a large quantity of land unexplored.
7. What extent of land would you say there was in the District you speak of? Sufficient to occupy a population of 20,000 profitably, if a road were opened. During the Russian War the sum of £230 per 100 was paid for cask staves (Russian), while the same could have been procured from the Esperance Valley at a cost of £50 per 100, equally good, if not better.
8. Are these resources unavailable for want of Roads? They are.

9. Is there an ample Market for our timber? There is an unlimited Market; especially for split timber, at a reasonable price, which cannot now be supplied in consequence of the absence of Roads. A good splitter will split about 500 palings per diem, whereas four-fifths of his time is occupied in carrying them out on his back, consequently not more than 100 per diem can be realised. I consider a good splitter to be a species of skilled laborer.

10. If there were Tramroads, could a greater supply of split and sawn timber be had? Decidedly.

11. What difference in the value of Crown Land in your locality would probably arise if such a course were pursued? Instead of being worthless, as it now is, I believe it would fetch a price considerably above the upset, and that there would be great competition for its possession. Under the existing Land Regulations, which limits a person to select 320 acres, it would not be worth any person's while to form a Tramroad from such lot to the water's edge at his own expense. Not less than five or ten thousand acres would justify an individual or private Company in forming such a Road.

12. Would you advise the making of Tramroads or ordinary Roads? I most decidedly recommend Tramroads. They are more cheaply constructed, and better adapted to that part of the country, and better calculated for cheap traffic; inasmuch as there is no natural feed for cattle. The more heavily timbered the country is, the easier it is to make Tramroads.

13. At what cost could wooden Tramroads be made? At an expense of about £300 per mile.

14. Would you recommend wooden or iron rails? Wooden, decidedly. If the wheel is properly constructed, a good gum rail would last ten years. I speak from the experience of four years. There is much greater weight carried upon my Tramroad than there would be upon ordinary Roads. I have frequently carried loads of 15 tons, and the rails are as yet but very little worn. This, I believe to be the result of having the wheels so constructed as not to cut or injure the rail.

15. What is the cost of carriage in your neighbourhood? From 2s. to 2s. 6d. per 100 palings, for from a mile and a half to two miles; and, at the water's edge, the value of the palings does not exceed 6s. per 100.

16. What extent of Crown Land is there in your neighborhood which would be probably occupied if a good Road were formed through it; and how many miles of Road would be required to bring the produce to market? I cannot answer the first portion of your question. From two or three places Tramroads can be taken into large tracts of valuable Crown Lands with good timber upon them, situated not more than four miles from the Shipping-places.

17. In the event of public money being applied to purposes of constructing Tramroads, upon what conditions do you think such public money ought to be advanced? I think the Government should construct Tramroads and let them by public tender, with a maximum fixed scale of tolls, with proper regulations binding the lessee to keep the line in proper working order. I also think the Government should construct Jetties at the various Shipping-places to which the Tramroads lead. I think that Roads so constructed would repay the Government the cost of erection and interest in five years, irrespective of the additional value it would give to Crown Lands in the vicinity of the Tramroads.

18. Whether would it be better to have such Roads made by the Government, by private Companies or by the Road Trustees of each District, or other local bodies? Whether the general interests of the District would be better promoted, when such Roads are constructed, that they should be under the control of private Companies or individuals, or let by tender and tolls charged, and a scale of charges fixed by Parliament? I think it would be better to have them constructed by the Government, under the supervision of local Trustees. I also think that if such Roads were constructed in the vicinity of D'Eutrecasteaux Channel, the benefit to the timber trade would be incalculable. The want of Roads has injured the quality of split timber, as it is now split too light, on account of the distance the men have to carry it out on their backs. Men are leaving the neighborhood of the Channel, as there is no way of getting back to the timber. If the Government would give me 20,000 acres in the Valley of the Esperance I will open it by a Tramroad, and engage that in two years it shall be as productive as any 20,000 acres in Tasmania. From a line of Tramroad two miles long, on 1000 acres of private property, we exported one million feet of timber per annum, worth about £3,500, for the years 1857, 1858, and 1859; and at the same rate it will take ten years to exhaust the timber.

19. Would these Roads be much endangered by fire? I believe the danger of fire is very trifling; I allude to the Tramroads in the neighbourhood of the Esperance Valley.

20. Do you think that in dryer parts of the country destruction of Tramroads by fire might be easily obviated? Yes.

Mr. Maning then retired.

MR. ALFRED NICHOLAS, *called in and examined.*

1. Do you think it advisable that the Government should make Roads through Crown Lands before disposing of them by sale? Most decidedly.

2. Do you believe that such formation of Roads would be the means of promoting the settlement of Crown Lands? As far as my knowledge goes, I think it would more than double the population in every District, more especially in the Timber Districts. I speak from experience of what has taken place on my own land.

3. What difference in the value of Crown Lands in your locality would probably arise if such a course were pursued? I consider the bulk of Crown Lands without Roads worthless. I have a thousand acres of Land situate at Port Esperance, near the water, for which I have been offered 35s. per acre if I make a Road into it at a cost of £250. I have endeavoured to sell this land for the last twelve months but cannot get an offer unless I make a Road into it.

4. Would you advise the making of Tramroads or ordinary Roads? Tramroads.

5. At what cost could wooden Tramroads be formed in your locality? I have had an offer to put down a Tramroad at 2s. per yard, or £176 per mile.

6. What is the character and condition of the Cross Roads in your neighbourhood? There are no Roads.

7. What is the cost of carriage in your neighbourhood? There is no carriage except on men's shoulders.

8. What extent of Crown Land is there in your neighbourhood which would probably be occupied if a good Road were formed through it; and how many miles of Road would be required to bring the produce to Market? An enormous extent; I should say about 100,000 acres. Three lines of Tramroads, of five miles each, would open up 50,000 acres of very valuable land.

9. In the event of public money being applied to purposes of constructing Tramroads, upon what conditions do you think such public money ought to be advanced? I think the Government should construct Roads, and let them by a fixed rental or by tender.

10. Whether would it be better to have such Roads made by the Government, by private Companies, by the Road Trustees of each District, or other local bodies? Whether the general interests of the District would be better promoted, when such Roads are constructed, that they should be under the control of private Companies or individuals; or, let by tender and tolls charged, and a scale of charges fixed by Parliament? I think Tramroads should be made at the expense of the Government, with local management and Government supervision.

Mr. Nicholas then retired.

HONEYWOOD TRAMROAD.

ESTABLISHED 24TH JUNE, 1856. CAPITAL £1290, IN £10 SHARES.

SHAREHOLDERS—R. Hill, 47 Shares; O. Geeves, 33 Shares; J. Geeves, 19 Shares; S. Geeves, 10 Shares; W. Studley, 10 Shares; R. Wells, 5 Shares; H. Ford, 5 Shares.

Date.	Honeywood Tramroad.	Cost.			Expenses of Working and Repairing Tramroad, including Interest on borrowed Capital at 8 per cent.			Earnings of Tramroad.			Profit.	Average Rate of Dividend for the 4½ years the Tramroad has worked.
		Miles	Cms	£ s. d.	Mths.	£ s. d.	Mths.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			
1857. July 14th..	To making one-half mile of Tramroad, with Carriages, & other Incidental Expenses ..	1	40	2144 17 7	6	82 13 9½	6	80 0 0	—	* Or £9 per cent. per annum dividend for 4 years and 6 months.		
1858. July 14th..	Making 15½ chains Tramroad	0	15½	143 7 6	12	280 3 2	12	277 2 2½	—			
1859. July 14th..	Making 11 chains 42 links....	0	11½	45 13 0	12	229 6 4	12	294 2 8½	59 1 7½			
20th..	Ditto 40 chains 37 links ..	0	40½	161 6 8								
1860. July 14th..	Ditto 1 chain 50 links	0	1½	6 0 0	12	350 0 10½	12	511 13 2½	161 12 3½			
1861. July 14th..	Law Expenses	0	0	67 2 3	12	539 4 9½	12	846 18 8	303 6 9			
		2	28½	2568 7 0	—	1481 8 1¼	54	2009 16 9	524 0 8¼*			

Date of Year.	Produce tramed out..	Traming.	Market Value.	Date of Year.	Produce tramed out.	Traming.	Market Value.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.
From July 17 1857, to July 12, 1858.	2,180,700 Shingles		1090 7 0		<i>Brought forward</i>	—	3277 16 0½
	48,335 Palings, 6-feet		217 10 0		1 bag Onions		0 10 0
	104,161 ditto, 5-feet		520 16 0		135 tons 12 cwt. Potatoes		949 4 0
	75 tons Potatoes		675 0 0		774 bushels Wheat		348 6 0
	45 tons 6 cwt. back freight		—		21,500 Laths		8 12 0
	450 bushels Wheat		157 10 0		10 cases Apples		8 0 0
	95 Bed-posts		5 18 9		10 casks Beef		—
	21 Naves		2 12 6		1,690 feet Lightwood		250 1 2
	62,070 feet Timber		294 10 0		15,263 feet Hardwood		61 1 0
	Drawing Logs		1334 16 3		28 bags Oats		13 16 0
	1,156 Lightwood Staves		105 15 2		1,000 Poles		5 0 0
		£ 277 2 2½	4424 13 8		1,402 Rails		28 0 0
From July 12, 1858, to July 14, 1859.	1,217,000 Shingles		669 7 0			£ 511 13 0	4850 6 2½
	179,115 Palings		890 11 0	From July 14, 1860, to July 14, 1861.	347,425 6-feet Palings		1911 2 3
	2,426 bags Potatoes, or 173 tons		751 10 0		533,716 5-feet ditto		2391 14 2
	5 tons 16 cwt. back freight		—		1,568,800 Shingles		939 13 6
	312 bushels Wheat		156 0 0		4,390½ Lightwood Staves		489 1 0
	5,215 Lightwood Staves		521 10 0		28,657 Wattle Staves		257 18 2
	4,128 Wattle Staves		77 8 0		249 Posts and Rails		5 0 0
	76 cases Apples		76 0 0		60 tons 13 cwt. back freight		—
	53,368 feet Logs		213 9 6		64 tons Potatoes		320 0 0
		£ 294 2 8½	3355 15 6		343 bushels Wheat		111 9 10
From July 14, 1859, to July 14, 1860.	19,900 Palings, 6-feet		129 7 0		213,600 Laths		85 8 9
	409,555 ditto, 5-feet		1658 18 0		10 cases Apples		6 0 0
	1,000,500 Shingles		600 6 0		408 Bed-posts		20 8 0
	6,176 Lightwood Staves		667 12 0		1,032 feet Lightwood		10 6 0
	4,931 Wattle Staves		50 5 9½		27 Lightwood Logs		67 6 0
	50 tons 19½ cwts. back freight		—		76,557 feet Timber		317 1 6
	148½ Naves		23 11 9		75,253 Market Palings, 5-feet		385 13 6
	734 Bed-posts		46 7 6		60 bushels 16 bags Oats		10 10 0
	4 bags Carrots		1 8 0			£ 838 4 4½	5228 12 8
	<i>Carried forward</i>	—	£ 3277 16 0½				

Total Earnings of Tramroad for 4 years and 6 months..... £2009 16s 9d

Committee Room, House of Assembly, 10th September, 1861.

SERIES of Questions to which the Committee of the House of Assembly on Roads request the favour of immediate Replies, addressed to the Chairman of the Committee :—

1. Do you think it advisable that the Government should make Roads through Crown Lands before disposing of them by sale ?

2. Do you believe that such formation of Roads would be the means of promoting the settlement of Crown Land ?

3. What difference in the value of Crown Land, in your locality, would probably arise if such a course were pursued ?

4. Would you advise the making of Tramroads or ordinary Roads ?

5. At what cost could wooden Tramroads be formed in your locality ?

6. What is the character and condition of the Cross Roads in your neighbourhood ?

7. What is the cost of carriage in your neighbourhood ?

8. What extent of Crown Land is there in your neighbourhood which would be probably occupied if a good Road were formed through it ; and how many miles of Road would be required to bring the produce to Market ?

9. In the event of public money being applied to purposes of constructing Tramroads, upon what conditions do you think such public money ought to be advanced ?

10. Whether would it be better to have such Roads made by the Government, by private Companies, by the Road Trustees of each District, or other local bodies ? Whether the general interests of the District would be better promoted, when such Roads are constructed, that they should be under the control of private companies or individuals ; or, let by tender and tolls charged, and a scale of charges fixed by Parliament ?

J. D. BALFE, *Chairman.*

To.

ANALYSIS OF REPLIES TO QUERIES.

NORTH COAST.

Number of Replies..... 5.

1. Quantity of Crown Lands available for sale or occupation.	About 150,000 acres, with about 100 miles of Road required to make it available.
2. The increased value which the opening up of Roads would give to the Crown Lands.	Varying from 5 to 100 per cent. ; but land like that on the North Coast is but of little value unless Roads are made.
3. The character of the present Roads, and cost of carriage of produce to Market.	Very bad. Only one metalled Road ; most of the Roads being bush tracks. Grain 4 <i>d.</i> to 6 <i>d.</i> per bushel ; 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> per ton per mile.
4. The description of Roads recommended for construction, and cost of construction.	Ordinary Roads in most places ; Tramways in others. Cost of Tramways, average £280 a mile.
5. The means of constructing Roads ; how, and from what sources, to be supplied ; and the best and most economical means of controlling the expenditure of moneys, public or otherwise.	By Road Trusts, where these have been established.

The replies to the Questions 1 and 2 of the printed paper are almost universally " *Yes.*"

MIDLAND DISTRICTS.

Number of Replies..... 28.

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|---|---|
| 1. Quantity of Crown Lands available for sale or occupation. | About 486,000 acres: extent of Road not stated. |
| 2. The increased value which the opening up of Roads would give to the Crown Lands. | From 40 to 200 per cent. Land almost valueless without Roads, which would promote their settlement. |
| 3. The character of the present Roads, and cost of carrying produce to Market. | Tolerably fair, though bad in winter in the lower lands. Grain 6 <i>d.</i> to 1 <i>s.</i> a bushel for 50 miles. Wool £3 to £4 a ton for 50 miles. |
| 4. The description of Roads recommended for construction, and cost of construction. | Tramroads, where timber abounds; at a cost varying from £300 to £500 a mile. But generally, ordinary Roads are recommended in the Midland District. |
| 5. The means of constructing Roads; how and from what sources to be supplied; and the best and most economical means of controlling the expenditure of moneys, public or otherwise. | By grants in aid, or interest guaranteed by Government, and then managed by the Road Trustees. |

The Replies to the Questions 1 and 2 of the printed paper are almost universally "Yes."

EAST COAST AND SOUTH EAST.

Number of Replies..... 12

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|---|---|
| 1. Quantity of Crown Lands available for sale or occupation. | 200,000 acres: about 90 miles of Road required to make it available. |
| 2. The increased value which the opening up of Roads would give to the Crown Lands. | Value would be given to lands now valueless, and other lands would be doubled in value. |
| 3. The character of the present Roads, and cost of carriage of produce to Market. | Very indifferent, owing to the hilly nature of the Country and the incomplete state of the Roads. £5 to £8 per ton by land; £1 to £2 per ton by sea. Interior, cartage 15 <i>s.</i> to 20 <i>s.</i> a ton for 8 or 9 miles. |
| 4. The description of Roads recommended, and cost of construction. | Ordinary Roads, except in the coal and thickly timbered Districts, where Tramroads would be desirable. Cost of Tramroads, unable to form an estimate. |
| 5. The means of constructing Roads; how, and what sources to be supplied; and the best and most economical means of controlling the expenditure of moneys, public or otherwise. | By Road Trustees or local bodies. Scale of tolls or other charges to be fixed by Parliament. |

The Replies to the Questions 1 and 2 of the printed paper are almost universally "Yes."

SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST COAST.

Number of Replies..... 25.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Quantity of Crown Lands available for sale or occupation. | From 20,000 to 30,000 acres would be opened up by from 4 to 15 miles of Road, required to get to Water Carriage. There are 10,000 acres in the Honeywood District alone. Between 70,000 and 80,000 acres spoken of by the various persons replying. |
| 2. The increased value which the opening up of Roads would give to the Crown Lands. | From 50 to 300 per cent. It would cause the good land to be immediately bought up. Land is nearly worthless without Roads. |

3. The character of the present Roads and cost of carriage of produce to Market.

Bad, rough, almost impassable. Cost, from 3s. 6d. to 15s. a ton per mile on ordinary Roads, 7s. 6d. a ton for two miles by Tramroad.

4. The description of Roads recommended for construction, and cost of construction.

Tramroads; at a cost varying from £100 to £500 a mile. £320 seems to be average.

5. The means of constructing Roads; how, and from what sources, to be supplied; and the best and most economical means of controlling the expenditure of moneys, public or otherwise.

The Tramroads should be made by Government, and, when completed, transferred to the Road Trustees. They could be made by loans secured on the Roadway.

The Replies to the Questions 1 and 2 of the printed paper are almost universally "Yes."

Macquarie-street, 9th September, 1861.

SIR,

I ONLY received your note of the 5th instant late on Saturday evening. I have not therefore had much time for the consideration of a subject so important to the Colony; but I shall endeavour to comply with your wishes as far as I can. I may acknowledge, however, that the question of Tramways has for some time occupied my attention; and, believing that the system must be adopted sooner or later, I had dotted down some facts relating thereto, together with such information as I could procure, as to the best practical means of improving our internal communications.

I need scarcely draw your attention to the state of the Roads in the extreme Northern and Southern portions of the Colony; they are too well known to require any description at my hands. I can conceive nothing more calculated to retard the settlement of these Districts than the wretched condition of the existing lines. I have no hesitation in stating my opinion that, if some improvement is not effected in the matter of Roads, the lands however rich, must be deserted. It is not probable that, for the future, high prices will be obtained for produce; indeed the progress of agricultural settlement in Victoria would justify the belief in a decrease. Under such circumstances, the importance of Tramways is obvious, not only for the purpose of improving the present condition of the settler, but of preserving his interests.

I believe I am correct in adducing the fact, that the expense of bringing the grain to Market or Shipping-place is more than the settler can pay at present rates. I speak more particularly of the North Coast, where there has been an active settlement of the public lands during the last two years. I have known one shilling per bushel to have been paid for a distance of sixteen miles; and, in the neighbourhood of Chudleigh, it was deemed unprofitable to send the crop of oats to Town.

I may remark that the construction of Tramways is more urgently required in the Agricultural Districts bordering on the coast, and those possessing valuable beds of timber, than in the other portions of the island. It is in these Districts the present Road system is found so inadequate; and any one who has visited them must have recognised the necessity of reform.

There are many persons who firmly believe in the formation of permanent Roads, which are no doubt excellent in their way; but the expense of construction and cost of maintenance are excessive. The Tramway combines facility of transport with economy in construction; and I do not believe that the wear and tear on a Tramway, substantially made, would exceed £6 per cent. per annum on the outlay. The ordinary Tramways in use by several of the saw-mills cost on an average about £300 per mile; but I believe more permanent work would be required for general purposes, which would raise the cost to £400 per mile. When the system of Tramroads is contrasted with that in present use, I do not think there can be any doubt as to the advantages of the former. The clearing and forming, with a few side drains, of an ordinary bush Road costs some £150 per mile. This, you will understand, is exclusive of metalling, and consequently renders the Road unfit for continuous working during the wet season. The seats of settlement on the North Coast are quite dependent on the existence of Roads such as I have described, but they cannot possibly ever provide efficient communication through a country covered with dense forests, and possessing a soil that readily becomes mire. I could offer many more reasons for the adoption of Tramways, but my time is limited; and I think I have urged the main grounds on which their superiority rests. I shall, therefore, proceed to the consideration of the best means to carry out the system. This may be done either by the Government providing capital or guaranteeing a fixed per-centage on the outlay. That this involves no new principle, I may refer to the fact of its being recognised in England, and has also been found to work well in Ireland, both with regard to drainage works on a large scale and Railways. In a pamphlet written by Mr. G. W. Bemans, an eminent engineer, and read before the Institution of Civil Engineers, the question of Government aid was discussed with reference to local requirements, and considerable prominence was given to the fact—"That in Ireland, while the Railway system had been assisted by Government advances to the extent of upwards of two millions sterling, the National Revenue had increased by that amount *annually*.* ** It was not too much to say, that Government had received a rate of interest of 15 to 20 per cent. per annum on the sum advanced." So fully was the importance of such aid acknowledged, that it was proposed to bring in a Bill to promote Railways somewhat on a footing of ordinary public works. One of the principles embodied in this Bill was to divide the guarantee of a fixed per-centage between the projectors, the Government, and the residents in the District who derived advantage by the construction of the work. I am of opinion that this system could be adopted here with a slight modification. The following scheme seems to me one that could be worked easily:—

1. Power should be given to the Governor in Council to proclaim Tramway Districts at the instance of three-fourths of the persons holding property who are assessed at an annual value of £15 and upwards.

2. That the District have the power of defining its own boundaries previous to proclamation.

3. That the Government guarantee be given, in ordinary cases, for one-half of a fixed per-centage on the outlay for a certain number of years, and that the District be assessed for the other half, should it be required.

4. In Tramway Districts where there are Crown Lands, and the Government is satisfied that the advantages are such as to increase the value of the same, the Government shall be authorised to guarantee (for a certain period) the whole deficiency of the working of the proposed Tramway, to make up the fixed rate of interest.

5. That a fund be raised by Debentures for the purpose of affording aid either by capital or guarantee as may hereafter be decided on.

The above crude sketch will give you an idea of my scheme, which seems to me feasible, and, what is of more importance, will prove of manifest service in stimulating agriculture and increasing the value of the waste lands. I only trust something will be done, as I know how much our prosperity depends on vigorous and prompt action with reference to this special want.

I conclude with the hope that I have made myself sufficiently clear, though I have been obliged to write hurriedly.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

W. ALCOCK TULLY, *Inspecting Surveyor.*

P.S.—You ask my opinion as to whether the Roads recently marked out under the Board of Works would be suitable for Tramways. I have no doubt but that some of them would; but a great deal depends on the curves which, in many instances, are too sharp and irregular for Tramways: but, with regard to gradients, there could be no objection, if your instructions to the Surveyors have been carried out.

W. A. T.