

(No. 47.)



1894.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

## THE UNEMPLOYED:

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE, WITH MINUTES OF  
PROCEEDINGS, EVIDENCE, AND APPENDICES.

Brought up by Mr. Mulcahy, May 17, 1894, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.



*SELECT COMMITTEE appointed, on the 6th April, 1894, to consider the practicability of the State providing Work of an immediately reproductive character for the large number of unemployed able-bodied men who, with their families, will probably become a heavy burden upon the community during the ensuing Winter.*

#### MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. MINISTER OF LANDS.  
MR. MACDONALD.  
MR. GILMORE.  
MR. WOOLNOUGH.

MR. BRADLEY.  
MR. MCWILLIAMS.  
MR. MULCAHY. (*Mover.*)

#### DAYS OF MEETING.

Tuesday, 10th April; Wednesday, 11th April; Thursday, 12th April; Friday, 13th April; Tuesday, 17th April; Wednesday, 18th April; Thursday, 19th April; Friday, 20th April; Wednesday, 9th May; Thursday, 10th May; Friday, 11th May; Wednesday, 16th May; Thursday, 17th May.

#### WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Mr. William Smith, Secretary Public Works Office; Mr. John Helmer, Inspector of Roads; Mr. J. Fincham, Engineer-in-Chief; Mr. E. Counsel, Deputy Surveyor-General; Mr. R. Johnson, Civil Engineer; Mr. Simmons, Road Inspector; Mr. Belstead, Secretary to Mines Department; Mr. T. Lewis; Mr. A. Montgomery, Geological Surveyor and Inspector of Mines; Mr. T. Budgeon; Mr. T. Meats, Tin-miner; Mr. Benjamin Dyer; Mr. F. W. Hortin; Mr. Robert Sydney Milles, City Engineer; Mr. Malcolm Kennedy, Smelter; Mr. E. G. Ford, Sawmill Proprietor; Mr. Arthur E. Risby, Sawmill Proprietor; Captain T. Fisher, Sawmill Proprietor; Henry Chesterman, Sawmill Proprietor; Mr. G. F. Beardsley, Metallurgist; Mr. J. G. Davies, M.H.A.; Mr. D. C. Urquhart, M.H.A.

#### WITNESSES' EXPENSES.

Mr. R. Johnson, 10s. 6d.; Mr. G. Simmons, £2 2s.

## R E P O R T.

1. SINCE the adjournment of the House your Committee have diligently proceeded with and completed its investigations. The following are the principal questions with which the inquiry dealt:—

- (a) The various items of authorised Public Works, both in the "urgent" and deferred Schedules, 53 Vict. Nos. 55 to 59, which might profitably be proceeded with at once.
- (b) New Public Works which would probably be immediately reproductive by opening up Crown Lands, or by in any way improving the public estate, or which might, by opening up new mineral country, give openings for mining enterprise.
- (c) The practicability of the State temporarily employing men at mining under such conditions as would recoup or nearly recoup the amount paid in wages and expenses.
- (d) The direct encouragement of certain industries which give employment to large numbers of men, and will increase the value of our exports.
- (e) The propriety of forwarding the scheme of drainage for the City of Hobart.
- (f) Various suggestions of witnesses, the principal one being the promotion of legislation to compel the adoption of rabbit-proof fencing on a large scale in infested districts.

2. Your Committee has already in its Interim Report made recommendations regarding works referred to in paragraph (a). To these may be added Item 36, Railways, 55 Vict. No. 59, Close Piling Bank of River North Esk from Tamar-street Bridge to Railway Bridge, 1300 feet, and Item 127, 55 Vict. No. 56, Distillery Creek to Mowbray.

3. Regarding paragraph (b), the evidence discloses the fact that there are in different parts of the Colony considerable tracts of agricultural land which would probably sell readily and promote settle-

ment were they opened up by roads. It has been suggested that these areas should be surveyed before selection is allowed to be made, and that the unemployed might be given a large amount of work in making roads. Believing that the opening up of these areas would be immediately reproductive and would give early employment, your Committee recommend such works to your favourable consideration. A schedule of the various areas is appended, from which selection might preferably be made of such as are in nearest proximity to means of cheap transit to market, such as railways or water carriage. In some of these districts the preparation of the land for settlement would also probably be justifiable as improving the value of the Crown estate. Your Committee also strongly recommend the extension of tracks into unexplored mineral country, and the making of pack-tracks or roads to mines which give promise of early production.

4. Under paragraph (c) your Committee recommend the adoption of a proposal made by the Secretary of Mines that a limited number of men be employed by the Government at Mount Cameron in alluvial tin-mining on certain forfeited sections. Careful inquiry should be made by the Mines Department so as to ascertain whether this plan cannot be extended.

Your Committee have taken a large amount of evidence regarding the lode tin deposits at Blue Tier, and, while they cannot recommend the working of these deposits by the State, they feel that Parliament would be justified in voting a sufficient sum of money to have the most promising formations tested to a depth by the diamond drill. Seeing that there is little probability of employment otherwise being found for the large number hitherto mainly dependent on public works, your Committee feel that it is the duty of Parliament to encourage production in every legitimate way, and as there is a concurrence of opinion that these great deposits would pay well were they worked on a very large scale, the proving of them to such an extent as would demonstrate their value to capitalists would doubtless cause private enterprise to develop them with great gain to the Colony. In connection with mining, too, your Committee believe that a reform of the Mining Laws in the direction of compelling a due amount of work to be performed on each section held, and a more rigid enforcement of the labour clauses under the existing law, would tend to the earlier development of mineral finds and a corresponding increase in the number of men at work.

5. The evidence given before your Committee under paragraph (d) shows that the timber industry will absorb a large amount of our unemployed if a market can be obtained at Home for Tasmanian paving-blocks. The assistance given by the State towards sending home a trial shipment will be an immediate help to the unemployed sawmillers, and will probably give this promising industry a good start.

6. The Colony is now exporting monthly some 1800 to 2000 tons of silver-lead ore, which is smelted principally in Germany. The smelting of this quantity of ore locally would employ a considerable number of men, and would greatly increase the value of our exports. Expert evidence shows that the ore could be economically turned into bullion here were the industry once fairly established. Your Committee suggest, that, as an inducement for the early starting of this industry on a large scale, a bonus might be offered for the first 10,000 tons of silver-lead bullion smelted in the Colony within a limited time.

7. Regarding paragraphs (e) and (f), your Committee do not make any recommendation.

8. In conclusion, your Committee, who have given a large amount of time and taken considerable trouble in this matter, beg to impress upon Parliament the great necessity for immediately adopting measures calculated to give relief in the form of work. Now that harvesting is over, the number of men out of employment is increasing, and there seems a certainty of great hardship ensuing during the coming winter. Seeing that probably State assistance will have to be given in some form, there can be no doubt that such help will be more acceptable to the recipients, and more profitable to the Government, if it is earned.

9. *SCHEDULE of unselected Crown Lands referred to in paragraph 3.*

	Acres.
Florentine Valley.....	18,000
Valley of Arve.....	9000
Vicinity of Port Esperance.....	5000
Vicinity of Sandfly.....	1000
Parish of Weld (George River).....	3000
Ringarooma District.....	3000
Mount Horror.....	5000
Scottsdale.....	3000
Mount Barrow.....	1000
Ulverstone Back Country.....	6000
"                    ".....	30,000 in 4 lots
River Blyth.....	9000
Wellington.....	6000
Inglis River.....	6000
Duck River.....	4000

10. Your Committee have the honor to submit their Report for the favourable consideration of your Honorable House.

EDWARD MULCAHY, *Chairman.*

*Committee Room, 17th May, 1894.*

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 1894.

The Committee met at 2:40 P.M.

*Present*—Mr. Pillinger, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Mulcahy (Mover).

Mr. Mulcahy was voted to the Chair.

The Committee deliberated.

Mr. Piesse took his seat.

Resolved, That the following witnesses be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee at 10:30 A.M. to-morrow :—Mr. W. Smith, Secretary to Lands and Works Department; Mr. E. A. Counsel, Deputy Surveyor-General.

Resolved, That the Manager of the Mount Cameron Water-race, Mr. Griffin, be requested to give written evidence as to the probability of finding employment for any of the unemployed upon the Mount Cameron Tin Fields.

The Committee adjourned at 4 P.M. until 10:30 A.M. on Wednesday, 11th instant.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 1894.

The Committee met at 10:35 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Piesse, Mr. Pillinger, Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman tabled (1) suggestions by the Member for Brighton as to the best means of providing work for the unemployed—Appendix A.; (2) letter from Mr. Henry Johnson, dated 10th April, 1894, containing similar suggestions; (3) communication from Mr. Clement Johnson, of Bellerive, dated 11th April, 1894, stating his wish to be examined by the Committee.

Mr. William Smith, Secretary to the Public Works Department, was called in and examined.

Mr. Smith withdrew.

The Committee Clerk informed the Committee that Mr. Griffin, Manager of the Mount Cameron Water-race, had been requested to give written evidence for the information of the Committee.

Resolved, That the Chairman be instructed to obtain the leave of the House to sit during the adjournment.

Mr. John Helmer, Inspector of Public Works, was called in and examined.

Mr. Helmer withdrew.

Resolved, That Mr. James Fincham, Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Simmons, Northern Inspector of Roads, and Mr. W. Duffy, late Engineer of Roads, be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee at a later hour in the day.

The Committee adjourned at 12:55 P.M. until the next sitting of the House.

### AFTERNOON SITTING.

The Committee met at 4:30 P.M.

*Present*—Mr. Piesse, Mr. Woollnough, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

Mr. James Fincham, Engineer-in-Chief, was called in and examined.

Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Pillinger took their seats.

Mr. Fincham withdrew.

Mr. John Helmer, Inspector of Public Works, was recalled and examined.

Mr. Helmer withdrew.

A plan of the proposed Tamar-street bridge, and the drawings and correspondence in connection with the extension of the Railway to the Hobart wharves, were tabled.

Ordered, That the following witnesses be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee :—Mr. T. Lewis, Hobart; Mr. F. Young; Mr. Simmons, Inspector of Roads, Latrobe.

The Committee adjourned at 5:30 P.M. until 11 A.M. Thursday, 12th April.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1894.

The Committee met at 11:15 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Pillinger, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Committee adjourned at 11:25 until 3 P.M.

### AFTERNOON SITTING.

The Committee re-assembled at 3 P.M.

*Present*—Mr. Pillinger, Mr. Piesse, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

Mr. C. H. Smith, Road Contractor, was called in and examined.

Mr. Smith withdrew.

Mr. E. Counsel, Deputy Surveyor-General, was called in and examined.

Mr. Mulcahy left the Chair, and Mr. Piesse was appointed Chairman *pro tem*.

Mr. Counsel withdrew.

The Chairman tabled the written evidence of Mr. James F. Young.—Appendix B.

A letter was received from Mr. H. Chesterman, Timber Merchant, requesting examination by the Committee.

Resolved, That the following witness be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee:—Mr. R. Johnson, of the Blue Tier.

The Committee adjourned at 4.45 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Friday, the 13th April.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1894.

THE Committee met at 11 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Piesse, Mr. Macdonald, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Pillinger took his seat.

Mr. R. Johnson was called in and examined.

Mr. Johnson withdrew.

Mr. George Simmons, Inspector of Roads, was called in and examined.

Mr. Simmons withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 1 P.M. until 3 P.M.

AFTERNOON SITTING.

The Committee re-assembled at 3.10 P.M.

*Present*—Mr. Macdonald, Mr. McWilliams, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

Account passed—Mr. Simmons, £2 2s., travelling expenses.

Mr. T. Lewis was called in and examined.

Mr. Lewis withdrew.

Mr. F. Belstead, Secretary of Mines, was called in and examined.

Mr. Belstead withdrew.

Mr. E. Counsel, Deputy Surveyor-General, was recalled and examined.

Mr. Counsel tabled a sketch plan of exploration of Florentine Valley and Weld River by Surveyor Frodsham and six District sketches.

Mr. Pillinger took his seat.

Mr. Counsel withdrew.

Resolved, That Mr. H. Chesterman be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee at a date to be determined by the Chairman.

Account passed:—Mr. R. Johnson, loss of time, 10s. 6d.

The Committee deliberated.

Resolved, That Messrs. Piesse and Mulcahy be appointed to draw up an Interim Report to be submitted at the next Meeting of the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 5.40 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Tuesday, the 17th instant.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1894.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Woollnough, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman informed the Committee that Mr. Piesse and the Hon. A. T. Pillinger had ceased to be Members of the House of Assembly.

Resolved, That the Chairman do move the House for the appointment of Messrs. Gilmore and Bradley to the vacant seats.

A letter was received from Mr. Theo. P. Jones, of the Henty, dated 12th April, 1894, containing suggestions for employment of surplus labour (Appendix C.); also one from Mr. W. Smith, Secretary to Public Works Department, dated 16th April, stating his readiness for further examination.

Mr. Montgomery, Inspector of Mines, was called in and examined.

Mr. Montgomery withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 1 P.M. until 3 P.M.

AFTERNOON SITTING.

*Present*—Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Macdonald, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Chairman tabled the draft Progress Report, which was read and agreed to.

Ordered, That the Chairman do present the said Report at the next sitting of the House.

The Committee adjourned at 3.35 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Wednesday, the 18th April.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 1894.

THE Committee met at 11.10 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Bradley, Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. William Smith, Secretary to the Public Works Department, was called in and examined.

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Mr. William Smith withdrew.

Mr. Macdonald tabled the following Telegram received in reply to the following query :—

“Can you give me the names of Mines whose work is stopped, which miners could work on tribute, if allowed, and how many men could go on the claims?”

“The following mines are really good enough for tribute parties, and could give work to say 20 to 30 miners if available for tribute :—Gate Extended, East Gate, Morning Star and Boys' Companies.”

The Committee adjourned at 12.15 P.M. until 3 P.M.

## AFTERNOON SITTING.

The Committee met at 3.15 P.M.

*Present*.—Mr. Bradley, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

Mr. Macdonald made a statement to the Committee (*vide* evidence of this day).

Mr. Thomas Budgeon, of Hobart, was called in and examined.

Mr. Budgeon withdrew.

Mr. Meats, of Hobart, was called in and examined.

Mr. Meats withdrew.

Mr. Benjamin Dyer was called in and examined.

Mr. Dyer withdrew.

Mr. F. W. Hortin was called in and examined.

Mr. Hortin withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4.50 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Thursday, 19th April.

## THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 1894.

The Committee met at 11.30 A.M.

*Present*.—Mr. Bradley, Mr. Macdonald, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Woollnough took his seat.

The Chairman tabled a reply from Mr. Griffin, Manager of the Mount Cameron Water-race, to certain queries forwarded to him on the 10th instant.

Mr. Robert Sydney Milles, City Surveyor, was called in and examined.

Mr. Milles withdrew.

Mr. Malcolm Kennedy, Engineer, was called in and examined.

Mr. Kennedy withdrew.

Mr. Alfred Mault, Secretary to the Central Board of Health, was called in and examined.

Mr. Mault withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 1.16 P.M. until 3.30 P.M.

## AFTERNOON SITTING.

*Present*.—Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Bradley, Mr. Woollnough, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

Mr. Woollnough placed on record his opinion of the inexpediency of taking evidence on the Hobart Drainage Scheme, on the ground that the consideration of that proposed work is beyond the scope of the Committee, it not being of an immediately reproductive character.

Mr. Ford, Millowner, was called in and examined.

Mr. Ford withdrew.

Ordered, That Messrs. A. Risby and J. Graves be ordered to attend and give evidence before the Committee at 11 A.M. to-morrow.

The Committee adjourned at 5 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Friday, the 20th April.

## FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 1894.

The Council met at 11.30 A.M.

*Present*.—Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Bradley, Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. E. G. Ford, Sawmill Proprietor, was called in and examined.

Mr. Ford withdrew.

Mr. Arthur Risby, Sawmill Proprietor, was called in and examined.

Mr. Risby withdrew.

Captain T. Fisher, Sawmill Proprietor, was called in and examined.

Captain Fisher withdrew.

Mr. H. Chesterman, Timber Merchant and Sawmill Proprietor, was called in and examined.

Mr. Chesterman withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 10 P.M. until a date to be hereafter declared by the Chairman.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 1894.

The Committee met at 11.15 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Bradley, Mr. Macdonald, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. H. Chesterman, Timber Merchant and Sawmill Proprietor, was called in and examined.

Mr. Chesterman withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 12 noon until 3 P.M.

AFTERNOON SITTING.

The Committee re-assembled at 3.10 P.M.

*Present*—Mr. Bradley, Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Macdonald, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

Ordered, That Mr. G. F. Beardsley Mr. Belstead, and His Worship the Mayor of Launceston, be summoned to attend before the Committee and give evidence.

Mr. G. F. Beardsley, Metallurgist, was called in and examined.

Mr. Beardsley withdrew.

Mr. Francis Belstead, Secretary of the Mines Department, was called in and examined.

Mr. Belstead withdrew.

Resolved, That Mr. D. C. Urquhart and Mr. J. G. Davies, M.S.H.A., be requested to attend and give evidence before the Committee.

Ordered, That His Worship the Mayor of Hobart be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 4.30 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Thursday, the 10th May.

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THURSDAY, MAY 10, 1894.

The Committee met at 11.15 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Bradley, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Woollnough, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were confirmed.

A telegram was received from His Worship the Mayor of Launceston, requesting to be excused from attendance, and stating that the only evidence he could give on the subject under enquiry was that the Corporation would probably employ men stone-breaking.

Mr. J. G. Davies, Member for Fingal, was called in and examined.

Mr. Davies withdrew.

Mr. D. C. Urquhart, Member for Montagu, was called in and examined.

Mr. Urquhart withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 12.25 P.M. until 3.15 P.M.

AFTERNOON SITTING.

The Committee resumed at 3.20 P.M.

*Present*—Mr. Bradley, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Woollnough, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Committee deliberated on the preparation of the Draft Report.

The Committee adjourned at 5.50 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Friday, the 11th instant.

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FRIDAY, MAY 11, 1894.

The Committee met at 11.30 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Bradley, Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Committee deliberated on the preparation of the Draft Report.

The Committee adjourned at 1.10 P.M. until 11 A.M. on Wednesday, the 16th instant.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 1894.

The Committee met at 11.20 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Minister of Lands, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Gilmore, Mr. Woollnough, Mr. McWilliams, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Committee deliberated.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works withdrew.

A letter from His Worship the Mayor of Launceston, dated 15th May, 1894, was read. (Appendix D.)

The Draft Report was then considered.

Paragraph 1 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 2 read and agreed to.

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Paragraph 3 read, amended in line 5 by striking out the words "not only" (Mr. Woollnough), and the words "but in preparing the land for settlement by ringing large trees, &c.," (Mr. McWilliams); in line 10 by inserting the words "In some of these districts the preparation of the land for settlement would also probably be justifiable work as improving the value of the Crown estate" after the word "carriage" (Mr. McWilliams), and agreed to.

Paragraph 4, amendment proposed, and Motion made, That the words "Under paragraph 3 your Committee recommend the adoption of a proposal made by the Secretary of Mines that a limited number of men be employed by the Government at Mount Cameron in alluvial tin-mining on certain forfeited sections. Careful inquiry should be made by the Mines Department so as to ascertain whether this plan cannot be extended," be struck out (Mr. McWilliams).

Question put, That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the paragraph.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, Mr. Woollnough, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Gilmore, Noes, Mr. McWilliams.

And so it passed in the Affirmative.

The Committee adjourned at 12:45 P.M. until 4 P.M.

## AFTERNOON SITTING.

The Committee re-assembled at 4 P.M.

*Present*—The whole of the Committee.

Paragraph 4, amended in line 8 by striking out the words "of say feet either" (Mr. Woollnough); lines 8 and 9, by striking out the words "or preferably by the sinking of shafts" (Mr. Woollnough); in line 12, by striking out the words "opening" and inserting "proving" in lieu thereof, and agreed to.

Paragraph 5 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 6. Motion made, and negatived, in line 9, that the words "Your Committee suggest that as an inducement for the early starting of this industry on a large scale, a bonus might be offered for the first 10,000 tons of silver-lead bullion smelted within the Colony within a limited time" (Mr. Woollnough).

Paragraph amended by affixing the words "within a limited time" (Mr. McWilliams) and agreed to.

Paragraphs 7 and 8 read and agreed to.

Schedule, paragraph 9, read and agreed to.

The Committee adjourned at 5:30 P.M. until 11:30 on Thursday, 19th May.

## • THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1894.

The Committee met at 3:30 P.M.

*Present*.—Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Bradley, Mr. Macdonald, and Mr. Mulcahy (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Draft Report was read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Chairman do present the said Report to the House at its next sitting.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.



## E V I D E N C E.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 1894.

WILLIAM SMITH, *called and examined.*

1. *By the Chairman.*—The object of this Committee is, first of all, to make enquiry into the number of public works authorised and not yet proceeded with, with the hope that something may be found to be gone on with immediately to afford some relief to the number of men that are at present unemployed in Tasmania. We have sent for you as being likely to give us what information we require on this point. What is your name? William Smith.

2. What are you? I am Secretary of Public Works. I have not been able to get out the information you require in detail, as, receiving the notice to attend just as the office closed last night, I had not sufficient time, but I have got it approximately correct so far as totals are concerned. The total amount at present available for road and bridge work is in round figures to-day, £60,000. That is under the Special Public Works Acts.

3. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Is that all amongst the urgent works? No. I was going on to say that as soon as the Parliamentary proviso in regard to waiting till the loan is floated is removed there will be about £60,000.

4. *By the Chairman.*—Do you mean that that is the whole balance? Yes, so far as special Public Works are concerned. Under the Crown Lands Act we have, and this also is subject to correction in details, from £70,000 to £80,000. The amount available under this Act is of course subject to compliance with the conditions of the Act in respect to residence and improvements, and before any expense is incurred in any particular district the officer who is in charge of that district has to report that these conditions have been complied with. The only information, therefore, that I can give in respect to Crown lands funds is in so far as it can be prepared in the office.

5. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Is there any of that money due not spent, the conditions having been complied with, within the knowledge of the office? I have no doubt that there are several places where expenditure could go on at once, but I know of none that have been brought under notice that have been deferred in any way. As soon as the Minister is applied to from any district an inspection is at once ordered, and the amount available ordered to be spent if the conditions have been complied with. We do not take the initiative to spend the money, but as soon as it is asked to be spent we then take the necessary steps. That £60,000 is for roads and bridges, under the Special Public Works Act sanctioned by Parliament, subject to correction in details which I am at present getting out. It is exclusive of £12,000 for a special bridge over the Tamar at Launceston. Of the £70,000 to £80,000 under the Waste Lands and Crown Lands Acts, I think you could regard half that sum as available under the terms of the Act for expenditure in the various localities entitled to it, but that could only be determined by an outdoor inspection.

6. *By the Chairman.*—At what do you estimate the amount available? Of course I have no data to work upon, but, roughly speaking, you might say half the amount is available. The inspectors have to examine the lots and see whether they have been improved or resided upon as the Act directs. One Act requires improvements and the other residence.

7. You say, therefore, that there is about £60,000 available for roads and bridges, including what are considered urgent, and about £80,000 under the Waste Lands Act and Crown Lands Act, of which about £40,000 is available, and £12,000 for a bridge over the Tamar? Yes, that is correct.

8. Is there any other money authorised which would be likely to be spent to assist the unemployed at the present time? Not that I know of. There is a sum under the head of "Tracks," but that is not available yet, as we have only voted supplies for the half-year. It is not very much, only about £1000 or so.

9. In the Schedule are there any special works that you think this Committee could recommend the House to go on with immediately with profit to the country? I don't know of any. The items are so small and so scattered about throughout the country that I don't know how you could pick any of them out. The out-door officer, Mr. Helmer, could advise you better upon that point, as he is often travelling about the country. Many of the works are not suitable for the unemployed, and it is only in such cases as forming new roads that we can put them on to work with advantage.

10. What is the general character of the work? Clearing and forming.

11. Are you in a position to inform the Committee as to urgent Public Works that are not in the Schedule? No, Sir, I am not.

12. Have you any information to give the Committee as to the road which has been suggested to the Florentine Valley? No, Sir, that is a suggestion I think by Mr. Counsel, but I am not quite sure on that point. At any rate it has not come before me.

13. It was suggested at one time to continue the railway round to the wharves? There was a proposal to that effect, and a plan was prepared at the time, which I produce. The survey was made by Mr. Mault in 1883, and there was some correspondence in respect to it.

14. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Was that before the Fisherman's Dock was altered? Yes. The Engineer-in-Chief waited on the Marine Board to discuss the matter some time ago, and a letter from Master Warden of the Marine Board to the Treasurer, dated July 18th, 1885, states—"The Engineer-in-Chief attended the Board's Meeting yesterday, when several suggestions were made to him the practicability of which he has promised to take into consideration. Until this is done it is premature for me to enter into particulars. On May 17th, 1889, reporting on the question of gates at the crossing of Macquarie-street, the Engineer-in-Chief stated in a letter—"The relief asked for should in my opinion be given: at the same time I only regard it as a tentative measure, and look for permanent relief (as the Government lines increase the traffic) to a large goods yard on the New Wharf, connected with the Main Line Railway."

15. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Is there any report on the subject from the General Manager of the Railway? Not that I am aware of.

16. *By the Chairman.*—Is there any estimate of the cost of that given? Not that I am aware of. I will see when I return to the office if there is anything of the kind there.

17. There being no report from the General Manager on the question, would you care to give an opinion? No, it is hardly within my duty.

18. Have any applications been made from any part of the country to the Department recommending the opening of tracks for mineral exploration or otherwise? Yes, Sir.

19. Very many? There are not many that have not been already dealt with. Some have been deferred for want of funds, but not very many that have not been sanctioned.

20. With regard to the bridge over the Tamar, that is urgently required, is it not? I believe it is.

21. Is there any intention on the part of the Department to proceed with the matter at an early date? It is deferred by reason of that proviso of Parliament to wait the floating of the Loan. No order has been given by the Minister to take steps in connection with it.

22. Are the plans and specifications ready to be proceeded with at once? Yes, the plans were submitted some time ago.

23. Is it a kind of work that would give employment for local labour, skilled and unskilled? Yes.

24. Is it an iron bridge? Yes, it is.

25. What the Committee really want to know, besides the amount available or authorised, and any suggestion you may offer in regard to new public works, is the very information you don't seem to be able to give us. I refer to any special works that you might recommend to be gone on with at once, with profit to the country and help to the unemployed? I cannot tell you that. The works are so small, being limited from £100 to £250, and so on, that I cannot pick out any. Mr. Helmer is in a far better position to advise the Committee to give information as to what works are suitable to put the unemployed on. He has been putting the unemployed on in several cases where he could get sanction for their employment.

26. What is the experience of the Department in regard to the work done—do you find the contract system better than putting the men on at daily wages under Government supervision? The reports we have had in the office lately have been satisfactory so far as the character and cost of the work done by daily labour is concerned. It gives the office and the inspectors considerably more trouble. Many of the men are unused to that class of work, and require constant supervision. But, on the whole, the reports are satisfactory, both as to the class of work done and the cost.

27. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Can you tell us what amount of urgent works are available? I can give you the exact figures in a little while; but, roughly, I should say about £12,000 to £15,000. The particulars of these works are being taken out now.

28. Under the Crown Lands and Waste Lands Acts there is from £70,000 to £80,000, subject to conditions of residence and improvement, and only probably half of that is available? Yes.

29. Is it not a fact that that money is usually expended so that the settlers in the vicinity of the roads get the contracts: is not that the policy of the Department? We expend it by public tender, and the lowest tenderer gets it, if there is no objection to him.

30. But, as a fact, has it not been as I state? I cannot say it is. The work goes to the lowest tenderer. The selectors do tender, if it is a part of the year during which they are free, and take the work as a rule cheaper than any one else.

31. But is not the sum available for this work looked to by selectors in the localities where it is to be spent as a means of keeping themselves going? That is so, in many cases. We cannot, however, prevent people from travelling the country as they do, when five or six often club together to get work where they can, and they frequently take work cheaper than the local people.

32. As to your remark that forming and earthwork was the principal part of the work done by the unemployed, metal of course would furnish a means of employment? Breaking stones of course would. We have spent about £500 lately in giving relief in that respect in the vicinity of Hobart.

33. Are these country roads to be unmetalled? Many of them. The votes do not provide for metalling in many cases, or only partly so.

34. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—With respect to the Tamar bridge, is there any arbitrary reason why it should be put on the Schedule covered by an amount not floated? It was regarded by the Cabinet when they submitted the Schedule to Parliament as a work that could wait till the floating of the loan.

35. The second section of the loan? Well, the proviso by Parliament did not make any section of it; the idea was to wait until the floating of the loan.

36. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Can you tell the Committee what amount of that £60,000 would be available for such work as the unemployed could be employed upon. Of course a certain proportion could not be utilised for the unemployed, as it means work which they could not do; but such work as clearing

and forming they could do? No; I cannot tell you that just now. We should have to go through each item in the Schedule separately.

37. I only want the proportion? I cannot give you any idea now.

38. Can you tell us generally whether the work done by the unemployed is in any way more costly than that done by the ordinary contract system? I think, on the whole, that it is not more costly.

39. Do you think their work is equally effective with the ordinary contract work? That is a question that would be better answered by an outdoor officer who has the supervision of the work, such as Mr. Helmer.

40. Would it take long to discover, on the part of your Department, how much of the £40,000 available under the Waste Lands Act could be spent in order to satisfy the terms of the Act? To do it properly means the inspection of each particular locality. I have no doubt we could get you the information approximately in the office relating to many of the districts about which we know from office documents. The works under the Crown Lands Act are scattered about so much that while there might be a good round sum due to one district, it might have to be spent in many different places in it to benefit the selections from which it is derived. In many cases, therefore, this would not be suitable to the unemployed, as there would be perhaps £20, £25, or £50 to be spent in one place, and then they would have to go on somewhere else. You can only employ them to advantage where you can get a good round sum for one particular locality. In some of the districts there is such a sum available.

41. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Is there any provision for buildings in the Public Works Schedule? Yes; there is about £30,000 in respect to buildings, including £3500 for the Government Printing Office, £2500 for sundry police and court-house buildings, £2200 for additional buildings at the Hobart General Hospital, £3700 for Launceston General Hospital, £1500 for Kerosene Store, Launceston, and £1300 for Bonded Warehouses, Launceston. Roughly speaking, there is about £15,000 available for expenditure.

42. That does not include any provision for school buildings? No Sir, we have about £5000 for schools at present.

43. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Suppose it was determined to put some of these men on to any of these works, is the Department ready with its plans and specifications? No, Sir, we are not. Some of these works we could put men on at once, but in many of them the Inspector would have to go through and select the route. If you put a lot of men on these works at once it would be only wasting money. It is also not so much the route as the class of work to be done. The Inspector would have to go over the route and see in what way he could spend the vote to the best advantage; and he has to know the whole of the work to be done before he can start.

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JOHN HELMER, *called and examined.*

44. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? John Helmer.

45. What are you? Inspector of Roads for the Southern Division of the Colony.

46. The Committee have asked you to come here to give them some information regarding the Public Works that are on the Schedule and have not been proceeded with yet. We want to know if you can advise us as to the urgency of any of them? I have had the matter under consideration from time to time, and I think I have pretty well thinned out all the votes that are available for the unemployed. Of course there are a number of votes for which you could not employ this class of men,—such for instance, where there is a lot of carting required.

47. We are not alluding to the urgent works alone, but to the whole of them? We have taken some of the other votes as well; they were expended by direction of the Minister.

48. Can you direct us from the Schedule regarding any works which would be of benefit to the Colony which could be proceeded with at once? I think the votes are pretty well all expended, as far as I know. I have had them under consideration for the last 12 months, and all those near Hobart and down to Southport have been expended, including some of the deferred ones. The Minister authorised me to take any votes out that could be proceeded with to advantage, and I did so. I have about 220 of the unemployed at work at present.

49. We wish to know what amounts are available and unexpended? I should suggest that a special vote be obtained for the unemployed; that has always been my idea, whether reproductive or not. Suppose you made a carriage drive to the Springs, if you spent £2000 upon it, it would keep 100 men employed for, say, 5 months.

50. Would £2000 do the work? Yes, I think so. You might make another drive up Mount Nelson—that would cost about £800. Then there is the Derwent Park Estate; you might make a road there. You would be improving Government property, and enhancing its value if the Government were to cut it up for sale as building sites. There are a number of other matters upon which a special vote could be spent to advantage. There are a certain class of people you could not take out of town, as they are unfit to go in the bush miles away from home.

51. *By Mr. Piesse.*—What would the Derwent Park Road cost? About £1000 would complete it.

52. *By the Chairman.*—Are these works you recommend the Government to go on with likely to be reproductive eventually? The Derwent Park Road would be reproductive.

53. In what way? The land is the property of the Government, and it would increase the value of the estate if the Government wished to sell it.

54. Is the road one that would be of value to the Government in the event of their placing any of the penal establishments there? Yes, they would require a road there. The road is, at present, partly made, but it is not complete, from the main road to the estate. It is not metalled.

55. Is there any other road there which the Government could use? There is a road from Risdon, but it is a rough one, and would require to be put in order. By completing the new road you could drive from the main road at Glenorchy to Risdon; it would form a fine new drive, and be an improvement to the property at the same time.

56. Do you know anything about the proposal to continue the railway line round the wharves? No, that is out of my province, and I have not gone into the matter.

57. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Is the road at Derwent Park now in such a state that it can be safely left without fear of deterioration? It might be safely left, but it could not be used in winter.

58. To make the money already spent good, would we not have to spend more money? Yes, £1000 would complete the road right round.

59. Would it be a shorter road for the Government than to go round by Risdon? Yes, it would be shorter.

60. Do you know that land is being sold in the vicinity of the property now? Yes.

61. Do you know the price? About £100 to £180 an acre.

62. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know the Derwent Park Estate pretty well? I have been through there several times.

63. In the event of the Government deciding to build a gaol out there, do you think it would be suitable for building purposes? It is a good building site, being well drained and nice, dry ground.

64. And the new road would be a better route for the Government to the site likely to be selected for the gaol or other establishment of that kind than the present road through Risdon? Yes, it would be shorter. In the event of the Government desiring to sell any of the property this road will directly enhance the value of the land.

65. *By Mr. Piesse.*—How many acres are there in the Derwent Park Estate? 195 acres.

66. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Does that road give the opportunity of draining that country there that the Government had so much trouble with? We have drained a good deal of that country already with this road. We have made a drain on one side of the road 8 ft. wide and 2 ft. deep, to take the surface water from Glenorchy way.

67. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think that by going through the schedule again you could make a selection of works that might be gone on with at once? I arranged with the Minister this morning to send some of the unemployed away to Oyster Cove and Bruny Island.

68. We want you to go through the schedule and select such works as can be gone on with? I have been through it a dozen times.

69. You are not dealing with the Minister now. We want you to give us a recommendation as to any of these works which can be gone on with at once, to the benefit of the Colony? Yes, I can do that.

70. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Do you consider that you have exhausted the deferred schedule? Very nearly, though there may be a few votes left. I have been through both schedules very often, and picked out the works to which we could send these unemployed, and I don't think there are many left.

71. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Is there any work necessary in regard to the sale of the Government farm at New, Town? The streets are made but it was not considered advisable to sell the land, and nothing has been done since. They are just using it as a farm now.

72. There is no opening there for the unemployed? I don't think so.

73. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know anything of the Florentine Valley District? There is some good land there; but unless they were prepared to form a settlement there, it would be no use the Government making a road there.

74. Do you know of any works away from the City that would be suitable for the unemployed? I am sending some of them to the road from Oyster Cove to Nicholls' Rivulet.

75. Is that an authorised road? Yes.

76. Will it open up some good land? Yes; and complete the road right through.

77. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Will that connect with the reserve of 6000 acres the Minister of Lands had some idea of throwing open? No, that is at the Sandfly, in another direction. There is another road I might suggest, at Tyenna. There is a great deal of good land available for selection there, and £1000 spent there would be of great advantage.

78. What is available for the unemployed you are now working? Within the last day or two I have picked out four votes that are amongst the deferred ones. I am sending about twenty men away to-morrow morning to Oyster Cove; and I am going to send a lot to Bruny Island, where there is a small vote of £200, which is on the deferred list too. I have been picking out these votes for the last twelve months, and all the votes round Hobart were expended last winter. The principle we adopt now is piece-work: we mark out a road and let it out in sections. Three or four men take, say, five or ten chains, and we fix a fair price.

79. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—What is Bentley's gang system of contract? It is a New Zealand system, something similar to what I have described. We know pretty well what we can get the work done for, and we supply tools and tents, and pay the men's passages, and we have an officer in charge to see that the work is done properly. I find this plan is better than day work. We find the strong men get together in gangs, and leave the weaker together, and though the latter take a longer time over their work, they get the same amount in the long run.

80. Do the men work well? They have to. If they don't do their work properly they don't get paid. Some of the men are earning good wages, and others very little. If they wish to get a living they have to stick to their work. We cannot help if a man is not used to the work; if he does not earn anything we cannot pay him.

81. Do you find any of the class of men who don't want to work? There are not many of them now. There were some in the first instance; but they are pretty well pushed now, and glad to get anything to do.

JAMES FINCHAM, *called and examined.*

82. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? James Fincham.

83. What are you? Engineer-in-Chief.

84. What we sent for you principally for was to obtain your opinion in regard to the expediency of constructing a continuation of the Main Line Railway round the wharves. There was a proposal to that effect, was there not? The proposition originated with myself asking permission for a survey to provide for such a line when the Derwent Valley Line was first proposed to Parliament, with a view to providing independent accommodation for the Government traffic, with running powers over the Main Line from Bridgewater. The work proposed is in 55 Vict. No. 59, in the list marked "urgent," with an estimate of which I know nothing. It originated, I believe, with some report of Mr. Napier Bell's in connection with the Hobart Station, and the work provided for, as I understand it, is for a siding first of all to get down from the high level of the Main Line, somewhere near the turntable, to the low level near the old Rifle Butts, and by a back shunt to get into the engine shed accommodation; with an extended line that should touch near the end of the Dunn-street Pier. As I understand it, the vote that was put down was for works more immediately connected with the Station accommodation at present than with any wharf service.

85. Do you think such a continuation of the line as I have described would be a source of immediate profit? I would not like to say off-hand that it would pay without having information as to the probable traffic; but there is no doubt that a direct Railway communication between the wharves and the Railway Station would be a great convenience.

86. Do you think the construction of such a line would give much work? No; it would only afford work to a limited extent to the class, as I know them, who are seeking work. It would, of course, give a certain amount of work to platelayers, ballast-men and excavators. A portion of the work provided for has really been done practically without cost by utilising the waste material, when the station yard was enlarged, to raise the level.

87. Do you think such a work would be justifiable as one means of relieving the present distress? It would be of advantage to put in hand any work of which Parliament has approved if any relief could be given by so doing, but I do not know to what extent immediate work could be provided out of this vote. It is possible that some preparatory work might be done. I hardly look upon it as a means of immediate relief.

88. In regard to item 28, £3500, has that rate been expended? I know nothing about the estimate or to what extent the money has been expended.

89. You can give us no more information? No, I have nothing to do with the preparation of the estimates for that work. It was done by the Railway Department.

90. Who would give us the information? Possibly Mr. McCormick.

91. There is an item of £1500 for new engine sheds at the Hobart Station amongst the urgent works? Yes, but no plans have been made yet. It would give employment for carpenters and so on, and no doubt it is a work that is wanted too.

92. There is another item for a goods shed at Jerusalem siding? I know nothing of what has been done on the open line.

93. Don't these plans pass through your office? Nominally the whole of the construction on open lines is under me, because I have to give a certificate of final payment; but I give my certificate by adopting Mr. McCormick's. I leave the supervision of construction to the Railway officers.

94. Do you know the object of the Committee? Yes.

95. Can you offer any suggestions as to meeting the difficulty? No, I have not thought sufficiently about it, I am afraid; but I am strongly of opinion that where work is provided it should be concentrated, if possible. It is, in my opinion, quite useless to think of sending men all over the country to compete with the country unemployed on little works for which £50 to £150 is voted, because the cost of making the arrangements for sending them bears too large a proportion to the cost of the work. It might be possible to design some new road in the neighbourhood of Hobart and Launceston upon which the unemployed might be put with advantage, as the cost of supervision would be reduced to a comparatively small amount, and varieties of work would be found to suit the physical capabilities of the different men.

96. *By Mr. Piesse.*—You think the extension of this line would only give employment to a very limited number of men? Yes; there would be preliminary arrangements to be made first of all, and a good deal of the work would be skilled work of a nature for which, if I may judge from appearances, most of these men seeking employment would be unfitted.

97. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Supposing the extension were carried round the wharves, would it give any relief to the unemployed? You can judge for yourselves. It is a very short distance from the creek to the Dunn-street Pier, and the mere laying of rails and sleepers would be a very small job, and even that cannot be done until the property the line would go through has been acquired.

98. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would the construction of the new bridge over the Tamar take any of the unemployed, or would it require skilled labour? That is a work that I imagine will be let by contract, and the plans are yet to be prepared. It would not take many of the class of people who are seeking for employment now.

99. *By the Chairman.*—Are there not a large number of all classes out of employment? I believe a very large number; and probably those who are the most deserving keep out of sight.

100. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—What do you suggest? Some scheme should be devised for concentrating the work, to avoid frittering the money away by moving these people about for small jobs; any work given should be of a large character. The difficulty should be faced.

101. Do you suggest any particular works? Only in a general way. For instance a road might be constructed from the Fern Tree, keeping well below the Springs, round the slopes of Mount Wellington, to come out somewhere near Glenorchy. It would not be immediately reproductive, but would form a magnificent drive and be a great attraction to visitors.

102. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Do you know the road through Derwent Park? Yes; it is left with a lot of clay forming, and is now quite useless for traffic.

103. Do you think any expenditure on that road is a justifiable item? It all depends on what is to be done with the property.

104. Would not the road make it more valuable? If the Park is to be cut up for sale I have no doubt it would be a justifiable speculation.

105. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—You seem to think the construction of the Tamar bridge would not help the unemployed much? It would be impossible to start it for some time to come, because first of all we must begin by making the working plans. There is only one general plan made, and Mr. Pillinger will remember that, in deference to the wishes of the House that no money should be spent out of the vote, he would not let me complete the working plans.

106. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Was there not an understanding that the Launceston Corporation should prepare those plans? Not that I am aware of. The plans were to be sent up for their approval. But the work, I imagine, will have to be undertaken by contract. The Government could not undertake such work as casting cylinders. That will have to be done by private firms.

107. Won't there be a great deal of masonry in connection with that bridge? Not a great deal.

108. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Then the work could not be of much service to the unemployed? Not immediately. No doubt many good mechanics are out of work, and if everything was ready to go on with at once it would doubtless be of benefit, whether the work was done directly by the Government or by private firms.

109. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—How long would it take to make the working plans? A month or six weeks. There are many excellent draughtsmen who have been out of employment for many months.

110. *By the Chairman.*—There is an amount of £3500 on the schedule for the Government Printing Office, Hobart. Is that a work of urgency? That is a question I cannot answer. It is for the Government Printer to say whether he can go on with the present accommodation or not.

111. Then there are sums for the Hospitals at Hobart and Launceston? The Hospital authorities are the best persons to say whether the work is urgent or not. I cannot give an opinion.

112. Then there is the Kerosene Store and Bonded Warehouse at Launceston? The Kerosene Store was an urgent work at one time, but it is not so now. We proposed building it on the bank of the Tamar near the Cattle Jetties, but now they take up the kerosene to where the dynamite is stored, and we have been to great expense making a metalled road for the use of the merchants, so I do not think it is a matter of great urgency.

113. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Is not the present bridge over the river at Launceston in a very dangerous state, with the timber crumbling away? No, that is superficial only. I have examined the bridge, and I think there are three or four years' life in it yet.

114. *By the Chairman.*—When the estimates were prepared for these various works, were they based on the rates of wages then in vogue, so far as labour was concerned? As far as the buildings were concerned, they would be based roughly on the cost of similar buildings, but the roads are put down in a lump.

115. Could not many of the works authorised here be constructed now at a lower price than was voted for them, so that there would actually be economy in getting them done now? Where the estimates have been based on data calculated on the price of wages no doubt there would be a considerable reduction now. I notice it every week on the tenders that come into the Government.

116. So that there would be a feature of economy in the matter? Yes.

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JOHN HELMER, *recalled.*

117. *By the Chairman.*—Have you prepared the information the Committee desired you to obtain? Yes, I have prepared a list of all the available items in the schedule, which I produce.

118. I see there are five items, representing £950. Is that all you consider you can recommend? Yes, all the others are pretty well spent.

119. This list is so far as roads are concerned? Yes.

120. It is based on the deferred list? Yes.

121. You have not shown any of the works on the urgent list? They are all done or under way.

122. You mean, of course, so far as roads are concerned? Yes. I have at present about 160 men employed in the country districts, besides about 80 in the Domain, stonebreaking.

123. How long do you expect to keep the latter going? They commenced last November twelve months, and have been kept going ever since. We have been working on those items wherever we could.

124. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—How long do you think you can keep on the men in the country districts? We will soon be worked out.

125. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—What has been the average cost? About £200 a week.

126. And you have now about enough money for a month? We have some items not spent yet.

127. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Do you employ the town unemployed on works of that sort? At Hastings and Port Cygnet they are all local men. At Port Cygnet there are 60 men, and at Hastings and Southport there are 30. They would not have any town men at Port Cygnet.

128. Have you prepared a list of other works that you think might be undertaken with advantage? Yes. There are five items, representing £7600. Some of them I have already described.

129. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Will the road to Mount Nelson improve the public estate? It will be a great inducement to visitors, and will engage some of the unemployed near the city.

130. *By the Chairman.*—Would the road from Russell's Falls and Tyenna to the Florentine Valley improve the public estate? Yes. There is something like 15,000 acres of land taken up there.

131. And the road to Port Cygnet? That will open up some very good land.

132. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Will that touch one of the blocks the Surveyor-General mentioned as good land? Yes.

133. *By the Chairman.*—Then there is the Uxbridge road deviation? That was a new road formed, but not completed, and it is useless at the present time. It would take £1000 to complete it.

134. Will that road open up any Crown Lands? It is all through private property, but the present expenditure is useless.

135. What about the road you suggest through M'Robie's Gully to New Town? That is of the same character as the others near the city, to employ destitute people.

136. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Are not those men employed at Port Cygnet and Hastings those who have their homes in the district? They are many of them saw-mill workers, who have little homes of their own; but they have no land cleared.

137. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Would you suggest a settlement at the Florentine Valley? The class of persons in the towns would not be fit to cope with such a heavily timbered district.

138. Could they not go on making the road there, and thus get their tucker out of the Government, clearing their own land meanwhile? I am afraid the distance from market is too great. It is 25 miles distant from Hamilton, which is the nearest town. There is a road to the Florentine Valley which was made 40 or 50 years ago by prison labour, and on which many thousands of pounds were spent, from Dunrobin, but it is now abandoned.

139. Would not the road by way of Russell's Falls open up more good land than that by way of Hamilton? I cannot speak from experience.

The Committee then adjourned.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1894.

CHARLES HENRY SMITH, *called and examined.*

140. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Charles Henry Smith.

141. What are you? I am a road contractor.

142. Do you know the object of this Committee? Yes; it is for the purpose of gaining information as to the best means of giving relief to the unemployed.

143. Have you any suggestion to offer which would be of value to the Committee in regard to any works which might be undertaken with that object? There is, first of all, the opening of a canal through Eaglehawk Neck. Then I might suggest a tramway to the Florentine Valley from the Main Road, about six miles from Glenora.

144. What would be the length of that tramway? That would depend on the way you went into the Valley.

145. I mean one that would reach the heart of the Valley? About 10 miles.

146. Would that be an expensive work to undertake? No, because the material is all on the ground.

147. Do you know the country? Yes; I constructed a track through there. There is very good splitting timber and very good agricultural land in the Valley.

148. Have you any idea of the quantity of really good land that is there? It would be a hard matter to say exactly, but I think there is about 10,000 or 12,000 acres.

149. What would be the cost of clearing? I think the cost of clearing, leaving all the large timber standing, would be about £15 an acre.

150. Would the value of the land be enhanced in proportion to the cost of the tramway? Most unquestionably. The tramway would be very much cheaper than a road.

151. Is there a market for split timber? There is always a market for good timber or good material of any kind, more especially in that district.

152. We have been told that the road to the Florentine Valley should proceed from the end of the Russell's Falls Road, and that would mean 17 miles, or 37 miles in all: how far would the Florentine Valley be from the place you speak of starting from? I should think about 15 miles.

153. From the Main Road? Yes, from the Main Road leading to Ellendale.

154. How far would it be from the Russell's Falls Road to the Florentine? 8 or 10 miles.

155. And what would be the actual length of a tramway to tap the Florentine? About 7 or 8 miles from the nearest part of the main road.

156. Would that tramway be a work which requires much skill? No; and the material is all on the ground.

157. Of course you have no idea of the cost of such a tramway per mile? No, I have not made any calculations.

158. Have you any other suggestions to make? Tracks might be made round the West Coast.

159. Do you know the West Coast? Yes, I assisted to make the overland track to the Ouse from the West Coast.

160. Can you suggest any places where tracks could be made profitably? Yes, from Mt. Lyell to the Ring River, for one; and I think it would be advisable to cut from the present overland track on both sides, for the purpose of opening up the country for prospecting.

161. Is cutting tracks a work that would give employment to very many men? Not very many.

162. It requires men experienced in bush-work? Certainly it does.

163. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Is the route you propose to the Florentine Valley near Marriott's selection? It is in that district.

164. That is not in the Florentine Valley? No, the valley is beyond that.

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EDWARD COUNSEL, *called and examined.*

165. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Edward Counsel.

166. You are Deputy-Surveyor General? Yes.

167. Do you know the object of this Committee? Yes.

168. And we have sent for you to know if you can give us any information which will help us in the matter. Do you think you can do so? Of course this is a very important question, and anything I can say will largely be in the direction of guiding the Committee to further investigation in certain ways. For instance, I could point out plenty of works that would be of great assistance in various districts; but we must remember that we are in a position which may never have presented itself before, and while it used to be a question of how quickly and how cheaply we could get this or that road or public work constructed, it is now a question of how many people can be employed with the least possible loss to the State. It is generally understood that there is a considerable margin between the prices for which public works have been constructed and the actual cost of the works as paid by the State. It will probably be the intention of the Government to construct as many public works as possible under the supervision of the Department under present circumstances, and if there is the large margin I have referred to, that ought to go in some way to reduce the cost of supervision. There is an impression, at any rate, that works constructed directly by the Government cost more than the contractors could do them for, and then I assume the difference between the contractor's profit and the actual cost of the works would go largely towards paying for any extra supervision. Many of the works proposed are of such a small nature that you cannot deal with them in connection with the unemployed, as you have not time to organise a large body of men upon them. There is some land in the Franklin District which requires exploration. I believe from information and reports to hand that there are some 9000 acres of very good land in the valley of the Arve River which can be practically opened up by four or five miles of new road.

169. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Where would it be? Nearly due west from Geeveston. We have a good many reports about this country, which all go to show that there is a very large amount of good land there; but in such places, before actual construction was attempted, it would be necessary to explore further. There is another place about four miles west of Port Esperance, where there are 4000 or 5000 acres of good land as reported by the District Inspector, and a road three or four miles long would open up the best part of it. Coming closer to Hobart, there are some 1000 acres in the vicinity of the Sandfly, nearly south from Longley, which I think attention should be drawn to. It is at present withdrawn from selection; but I understand that it is the intention of the Government to remove the restriction almost at once. It would only require a road three or four miles long to open this land up. Then in the Fingal District there are a number of places where good land exists. South west from St. Helen's there is a large tract of good country which five or six miles of road would render available, and probably result in the sale of a good deal of the land. A track from this country, which is called the George's River Settlement, across to the valley of the South Esk, about 7 miles, would open up further country. Track-cutting, I may remark, will not at any time employ many men, and those employed require to be good bushmen. I think you must concentrate the unemployed on larger works, where you can keep them under supervision, and get a return for the labour which will be fair to the men and the employers. In the Ringarooma District a road could be opened from George's River to Weldborough, which would go through good land. Then again, in the Mt. Horror District there is a large extent of good land; some of it was selected last



year, and will be in grass next spring. About 8 miles of road from Scottsdale to Ringarooma would open up 2000 or 3000 acres of good land, which would be almost immediately available; and again in the vicinity of Mt. Barrow there is good land which would be worth opening up. There is some good country in the Ringarooma District, but road-making there is not generally of an urgent character, because roads are pretty well made up to it. These lands have been largely withdrawn from selection for years in the mining interest. Going round to Devon, the best land is right back from Ulverstone. As far as I can estimate, there are about 5000 or 6000 acres, but a long way from market. There is a made road some 8 or 9 miles to the coast, which has been opened several miles further. West of the river, about 9000 acres of land is shut up at present for want of roads, and there is no chance of progress in this part at present unless roads are made. I am mentioning all these places so that the Committee may understand where to direct further investigation. At the River Blythe there are a few thousand acres; most of this land would necessitate 3 or 4 miles of road-making, on an average, from the main roads. In Wellington, west of the Mt. Hicks road, and about 13 or 14 miles from the coast, there is an area estimated at about 5000 or 6000 acres, which would require 3 or 4 miles of road-making to make it available. Further west, on the east side of the Inglis River, there is another 6000 acres similarly situated as regards roads, and the same remark applies to Flowerdale. South of the Duck River there are about 3000 or 4000 acres. These are all estimated areas, which have been reported to me by the best authorities from time to time, and they may be taken as fairly correct.

170. These areas you mention are not selected, are they? These lands are all unselected.

171. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—There is some good land at Branzholm, I believe? Yes, there is some very good land there.

172. *By the Chairman.*—None of these works would be of immediate benefit. They would require surveying and the preparation of plans and specifications, would they not? Yes.

173. And of course the consent of Parliament too? Yes. But there are some moneys available from the Land Fund.

174. There are some of a much larger character than others? Yes.

175. Would any of these works give employment to a fairly large number of men? Yes, the Arve River road would. It is all dense scrub country, and the road would have to be formed, and portions constructed.

176. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—How far would that land be from a port? About 7 or 8 miles from Hospital Bay, on the Huon.

177. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Would it not be easier to reach this land by striking from the head of one of the timber trams which exist in that District? If the estimate of the quantity of land there is correct, it possesses the greatest advantages for opening up of any place I know, by reason of its closeness to a shipping port. The old trams might be utilised for a portion of the way. There are 4 or 5 miles of road to make.

178. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Would you place this land before the land at Ulverstone? The land at Ulverstone is a long distance back from the Coast. The improvements of selectors extend 20 miles back from Ulverstone. The lands now available on the N. W. Coast all lie back a considerable distance from the shipping. Where roads are made there the land is always taken up and improved. It is a progressive district and good land.

179. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—How far is the land at Duck River from the Coast? About 7 or 8 miles; but there is no great extent of good agricultural land there now unselected.

180. *By the Chairman.*—Would it be better to have a road or a tramway in most of the cases you mention? That is a question that would have to be decided by investigation; a tramway would be best if the land is very broken, but a road would be much more preferable if the country is favourable. A tramway is only a makeshift, suited to mountainous country, while a road is free to everybody. If some investigation is made in regard to utilising the tramways already made, a saving might be effected.

181. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—These tramways as a rule cost about £300 per mile? I believe £300 per mile is a fair estimate for the work.

182. *By the Chairman.*—Generally speaking, the works you suggest would give work to the unemployed, and would be profitable to the Colony? Yes, they would be a good thing for the colony, and would have to be undertaken sooner or later.

183. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—What is the land like at the Huon? It is pretty good land from the reports we have got about it, and there is a large area of it.

184. *By the Chairman.*—Have you any information about the Florentine Valley? Yes, we have had it inspected and reported upon, and the report went to show there were about 12,000 acres of first-class land, and about 6000 acres of second class land there. It was well investigated. It lies some 38 miles from Glenora, 15 miles of which are made, 6 open, and 17 to clear. The cost of making a road there from the present road was roughly estimated at £1700. This would include clearing and forming a road some 10 or 12 feet wide where necessary.

185. That is from the Russell's Falls Road? Yes.

186. And would 17 miles more reach the heart of the Florentine Valley? It is very difficult to estimate the distance exactly, as the country is very broken, but I believe it would from the cleared road.

187. Is any of that land taken up just now? No land has been selected at all west of the Russell's Falls Country.

188. Is it open for selection? No. Most of it has been withdrawn from selection for mining purposes, but there has been no question raised about it, as it would be of no use to any one without a road.

189. Is that such a work as the unemployed could be put on speedily? Yes, there seems to me to be no difficulty in the way. The road is open right up to the place where you would start from, and it is a place where the unemployed question could be tested, as the work is of sufficient extent to employ 50 or 100 men upon it.

190. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Don't you think that works of this character could be carried on at a considerable saving to the Government compared with the cost at ordinary times? There is no doubt that good labour is cheap now all over the Colony. In fact, in the agricultural districts good labour can be obtained for one-third the price it formerly commanded. Men are scrubbing land now on the North-West Coast that used to cost from 25s. to 30s. per acre for from 7s. 6d. to 10s. per acre. It was quite startling to me when I found that was being done. Works of the character of this road could be done at two-thirds, at the most, of what they used to cost.

191. I believe there would be no difficulty in getting really first-class labour for work of this kind at 5s. per day? And the men would be glad to get it.

192. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—How far is the Florentine Valley from the nearest railway station? About 38 miles from Glenora.

193. *By the Chairman.*—Have you not been over most of the mineral fields here in your experience as a surveyor? Yes.

194. We have not come yet to the practicability of putting men on to the mines, but as you are here you might be able to offer some suggestions on the subject? I have no prepared scheme to offer for carrying out such suggestion, but it appears to be feasible.

195. You mean that the State would be justified in making advances to enable mining companies to open up their ground? Labour might be employed on mining leases where the prospects are sufficiently encouraging to warrant assistance being given to the lessees; but the State would have to receive reasonable security in such cases.

196. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Are you acquainted with the western silverfields? I have been through them.

197. Don't you think something could be done in the direction of small co-operative parties working the known lodes there which are not being worked at present; they are purchasing silver ore on the field now, so that no great expenditure would be required to begin with? It seems to me that something in that direction might be done; but care would have to be taken not to infringe the rights of lessees.

198. I mean where land has been locked up and not worked to forfeit the lease? That is a question of administration of another department which I cannot enter into.

199. Don't you think small co-operative parties could work small areas of known silver-bearing country to advantage? I think so. I think it is being done in some cases already.

200. I do not speak of tributing parties; I mean the same as they used to do on the tin mines. They are buying silver ore on assay on the ground at the West Coast, so that no machinery or anything of that kind is required? That is exactly the position the East Coast tin mines were placed in. These small workings did more practical good to the country than any mines ever did, because almost everyone shared in the profit. The work was done by small co-operative parties, and about £20 would start a claim. No machinery was required.

201. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know the Mount Cameron District? Yes.

202. Do you think it would be possible to put small parties of men on there, under efficient supervision, to work the alluvial tin, with a prospect of their earning four-fifths of the wages paid them, and to put a man accustomed to alluvial tin mining in charge, making his position conditional upon his winning, say, four-fifths of the amount necessary to pay the men's wages? Yes, I think it is quite possible. There is a good deal of fossicking being done about Mount Cameron now. There is no very rich land, but the tin is spread over a very large area of ground, and a lot of small mines appear to be paying. With a little assistance I have no doubt a great deal of work could be done there for a long time. It is all open country, and easily worked.

203. Do you know any other tin country in which there is a prospect of such work being carried out? There is Stanley, and the discovery recently made several miles inland from Whale's Head; but I have no definite information to offer in regard to them.

204. What about Mount Heemskirk? I think the tin there occurs principally in lodes, which would require machinery to work.

205. There is another district in the neighbourhood of Mount Horror which is spoken of as likely to yield employment? Yes; there is a considerable quantity of gold and tin-bearing country there, extending right across to Gladstone.

206. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Would it not be decidedly remunerative work for the Government to construct roads and survey the selections before they were sold? Yes; ultimately. The land should be sold by auction, or if that was not considered advisable, an increased price should be put upon it under deferred payments, as at present.

207. Don't you think the saving effected by making the roads before the land is selected, with the additional price you could legitimately charge for the land, would recoup the Government for the outlay they are now incurring in purchasing back land from selectors for the deviations you have to make in your roads? The cost would be considerable in some cases at the outset; but there would be an ultimate saving to the State.

208. Have you found in your experience any considerable difficulty in having to make deviations? Yes. The question of deviations of roads is one of the most difficult matters we have to deal with.

209. Don't you think it would be better for the whole question of road construction if, where you have a large area for selection, the roads were surveyed and laid out, or even constructed, before the land was surveyed and sold? Yes; it is the right principle, and should be adopted as far as it can be. It is the only way to get over the constant trouble of having to alter roads afterwards.

210. Now that we have the question of the unemployed before us, don't you think it would be a proper time to endeavour to introduce the reform? I think it should come hand-in-hand with what is done in the direction of making these roads. Unless the land is, however, first surveyed into allotments, it is not a success, because you may make a road in one direction and settlement may trend in another way.

211. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would not the survey before selection involve delay in the particular matter we have in hand? No, it need not. The road would, I assume, be made before the land is surveyed for selection or sale.

212. *By Mr. Piesse.*—The surveyor does not allow the selector to choose what sort of a block he will put his land into? No; he is restricted to keeping to the cardinal points of the compass.

213. Do you think that would make any difference in regard to selection—are the men averse to having their land chosen for them? I don't think it would interfere one iota, if roads were made.

214. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Is the system I have just referred to one that obtains very generally elsewhere? Yes.

215. All through Canada, America, and the other colonies? Yes, in the other colonies; but, I believe, a different system obtains in Canada.

216. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—This system would mean paying a large amount of survey fees, without any security that you would get the money back? We are in a similar position now as regards selections under the Crown Lands Amendment Act. The great consideration is a road. In places where the land is good it is readily disposed of if adjacent to made roads.

217. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Take the Arve River district, for instance. If that land was available to-morrow, with a road to it, do you think there are men who would be willing to take it up? Yes. I believe there is no good land in this country that you could not dispose of to-morrow if there were roads to it.

218. Would it not be advisable in some way to bring the provisions of the law to bear upon those selectors who have taken up land and done nothing with it? That affects the administration of another Department, which I cannot deal with. In regard to the Florentine Valley there is no doubt that its distance would be a great objection, and that it would have to be used for dairying purposes mainly. If a man selected, say, in the Ringarooma District in January, he could have the scrub fallen and grass on his land by next October. There is a general impression that it takes a long time to get settled in these heavily scrubbed districts, but in one year they could have English grass growing for grazing purposes. If these road works were carried out, the people would soon be settled on the land, where it is suitable.

219. *By the Chairman.*—Supposing Parliament is favourable, would it take long before men could be put on these particular lines of road? No, it would not take much time or expense to put the men on most of them. In many places the country is so well known that they could be put on portions at once.

220. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would the delay be more than a month? In many cases we could mark the lines in a week sufficient to go on with. It would not take long to mark out a road in the Florentine Valley; but the Arve River district is a rougher country, and requires more examination before the best route could be determined. I think the Public Works Department are having a track cut into the Arve River country at the present time.

221. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Are there any other large works on which labour might be concentrated? Those I have mentioned, and what may be done with the mines, are the principal works. There are desirable works that might be undertaken near Hobart, but they are not of an urgent nature.

222. *By the Chairman.*—A road to the Springs has been suggested? A road to the Springs, another to Lady Franklin's Museum, and such works might be undertaken if necessary to find employment for labourers. They would not be immediately reproductive. Although I do not look upon track-cutting very favourably as relief works, still a track might be cut with advantage from Recherche Bay to Cox's Bight, some 20 miles, which would open up a good country for prospecting. There is a lot of land in the County of Kent which is practically unexplored, as much of the country is almost impenetrable.

The Committee then adjourned.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1894.

ROBERT JAMES JOHNSTON, *called and examined.*

223. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Robert James Johnston.

224. You are the Manager of the Anchor Tin Mining Company? No; I am now a tributor there. I have known the Anchor mine about two years, and have been mining there about six months.

225. Are you acquainted with the Blue Tier Country? Yes, but not very well.

226. Your attention has been mostly confined to the Anchor mine? Yes; but I know the general run of the country there.

227. The Committee have asked you to attend here with a view of gaining information as to the practicability of finding work for some of the unemployed at the Blue Tier, either in producing tin at the cost of production, or in producing at something less than the cost of production. Do you think work could be found for men winning tin even if it was done at a loss? Yes, I think so, if there was a pre-

liminary expenditure gone into. So far as the alluvial tin is concerned, the Miner's Right would meet the difficulty easily enough. A man could get a Miner's Right for 5s., and get his bag or so a week of tin ore in many of the gullies in this district; but to make the lode tin available the Government would have to provide reduction works of some description.

228. Would the ground you are speaking of pay, supposing the Government went to such an expense? I think it would pay very well. There are lots of places that would give 3 per cent. of tin, but the trouble is to get it reduced or treated.

229. Would it involve much expense? You could put up a 50-head battery for about £5000, including everything, and a good number of men would be employed in the erection of it, as there are water-races to be cut and other things to be done. But before that could be gone into you would have to have the thing very explicitly defined, and a thorough investigation made by practical men. Before I came down here I wrote to Mr. Davies to get Mr. Hartnoll to appoint me for eight or ten days to investigate the whole thing and get something tangible to work on. He laid the thing before Mr. Hartnoll, but I did not get any reply.

230. When you spoke of the 50-head battery, did you think of any particular mine to put it on? No. There is a great deal of unleased country there that could be worked. The proper way to manage the matter, looking at it in a crude way, would be for the Government to be the reducing power, and let the unemployed bring out the stuff. The wages system with the unemployed is not a good one, and I have always found it more satisfactory to have the payment by results. I had about 500 of the unemployed under me in New Zealand, when I was Government engineer on a railway there, and I found the wages business did not work.

231. How would a combination of the two systems work, say, pay them half wages and half of the results? I don't think it would act; it would require too much management. This is one of those things that requires ready money, and the material should be supplied by what is called piecework, without any responsibility on the part of the Government, so that the unemployed could clear out at any time they liked. That is the principle adopted in other places.

232. What you propose, then, is that the Government should find the capital and erect a large reducing plant? Precisely.

233. And buy the stuff to be reduced from the people who would bring it, paying upon a percentage of the tin won from it? Yes, that is it. That is being done now on a small scale. I have heard that the New Moon Company is crushing tin ore for people at 2s. a ton. It is said to be very good stuff, and pays very well.

234. Could that system be carried out on a large scale? Yes; it is just what I think should be done. The Government should confine themselves to supplying the plant for treating the lode tin, and treat it for any person or combination who liked to get the stuff. There will always be experts of some kind amongst these men, who could do a little blasting-or work of that kind.

235. Would not the work of getting the tin require expert supervision? No, not at the Blue Tier. The work would all be done by open faces; it would be more quarrying than mining. The Anchor mine is simply an immense quarry, 70 or 80 feet deep, and 8 or 10 chains on the face.

236. How many men are there on the Anchor mine at present? 12 lately.

237. Is the number so small because you have not sufficient reducing plant? Yes.

238. What work would be available on that particular mine supposing the Government would reduce the ore? With the 30-head battery there in working order, it would employ about 30 men.

239. Supposing there was a very much larger plant, could you find stuff to keep it going? Oh, yes; there is an inexhaustible quantity of stuff. I do not believe that mine could be worked out in 30 years.

240. So there seems to be any amount of work that would pay expenses, at any rate, if there were appliances for treating the stuff? Yes, if there was a preliminary expenditure. Beyond the initial cost, I think it would be quite self-supporting. That place has not been so far developed at all, except in one or two particular places. There is a New Zealand man there now who is erecting a large plant on the Puzzle claim. I cannot give you the exact particulars, but I believe the work he contemplates will absorb a good deal of labour. Of course in his case he would require the very best of labour; he would not likely have the general run of the unemployed.

241. Are there many men out of employment on the Blue Tier now? A good many.

242. Can you give us a rough estimate of how many? I don't think there are more than 20 or 30 men actually unemployed. These men get into the gullies with a miner's right, and get from half a bag to a bag of tin a week, for which they get from £1 to £2, which pays them very well. The miner's right has been rather useful in that way.

243. *By Mr. Piessé.*—If the Government spent £5000 on erecting a 50-head battery, how many men would it employ? It would not employ more than 50 or 60 men. It would employ about one man a stamp.

244. Are you quite sure about one of the batteries crushing for 2s. per ton? One of the men getting the stuff crushed gave me the information.

245. Could the Government crush for less? Yes; the larger the plant the cheaper the crushing would be. There has to be a certain number of men to look after the concentrating plant, and boys to feed the crushing machinery; and the more you can put through the cheaper it will be, in battery work.

246. With a 50-head battery, at what rate would it pay the Government to charge for reducing? A 50-head battery ought to do about 3 tons per stamp in the 24 hours, or 150 tons.

247. You are supposing it to be worked by water power? Yes.

248. How long would such a plant last? It would last an indefinite length of time. It would require what we call a suit of clothes every year, such as bottoms, and stamp heads, and lots of things, which would cost about 23s. per stamper per annum. I would not advocate anything else but water-power.

249. Do you know of any situations where water would be available for such work? I cannot give you any information on that point. There is plenty of water in that country.

250. Do you know anything about the Full Moon claim in that respect? No.

251. Could your own claim be worked all the year through? Yes, there is a large water-wheel there, 61 feet in diameter, which I regard as a white elephant. The water in the race produced about 15 or 16 horse-power with this wheel, but if it were carried down in pipes and used with a Pelton wheel, it would produce about 80 horse-power.

252. The battery would be employed with three shifts a-day? Yes, for the 24 hours.

253. And, if so, would 50 men suffice to bring material to it? Yes, 50 men would do. They would work in 8 hour shifts.

254. Do you know if there is a plant that could be got at a less cost than you have mentioned that would be suitable for the experiment? There is a 15-head battery belonging to the Full Moon Company.

255. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—A 50-head battery would employ about a man per stamp? Yes.

256. And you don't think there would be sufficient men in and about the district to supply all the material you could crush? Yes, I believe there would be.

257. What we are chiefly confining our attention to now is in regard to something immediate to relieve the wants of the unemployed. How long would it take to put up a 50-head battery? If you carried out all the works energetically, and at the same time, it would take about four months.

258. And you think it would cost about £5000? Yes, but that is a rough estimate. I do not know what length the water-races would have to be.

259. You would not care to contract to do it for £5000? No. There would be the site, the pressure of water, the quantity of water, and a lot of other details you would have to ascertain before you could make an estimate.

260. And about £1 per stamp per annum would be the cost of repairs? Yes.

261. And that would only give employment to 50 men? Yes.

262. You are pretty well sure that if a 50-head battery was erected there are enough men in the district already to provide the material for it? Yes, and you could get it cheaper. The men there are mostly all expert miners.

263. What chance would the ordinary unemployed have competing with these men? Very little.

264. Would they earn 50 per cent. of what the other men would? Probably they might do that. The best way to handle the unemployed would be to put them on some extensive work like road-making.

265. As a practical man would you advise the erection of a 50-head battery, at a cost of £5000, to find employment for 50 men? I would not. I candidly recommend it not to be done.

266. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Do you know anything of the Mount Cameron district? I was there for the Engineer-in-Chief many months.

267. Do you think it would be possible to work the mines there by the unemployed? That is a better field, and there are more gullies, but the water, of course, is against it.

268. But would not the Mount Cameron Race supply it in a great measure? Yes; and it could be extended towards Gladstone about five miles, which would open up a lot of country.

269. Is that an expensive work? £4000 is the estimated cost, but you could do it now for much less.

270. Do you think men could be employed on that field and make wages? Yes; but it would be a mere question of the number of heads of water you could supply. The field is sufficiently rich to pay wages. There are men there who do nothing in the dry season, and work in the winter by conserving a little water in the gullies, who manage to make it pay.

271. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Do you think the system of paying half wages and half by results would pay on the Mount Cameron field? I think the best way would be to give the water and the ground to co-operative parties and let them work for themselves.

272. But if you gave them the water and the land, are there not a lot of men from Derby and Braxholm who would step in and take up the land? Yes, and you would not be able to draw any distinction between them and the ordinary unemployed. You would have to take them as they came. That has been always the difficulty.

273. That is why I asked the question in regard to half wages and half results. I am convinced if you were to throw the land open the whole of it would be absorbed by practical men, who would earn three times as much as the ordinary unemployed and still keep them out of work? Yes, that will always be the case.

274. Do you think that if a low rate of wages, say one half, is paid, and a further payment made on results, that the ordinary unemployed could raise enough tin to quite or very nearly recoup the Government for the half wages? No, I am afraid not, from my knowledge of them. There is nothing to prevent the Government taking the tin and reducing it; they could do that without risk. There are plenty of places at Mount Cameron where tin could be got, but the whole of that depends upon water.

275. But if there were water, would not the whole of the district be worked by local men? Yes, but there seems to be some difficulty there about water at present. The men say they are paying too much for it, but whether that is so or not I do not know. They are paying, I think, 10s. a head, but you may, of

course, reduce that very much now, and enable them to work poorer lands. I believe that nearly all the water is now being used, but Mr. Belstead could inform you on that point.

276. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—What is the percentage of tin at the Anchor mine? I don't think I am justified in answering that question, as it is a private company.

277. I understood you to say it was low grade ore there? I referred to the general run of the Blue Tier country.

278. Would the man whom you say is about to start a plant in the neighbourhood be injured by the Government employing men? No, it would be on a different side of the Blue Tier to where this scheme would be carried out. There would be no clash of that description, but he could take the unemployed, if he liked. I don't think he would be interfered with even if the Government erected a large plant.

279. Speaking of the 50-head battery, would the 50 men it would employ be exclusive of the men required to raise the tin? Oh no, the 50 men would include those required to raise the tin and all.

280. How long have you been at the Blue Tier? I have been there occasionally for the last three years.

281. Is there sufficient water all the year round for all the claims in that country? Yes, at the Anchor mine it is bad for about a month in the summer, but that is with the present wheel.

282. Is there any large work about the Blue Tier which would benefit mining generally, such as the Government providing water in large quantities at a cheap rate, upon which the unemployed could be utilised? No, you would have to provide both water and plant for the Blue Tier. I don't think that water alone would develop anything there. It is a different district to Mount Cameron, which is alluvial, and only requires water.

283. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Don't you think it would be better for the Government to find work for the unemployed in opening up the country by roads rather than on the mines? Yes, must decidedly; it is the only way. The Government could employ far more men, and get a better return for their money.

284. Would not a great majority of the unemployed be quite out of place in mining? Yes, quite out of place.

285. And they would probably starve while learning how to do the work? Yes. There is one thing about the reducing scheme, and that is that it might draw the unemployed up there, and allow them to get into work on the alluvial tin with Miner's Rights.

286. *By Mr. Piesse.*—How would it do for the Government to send men up there, giving the men free passes and Miner's Rights? It would be hazardous.

287. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—But if the work was there, you would not find miners knocking about the towns, would you? No. The men I have knocked off the Anchor Mine lately have all gone away fossicking about the gullies. You might stick the whole of the unemployed on the Mt. Lyell Railway, and let the Government carry it out.

288. *By the Chairman.*—You mentioned about 5 miles of a race that might be made near Mt. Cameron? Yes; I surveyed it for the Engineer-in-Chief, but it was never constructed.

289. Would the construction of that race give very much work? Yes, and would open up an immense amount of tin country. There is 1 mile and 13 chains of syphon across the Ringarooma River, but the open part of the race would employ 40 or 50 men, but not for very long.

290. What is the particular locality of this race? It is a branch of the Mount Cameron Water-race from Edina Hill to Gladstone.

291. Is that such a work as could be profitably done? Yes, it would be good for the country, and it is all surveyed ready for work to be started to-morrow.

292. What is the estimated cost? £4000 I think, syphon and all. The syphon would cost about £1600, and the remaining £2400 you could spend upon labour at once.

293. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Is that estimate based upon the market price of labour, or upon what you could get it done for by the unemployed? On the market price.

294. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—What effect would sending men up there have on the local labour market? No bad effect at all. Of course objections would be raised, but there would be no hardship caused, and it would be the means of opening up a grand field of tin. Mr. Belstead and myself came to the conclusion that the work would recoup the Government when it was no question about the unemployed at all; but simply a question of opening up a large amount of country that would be immediately reproductive. It would be more reproductive now that you could use the unemployed.

295. *By the Chairman.*—Could the pipes required be made in Launceston? You could make them on the ground if you had the punching machine and sheet iron there.

296. Is this a work you would recommend? Yes. There is a man there named Ogilvie, who has a lot of ground, who was depending on this race, and who could have used nearly the whole of the water and given an immense amount of employment. Before you finally decide to carry out the work, you would have to come to an understanding with this and other persons about the land. It would open up a part of the Mount Cameron district that was never opened up before. You will get the whole of the information including my plans, in the Public Works Office.

297. Do you know of any other large works in any district you are acquainted with that might be carried out? No, no really practicable schemes.

GEORGE SIMMONS, *called and examined.*

298. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? George Simmons.

299. What are you? I am Inspector of Roads for the Northern Division.

300. Are you pretty well acquainted with the Public Works Schedule? Yes.

301. Do you know the works which are classed as urgent? Yes, but I may tell you that they are all set out, and very many of them let. There are few items left.

302. What we wanted to know was, in regard to any particular works that are down here on the urgent list which may not have been done at the present time, and any works, on the other hand, which you may consider as being urgent, and which may be gone on with at once? I understand.

303. Have you been engaged by the Government in finding work for the unemployed? We have not been much troubled in the north with unemployed, except in Launceston. We have provided stone-breaking at the Cataract, and on the Launceston to Carrick and Launceston to Perth Roads, and the Beaconsfield Road, where I only put the metal on two weeks ago, and the Launceston Dynamite store, which will be about finished this week. We have provided about 1400 yards of metalling on the Launceston end of the Beaconsfield Road, and 1000 yards at the Beaconsfield end, and there is about 2000 yards at Killafaddy.

304. What we really want to know is, if there are any works of urgency upon which the unemployed could be put in your district? If you send the city men to compete with the local men in the country districts it will only lead to trouble. There are enough men in these districts to do the work themselves; and at Latrobe, for instance, I could set 100 men to work to-morrow if I could find anything for them to do.

305. But we wish to find employment for the Latrobe men as well as for the others? We are spending money all round, and have had no trouble up to date. Many of the city unemployed are unfit for any useful work in the country, and it would be a waste of public money to employ them there.

306. Your opinion, then, is that work in country ought to be confined to the country unemployed? Yes, that is my opinion.

307. And you think there are no public works in the country which would offer any help to the large number of unemployed in the two cities? I don't think so, unless you brought trouble on yourselves. For instance, if you sent any of the unemployed to Ringarooma, you would be only taking the bread away from men already there wanting work.

308. Under these circumstances there is very little use in going through the schedule. You think the work in the country is not more than sufficient for the men already there wanting it as badly? Yes, that is my opinion.

309. From your knowledge of the country generally, do you know of any large areas of good land to which there are no roads at present, and to which it would pay to make roads? Many roads in the country have been grubbed and cleared and have simply grown up again, and to spend any more money upon them would be utter waste. Some of the roads which have been made are now covered with 6 or 7-inch saplings.

310. Are these roads to good land? Yes.

311. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Don't you think the sending away of inexpert men from the towns to the country would have a very serious effect on the local labour markets? Yes, that is what I am trying to impress upon your minds. The members for the districts to which these men are sent will have to pay the penalty.

312. Don't you think that in the districts under your control there are quite enough men to do any of the works there? Yes, and a large surplus. If you sent men from Hobart or Launceston to do the work you would be robbing the local men of their bread. Most of the works in the country are very small, and the greater part of the money would be absorbed by sending the town unemployed there and taking them back again. The country districts would thus not get value for the money.

313. Would it not upset the local labour market altogether? Yes, it would indeed.

314. *By the Chairman.*—The Committee were told yesterday of several large areas of agricultural land which would be immediately saleable if roads were made to them. Do you know any areas of that kind? No, I cannot say I do.

315. Do you know the Mount Horror district? Yes.

316. We are told that there is an area of several thousands of acres of land there? That is one of the places that is not suffering for a road, as the selectors can get along, having nothing to bring out.

317. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—We are told that a road eight miles long would open up thousands of acres of good land? I should say such a thing is premature. In the Belmont district, for example, the road is in advance of settlement nearly a mile, and nothing has been done to the land which has been taken up. If you make these roads they will only grow up again.

318. It was Mr. Woollnough who told us, and his idea is to make a macadamised road? Then you would be doing an injustice to the settled districts, because there are many good farms that have not a chain of metalled road to them.

319. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Would not the making of roads to areas of good unsettled land entail a danger of a rush of people to purchase that land, without any idea of making immediate use of it? Yes; and it would be unjust to people who have already taken up the land and are working it in other districts.

320. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Do you know any districts where selectors are living on the land and improving it, to which there are sums of money due under the Waste Lands Act? No, I do not, during the last three years; since about 1885 or 1886 we have been spending money very rapidly under this Act, and in many cases the conditions of the Act have not been complied with.

321. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Do you not think that a great deal of this trouble would be obviated if the suggestion is carried out that the new agricultural lands should be first of all surveyed and laid out in blocks and the roads made before they are sold—would not that prevent dummyism? I quite believe it would, but it is a large undertaking. Sometimes it is very hard to locate the road through some of the dense forests there are in this country. Opening a road is different from macadamising it. If a man makes a mistake in laying out an unmacadamised road, it can be repaired for about £80 a mile, but if it is macadamised it will cost from £600 to £700 a mile. It is very easy to see where the road should have gone when the scrub is cleared away, but almost impossible while it is there, in many cases.

322. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Could you recommend any works of general utility about Launceston which are not yet authorised? There is a deferred work—a road from Hobler's Bridge to Ravenswood, I think, which might be undertaken.

323. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—What does stone-breaking, when done by the unemployed, cost the department? 2s. 6d. a cubic yard, taking the labour only.

324. What does it cost when done by the stone-crusher? It is 6½d. cheaper. The difference is about one-fifth, and the work is better.

325. Can you suggest any works which might be of benefit to the State? No.

326. Is there any sale for the stone broken in your quarries? No, no one wants to buy any.

327. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Don't you find that well hand-broken stone is better than crushed metal? There is a difference of opinion, but I believe in the crushed metal.

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THOMAS LEWIS, *called and examined.*

328. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Thomas Lewis.

329. You know the object of this Committee, I believe? Yes, I do.

330. The Committee understand that you may be able to make some suggestions which will help them in trying to provide work for the unemployed. Can you do so? Yes, I have a suggestion to make, but it is a question whether the Committee could deal with it, unless there was an Act provided, on the lines of a Boundary Fences Act; my idea is this: In the country districts at the present time we are terribly plagued with rabbits, and whatever we may do they still keep increasing upon us. There are a number of fences in the country which are called boundary fences, but they don't keep back the stock as they should do, and serve as harbours for rabbits; I refer to what are called dead-wood fences. All these dead-wood fences should be swept away; and my idea is that the Government should come forward and lend the pastoralists money to enable them to put up wire fences, and wire netting fences, charging them a certain rate of interest. There are a large number of people at the present moment who would gladly go in for wire fences and wire netting, but have not the means to find the necessary capital, and if the Government could see their way clear to advance the money, all the owners of property could be got to mutually agree to repay the principal, with interest at a fair rate, say 5 per cent. The Government obtaining the wire and wire netting in large quantities could supply consumers at lowest prices. This scheme would immensely benefit the country, and would give a large amount of employment. In the country at present, as well as in the towns, there are a great number of persons who actually do not know how to live, being in very straightened circumstances, and this scheme would give a large amount of employment during the coming winter. It could be gone into immediately, because the wire and netting and everything necessary could be got at very short notice, if it is not in the country now.

331. Our object, of course, is to provide work for all the unemployed, as far as we can, in the towns as well as in the country? There is a great deal of distress in the country at present, and there will be more during the coming winter, because the people have really nothing to turn to. A good fence of the kind I have described will cost less than £50 a mile, and 100 miles would not cost much, and would do a great deal of good.

332. Do you think the Government ought to take a step of that kind? I think it would be a national benefit, as the rabbits are at the present time an immense tax on the farmers and pastoralists. It would prevent the unemployed in the country seeking the towns to look for relief from the charitable institutions.

333. Is it a work which would require a great deal of skilled labour? No. It would just mean putting in posts and stretching wire. I know one small farmer who had a small paddock of lucerne; he did not look at it for some days, and the rabbits ate it as bare as a road.

334. According to your proposition the money would not be spent by the Government? No, that would not do, because the Government would in that case have to appoint people to overlook the work. By my proposal you make those who are finally to pay for the work be their own overseers.

335. The farmers really would eventually have to pay the money? Yes, it would be only given to them as a loan.

336. Do you think such a proposition would be acceptable to them? I have hesitated a good deal as to whether you will not require an Act of Parliament to compel the people to do so, and to make the principal and interest repayable on the system in force in Building Societies, so that they would become free in the end. The country at large would thus benefit, and the Government would not be put to any loss.

337. Don't you remember that a Boundary Fences Bill was brought in and thrown out? Yes. There were parties in the country who no doubt influenced Members by saying they had not the means to do the work, but under my proposal the money would be found for them at once, and they would be given time to repay it.



338. Do you think the farmers and others concerned would be willing to accept this without compulsion? I cannot answer that; I know parties who would, but their next-door neighbours might not.

339. Do you think this would be a safe investment for the Government? There again they must come in with an Act of Parliament to compel people to carry out their obligations.

340. You say the position of the unemployed in the country will be worse during the coming winter? Yes.

341. And you think that under the circumstances the Government would be justified in stepping out of its way to give something in the way of extraordinary assistance? Yes, during the coming year. There are a large number of small farmers, and prices are very low for grain and wool, and I am afraid very many of them have anticipated the coming crops. They won't be able to employ labour, but if they were able to do so in such a way as this, which would be of such immense benefit to them eventually, they would be disposed to enter heartily into it.

342. *By Mr. Piesse.*—Might not a large area of country, including a large number of farms, be fenced in this way, and the rabbits thus kept out at a less cost? Yes; that was suggested last year in the Boundary Fences Act. It would give a large amount of work, and the Government could eventually recover the cost with interest.

343. Would it not enhance the value of property? Oh yes, very much. Last year the suggestion was that the Government should do it as a national work; but by my plan the money would be advanced only by the Government, and eventually repaid with interest.

344. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—I understood you to say that many of the pastoralists desired this proposal. Do you know of your own knowledge that such is the case? Yes, from my own knowledge a number of pastoralists, and small farmers as well, desire it.

345. Do you think the work you suggest could be done wholly by the unemployed in the different districts? Yes.

346. Would you propose to force every small farmer to put up a rabbit-proof fence? Yes, except in districts where there are no rabbits, such as the Huon and the North West Coast.

347. And you would propose to have an Act to render this compulsory? Yes, and to do away as quickly as possible with all the deadwood fences in the country. It is true the making of these fences helps to clear the timber off the land; but it would be far better to burn it all at the beginning, as they become simply breeding-places for rabbits. In portions of the country people cannot get a burn-off because they are afraid of setting fire to these deadwood fences.

348. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—The system you propose is very much like the law that exists, or did exist, in New South Wales? Yes.

349. The Government there, I believe, advanced the money to any man who wished to put up a rabbit-proof fence? Yes. There has been a recent Act passed compelling people to put up fences of this kind. There is an immense fence now between New South Wales and Queensland.

350. From your practical experience do you think your proposal would considerably increase the value of the crown estate at the same time? Yes, because it would do away with the rabbits. We are at the present time bringing up children to be rabbiters, with the most demoralising effects. They take the rabbits out of the traps, knock them on the head, and skin them while they are scarcely dead, thus increasing the organ of destructiveness; and it is not well that the children should go out mixed up, boys and girls, as they do. They are little, if any help to their parents, and cannot be got to work on the farms.

351. You mean this to apply as an ordinary loan, the repayments to extend over a number of years? Yes, so that the State will not do the work without any return.

352. And you would make it compulsory on all the rabbit-infested districts? Yes, that is all I wish personally to see done, because you don't want the wire netting where there are no rabbits. Mr. Downie, who has had this fencing in use for some time, has found it very successful, and he has largely increased the quantity of his wool and the quality of his stock generally. The man who has no rabbits on his land must necessarily be in a much better position to pay his way than his neighbour who has to carry on under this terrible scourge.

353. Don't you think there are enough unemployed in the country already to do any work that may be undertaken there? I would not like to say that exactly. There are no doubt many men in the country accustomed to bush life who cannot get a living at present, and are a heavy tax on owners of property, as they are tempted to go loafing about and become sheep-stealers.

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FRANCIS BELSTEAD, *called and examined.*

354. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Francis Belstead.

355. You are Secretary of Mines? Yes.

356. Do you know the object of this Committee? Yes, in regard to finding means to relieve the unemployed.

357. There are some matters concerning your Department about which we require information. In the first instance, Mr. Johnston, of the Anchor Tin Mining Company, spoke this morning of a branch water-race he had surveyed from Mount Edina to Gladstone, and he told us that it would give employment in its construction to a large number of men, and open up a great deal of mineral country. Can you give us any information as to that? Some two years ago the Mount Cameron Water Board were desirous of bringing the water from the present Mount Cameron Water-race to the western side of the Ringarooma

River. They employed Mr. Johnston to make a survey and find out what the cost would be, and to take the levels and see what country the race would command. Mr. Johnston made his survey, and estimated the cost at between £3000 and £4000. We then got Mr. Montgomery, the Government Geological Surveyor, to examine the country and see whether it warranted such an expenditure, and the conclusion that the Board came to, after going over the ground themselves, as well as having the two reports before them, was that the cost would be too great. The Board were further influenced by reason of the Esk Company, a private Company, having gone to a great expense in putting up pumping works on the other side of the river, and their works commanding a great deal of the same country our proposed race would have covered. We did not think it right for the Government to enter into competition with a private company. Our chief reason was, in point of fact, that the work would not warrant the expense it would entail.

358. Do all those reasons hold good still? Yes.

359. Is there not a good deal of tin country round Mount Cameron not being worked at present? Yes.

360. What is the reason of that—is it because the land is held under lease, or because there is not a sufficiency of water? A good deal of the land is held under lease, and a good deal of the country the present race does not command. There is not much of the land that is leased or to which water is available that is not being worked if it is worth working. The ground generally is poor.

361. Mr. Johnston spoke of some tin sections which are held by Mr. Ogilvie which would be commanded by this extension? Yes; but he has lately made arrangements to bring water at his own cost to his sections, and he will be working them in the course of a few weeks.

362. Have you not had under consideration in your Department the question of sending men to the Blue Tier? Yes.

363. And what has been the result? The result is that we have found there would be no work suitable for them there, unless a large expense is incurred by the Government.

364. Would the Government be warranted in going to that expense? The Government appear to think not. The work contemplated was to acquire the New Moon mine and battery, which is a 20-head one at present, and add another 50 or 60 stamps to it, and crush for all the men who liked to go out and get tin ore. It was found that it would cost from £20,000 to £30,000 to do that, and the stone, according to Mr. Montgomery, would leave the very barest margin for profit. It has been worked there by several companies without any margin of profit whatever, and of course Government works would be more expensive. Another very important element in the matter is that it would employ so few men. You may estimate roughly that it employs a man per stamp. It would also require a certain amount of skilled labour on the part of the man getting the tin, and if a man did not know how to do it he would not earn his salt at it. The matter was fully gone into by the Ministry, and they referred to Mr. Montgomery and myself, and we fully concurred in our views without having had any previous conversation.

365. Has Mr. Montgomery given a written report on the subject? Yes; I called in to get it as I was coming down, but the Minister of Lands was away, and it was locked up. It can be obtained by the Committee.

366. From your own knowledge, then, you do not think much could be done for the unemployed by putting them on the mines? I am afraid not. I have thought over the matter seriously for a long time, and in every way, and I do not see any way in which a large number of them could be profitably employed. Men who understand mining might be given a Miner's Right and means to get into the country, and here and there they might possibly do well, but it would require some degree of knowledge.

367. Have any suggestions been made to the Department lately in regard to cutting tracks? Not recently. Of course from time to time tracks are suggested, and are executed, as far as the means at our disposal allow.

368. I suppose the means are very limited? Yes, very limited.

369. Do you think there would be any prospect of opening up any good mineral fields, especially alluvial ones, if tracks were made? I don't know anywhere where such a result would be likely, where the work is not already done, or is being done by degrees.

370. The country between Mt. Reid and Mt. Lyell was mentioned to us, in a letter from Mr. Young, as being likely to give returns in gold and tin, if it was opened up? That is only probable, we have no definite information about it. The whole of that zone is a mineral country, and there is nothing like cutting tracks in it to open it up, but the difficulty is that the money is not available. It would be a speculative track. I don't know the locality at present that you could put your finger on and say with any degree of certainty that it would be likely to be productive.

371. From the reports you get in the Department, do you think there is a sufficiency of roads on the West Coast now for the proper development of the mines there? Not nearly a sufficiency. Several thousands of pounds could be spent there profitably.

372. Have you had any representations made to you in regard to the road to the Stanley River? Yes.

373. There is a small vote for that work? Yes, it has been assisted in one way or another.

374. Has that assistance been sufficient to make the road at all fair? No, undoubtedly not. There is a difference of opinion I have heard as to the route of the road, as of course there are conflicting interests. The Zeehan people want all the traffic brought into Zeehan, but the true interest is that the road should be taken to the landing on the Pieman River. A road somewhere there would be of great advantage, there is no question, and the same remark applies to North-east Dundas. There is something being done there now, but of course not what ought to be done, or what the field would stand.

375. Do you think the Government would be justified in spending a few thousand pounds on the West Coast now? Yes.

376. And it would be reproductive almost immediately? Yes.

377. You are speaking, I suppose, regarding the known mineral fields? Yes, not the prospective ones.

378. Have you any further suggestions to offer which you think would assist the Committee? Well, of course, in common with the rest of the community, I have formed my own idea upon the question. My view would be to select a piece of good ground, and put men on to clear it, and then sell it when cleared. As to village settlement in the wild bush, it is hopeless; but on cleared land people could raise something at once to keep them going. There are pieces of land where such could be done, there is no doubt.

379. We have been told of several areas of agricultural land to which there are no roads? Road-making would be part of the business.

380. It was pointed out to us that in making a road through heavily timbered country it was a difficult matter to select the best route, and a waste of money often occurred through the wrong route being taken? That has occurred everywhere, and must of necessity occur, but the road need not be a permanent one. Only a way in and out would do in the first instance.

381. And do you think that land cleared like that would find a ready sale? Yes.

382. Would you propose selling it on deferred payments, that is, under the Land Act? Yes, though I would increase the upset price.

383. Would it command such a price as to cover the cost of clearing? Yes, if it were properly managed and looked after.

384. *By Mr. Piessé.*—With regard to the Blue Tier, I suppose your opinion is the same as that I formed three or four months ago, that there is very little opening for the employment of many men? Yes.

385. And you have had the matter continually in your mind? Yes, it is not a hasty conclusion I have come to, it has been forced upon me.

386. And the outlay of £20,000 to £30,000 would only mean the permanent employment of 50 or 60 men? Less than a hundred men, at the most.

387. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—I have an impression that the country round the East Coast has been largely dummied, and that the labour clauses are not being carried out? That occurs all over the Colony.

388. Do you think if the labour clauses were enforced that it would lead to a lot of these claims being abandoned, and thus allow them to be worked by a lot of men who are idle now? No, I do not think so.

389. Are there not claims not being worked now upon which men are practically prevented from going? Yes, here and there, but in such a case all a man has to do is to make application for the forfeiture of the lease; the matter is enquired into by the Department, and all the circumstances weighed, and if it is a fair and proper thing that the land should be forfeited, the application is acceded to, and the applicant for forfeiture gets the ground.

390. Don't you think it would be better for the Department to forfeit the land themselves, where they know the labour clauses have not been carried out, rather than waiting for some one to give information? We should have to have a much larger staff to enable us to do that. The matter has been well considered for a long time, and as far as I know there is no better or more practical way of dealing with the question than that now in force.

391. Do you suggest that the roads you were speaking of on the West Coast should be macadamised? Oh, no.

392. *By the Chairman.*—How would tramways do? There is no doubt that trams are the best style of conveyance in rough and difficult countries.

393. Would the same thing apply to the East Coast? No, roads would be best there, as there is so much material at hand.

394. Do you know any places on the East Coast where it is desirable to put roads? No, not to any extent.

395. In regard to clearing the land, do you think the present is a suitable time to begin? It is not a suitable time of year, but there is much that might be done in the way of preparation: the large trees might be rung, and so on. As soon as the land is determined upon you might begin the road.

396. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Are there not men in the North-eastern District now working the land wherever they can get water? Yes, there are a good many men working wherever they can get water; but over and above that there are places open for working still—about the Mount Cameron District, for instance.

397. Don't you think that most of the land in that locality is worked whenever water can be got? Yes.

398. And if the land there was forfeited could anyone be able to work it when the price of tin comes below a certain figure? No. Some of the best claims are shut up, waiting until tin rises in price.

399. And even when the land is dummied, is it not worked whenever water and the price of tin make it profitable to do so? Yes, generally speaking. There is very little land dummied about Mt. Cameron, as I found when I came to make enquiries. There may be cases here and there where the land is not worked.

400. Do you think it would be possible to let very small areas to co-operative parties on the silver-fields to mine the lodes, as they are now purchasing galena on the coast? Yes; but there is no reason why they should not take up the ground for themselves. Under the new mining regulations any quantity of land, even a quarter of an acre, can be taken up.

401. There is no obstacle in the mining regulations to prevent men doing so? No. The alleged obstacle is that there is a great deal of land held and not worked, and that many of the mining companies have too much land, but that even is passing away, as the mines are adopting the system of tributing.

402. Do you think it would enable men to get work if some of the companies were compelled to either work their land or resign it? In some cases it would, where there are large areas of land held; but in others, of course, there may be only a strip of land, where the lode is, that is capable of being worked.

403. Do you think it would assist those who are unemployed in the mining industry if the companies holding large areas were compelled to work them themselves, or allow others to do so? Yes, I think it would, undoubtedly.

404. Do you think it would be advisable to send the general run of unemployed into the mining districts? No, I think there are unemployed enough in most of them as it is.

405. Taking the mining fields of the Colony as a whole, do you not think there are more than sufficient men on them now to work all the available land? Yes, I think there are sufficient men. I do not mean to say there is not room for any more.

406. In most of the mining centres there are a considerable number of men out of work now? Yes.

407. And to send men out of the towns to them would be simply adding to the distress already existing? Yes, especially if they were unskilled men.

408. *By the Chairman.*—You know the Mount Lyell Company is asking the Government to guarantee their debentures; don't you think it would be far better for the Government to construct that line themselves? As a matter of personal opinion, I think so. If the country is to guarantee the money they ought to do the work.

409. Do you consider the work justifiable? Yes, undoubtedly.

#### EDWARD COUNSEL, *recalled.*

410. *By the Chairman.*—Have you brought down the plans of the localities mentioned by you yesterday? Yes.

411. It has been suggested to us that, in making roads through heavily-timbered districts, there was a great danger of the best route not being always chosen. What is the nature of the land at the Arve and Florentine Valleys? In respect to the Florentine there would be no risk of that kind whatever. The road has been opened a considerable portion of the way, and a track has been marked right through. We know the point at which to cross the dividing range; and there would be ample time to lay the road out in advance of the workmen engaged upon it.

412. Would it be a macadamised road? Not for the whole of the way; in some places it would be better to corduroy it; in places where stone is available it could be metalled, but in others nothing will be done but to open and form it. There is a good road for 15 miles from Glenora, and five miles more of it is opened, leaving 17 miles to make to get into the Florentine Valley. In regard to the Arve, I do not think there is any great risk of not choosing the best route.

413. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Is there not a belt of timber and then a button-grass plain before you get into the heavy timber of the Arve again? I am not aware of it, but there are people in the district fairly well acquainted with the country. The danger of badly locating roads is one of the difficulties caused by the system of selection before survey; and it is not much improved by laying the road out first unless the land is surveyed into blocks, because people may not take up the land where they are expected to. One of the advantages of the system I propose is that the main road, at all events, will not need to be altered afterwards. The system that is at present in vogue here is that selection precedes the roads, and that is largely the cause of all the difficulties you have mentioned. The system of making the roads first would be more expensive at the outset, but it would be infinitely better than the present one where large areas are being opened up. I believe this is the opinion of the highest authorities on land settlement in all the colonies.

414. *By the Chairman.*—Mr. Simmonds pointed out to us that in many places where roads had been made, they had all grown up again with scrub? That may be so on some of the small branch roads, but it is not the case to any great extent in any part of the Colony, so far as I am aware.

415. We have also been told that in many places where roads have been made the land has not been taken up, or nothing done to the selections? I think most of this land would be found to be private property.

416. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Mr. Simmonds said that the Mount Horror country was so heavily timbered that a surveyor could not be certain that he was selecting the best route? I don't think that country presents insuperable difficulties; it is a question of time in laying out the road.

417. *By the Chairman.*—I suppose, as a matter of fact, these risks are unavoidable? Not if sufficient time is taken to explore the country.

418. Would the road to the Arve go through much country that would not be taken up? I don't think there is much of that country inferior; but, of course, there must be some waste land.

419. Would you recommend the Government to clear some of that land and sell it? I would not at the present time. Something of the kind might be done in the season by way of experiment.

The Committee then adjourned.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1894.

ALEXANDER MONTGOMERY, *called and examined.*

420. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Alexander Montgomery.

421. What are you? I am Geological Surveyor and Inspector of Mines.

422. You know the object of this Committee, I suppose? Yes, I understand it is to investigate the probability of the unemployed finding work of a profitable character on the various mining fields, and to devise means to assist them generally.

423. We have sent for you to get some information in regard to the various mining fields. It has been suggested to the Committee that work might be found for a large number of men at the Blue Tier mines, supposing the Government were to provide the reducing plant. Can you give us any information on that subject? I am afraid the idea is not practicable. I have given the subject my consideration for some little time, in fact at the request of the late Minister of Lands, and I find the position is something like this:—There is any amount of work on the Blue Tier, only it is not immediately available. It is a very fine field, and one that in course of time, and with large expenditure, will come to be a very valuable place, but I don't think there is any opening to put on men just now, even if the Government were to put up a large battery. Supposing they were to put up a 100-head battery, it is not likely to employ more than about 100 men, which would not be of much value under the circumstances, and even then I don't think a Government battery could be made to pay. The Blue Tier deposits are generally very poor, and it would be a matter for very careful management, both in the mine and the battery, and very careful business management also, and it would be extremely difficult to get that under Government control, I am afraid. The mines working there at present have really made a desperate effort to make the deposits pay, and are working in the cheapest possible manner. It has been demonstrated that with rather larger plant, say from 80 to 100 stamps, there would be a great probability of the field paying, but such a result could only be obtained by the mines getting all their arrangements to save labour as much as possible. Labour-saving machinery is what is wanted there, rather than men.

424. Supposing the Government would be willing to take the matter up and erect expensive machinery, would the prospect of return be good enough to make you feel warranted in recommending it? That requires consideration, as so much depends upon the conditions of the aid given by the Government.

425. There is very little alluvial ground there, I believe? Very little.

426. Is there much alluvial ground available at Mount Cameron? Not much. Most of it is held already.

427. Is it being worked? A good deal of it is being worked. There is some ground that ought to be worked that nothing is being done with; but there are very often good reasons for its not being worked. Sometimes the ground is not really get-at-able.

428. Is there any ground at Mount Cameron which might be worked at a slight loss, where the men might win as much tin as would nearly pay their wages, for instance? No doubt there is, but it is extremely difficult to say what the ground will turn out. The ground varies so much that I really cannot say whether it would turn out well or not.

429. You say there is ground up there prospectively profitable that is not being worked at the present time? Yes.

430. And that ground if worked would find employment for a good many men, I suppose? It would, no doubt, but it requires water, and the water in the Mount Cameron Race, the only available source of supply, is nearly all taken up.

431. Was it not suggested to continue the Mount Cameron Race? It was proposed to bring a branch across the Ringarooma River to the western side to supply the claims round Gladstone, but these are now mostly being supplied by the successors of the Esk Company, and I don't know of any quantity of ground worth speaking of on that line that is not already taken up or being worked. The Ogilvies' are bringing in a race across the Ringarooma at the present time.

432. Do you think there is sufficient inducement to construct that branch race? No, I don't think so, as the water is all being used up where it is now.

433. Do you know anything of the land in the vicinity of Mount Horror? No, I have not been there at all.

434. Can you make any suggestions with a view to finding men work on any of the mining fields, even if the work were not exactly of a profitable character? I have turned the matter over in my mind very carefully, and I don't know of anything at any place where men could be sent with any reasonable chance of success. The places most likely, now winter is coming on, are the goldfields on the West Coast. There are certainly creeks there where men who understand the business might make a living, but I am afraid that the average of the unemployed about the towns would simply starve. If a few of the men who understand mining were given means to get round to the West Coast goldfields they might make a living.

435. Are there sufficient tracks on the West Coast to enable men to get access to the known fields? Oh, yes, the place is ramified with tracks.

436. There is a stretch of country between Mount Lyell and Mount Reid which we are told is practically unexplored. Are there tracks there? There are no tracks between Mount Reid and Mount Lyell.

437. Would you recommend tracks to be made there? I think it would be a very good thing indeed to make tracks to open up that line of country from the north end of Mount Reid towards Mount Lyell.

438. Do you think that the opening up of that country would probably give employment? I think it is very likely to do so.

439. We have also been informed that there is good country at north-eastern Mount Reid that is not opened up? That would be towards Mount Murchison; I do not know that country at all. I understand that there has been one very good find reported at Mount Murchison. A great deal of the country to the east of Mount Reid is open country, where no tracks are required, except here and there through little belts of scrub.

440. Would you be disposed to recommend the relaxation of the Mining Regulations to allow men to get on to the fields without expense—you know what they are doing in the other colonies, sending men to the mining fields and giving them Miners' Rights, and in some cases even finding them in tools? I think if men of the right stamp, fairly young and active and able to bear hardship, wanted to go to the West Coast fields, it would be a very good thing to give them a fortnight's tucker and a miner's right each and help them to get round there.

441. Have you any other scheme to suggest other than that you have just spoken of? No.

442. You were asked to consider the matter by the late Minister of Lands? Yes, I wrote him a letter on the subject.

443. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Are there not enough unemployed men on the different fields now to do any work that may be found on them? There certainly are a good many men unemployed about the different fields.

444. In opening these tracks are there not actually *bonâ fide* miners capable of going into the country on the fields now? There are a good many, only men get discouraged from going out, as there is no certainty of making a living.

445. Do you know of your own knowledge that there are many mines which have stopped work because they were not quite paying their way under the existing rates of wages, and which, if resumed by the Government and worked at the unemployed rate of wages, would pretty nearly pay the cost of the mineral obtained from them? The mines on the Blue Tier might, the Full Moon more than any other I know of, but skilled miners would be required to do the work.

446. Are there not 200 or 300 skilled men round the East Coast living from hand-to-mouth? Yes, that is so, I believe.

447. Do you know of any mine now stopped that would provide work for these men under the circumstances I have mentioned? There are the Full Moon and New Moon mines.

448. Do you know of any others? There is the Anchor mine, but I think that is being worked on tribute now.

449. Don't you think it is a great hindrance to the development of our mineral fields when mining companies won't work their land because it does not pay, and won't let it on tribute on fair tribute prices? It may be their attitude, but it is never their expressed attitude to my knowledge.

450. Do you know of any mining companies that have taken up that position? No, I do not know of any.

451. I have a telegram here, which I got this morning, which mentions four companies which have taken up that position—the Gate Extended, the East Gate, the Morning Star, and the Boys? It is a matter of the circumstances in each particular case. If you ask the companies their view of the matter they will probably say the tribute will not pay, or something of that sort. It is a commercial matter between them and the tributors. As a general rule the companies are only too glad to have their mines worked without their being put to expense themselves. There are many mines that have spent a good deal and are merely waiting for a favourable opportunity to make an effort; and it would be a very great hardship on them to take their land away because they have spent their money unsuccessfully.

452. Are not many of these mines waiting until they can get labour at the same price that the Government propose to pay the unemployed?—here are four cases which would employ 20 or 30 men if the mines were let on tribute? When I last saw these mines the Boys was the only one that showed any likelihood of being of any use to tributors, but to get any ground open they would have to sink another level; that was the difficulty which made the Company stop. The East Gate and the Gate Extended have done a lot of work since I saw them, but I think they would have to sink a main shaft and go to a considerable expense before the ground would be open to tributors. I don't think, from my knowledge of these companies, that any of them are in a position to let their properties on tribute. My information about the district is not very recent, certainly.

453. I have another communication from the Blue Tier which states that there are two or three hundred men unemployed about the district; can you make any suggestion to meet that difficulty, as it is actually the class of labour that is wanted? There is a probability of that district employing a lot of men successfully if they once get started.

454. What would be the amount of money necessary to do the dead-work, say at the Full Moon Mine? At the Full Moon there would not be less than £40,000 or £50,000 required. It is a most awkward place to open up, as you would require a battery, water, pumping plant, and many other things. There is no use whatever touching it on a small scale. At the New Moon mine, where expenses were cut down in every possible way, it was found the actual returns were just a little under what would pay expenses. The stone was delivered at the battery at a cost of 2s. to 2s. 3d. a ton, and it cost about 4s. 6d. a ton to crush and concentrate it. The total expenses ran to about 7s. per ton. The exact figure is given in one of my reports.

455. Do you think £70,000 or £80,000 would be a justifiable expense for the Government to go to? The expenditure should take this form first of all,—that the large deposits should be proved to some little depth. The best way to do that would be to use one of the Government diamond drills, and prove the ground to the depth of 100 feet or so. By doing that you could value, with something like certainty the quantity of stuff available. These tin deposits at the Blue Tier have, in some cases, gone out rather

suddenly, as at Cream Creek for instance, which gave rather a good show at first, but when they came to take the stuff out they found nothing underneath. The deposits are in floors, one above the other, and in order to be able to put up large machinery with some confidence, it is absolutely necessary to prove the ground to some depth to show that there is really the large quantity of ore there that we anticipate. I think there is very little doubt that the tin does exist, and that it will be found at a good depth, but before spending a large sum of money the ground should be proved.

456. Would it not take some time to do that work? Yes, but it would take more time to do it in any other way, such as sinking shafts for instance, which would be better, but more expensive.

457. Would you advise that work being done by the Government on any private claim, or a claim being taken by the Government from any of these companies who are not now working? That is a matter rather for you political gentlemen than for me. Personally, I do not believe in the Government undertaking these things.

458. Would it be wise for the Government to take any one claim, say the Full Moon, or anyone that would fairly command, from the surface show, success, and work it in the interests of the unemployed? The Anchor mine is the most promising of all at the Blue Tier, and has paid at times even with the present plan of working, and is in the best position for working. It would be the most likely to do good to the district.

459. Is it a large deposit? Yes, it is a very large deposit. I don't think it could be acquired by the Government. The next best mine, the Puzzle, is also being tried, and there is a man building a foundry at George's Bay to make machinery on the spot for it. The New Moon and Full Moon are badly situated for working, as they are on the top of a hill, and there is not the same facility for getting material in.

460. *By the Chairman.*—Is there water available? Not without conservation dams. They are expensive claims to work.

461. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Do you think it would be practicable to open out better means of communication with the Blue Tier, thus having the effect of lowering the price of provisions, and consequently lowering wages, and so enabling many of the mines at present shut up to go on working? The roads about the Blue Tier are very good.

462. So that there is nothing really in that contention? No, I do not think there is.

463. Amongst the mines at the Blue Tier that are now shut down are there any that you would characterise as having a good show. I ask the question in regard to the possibility of the Government resuming any of them? Haley's Lease and the Full Moon both have a good show, though there are better claims on the Tier.

464. Is there any limit to the length of time that companies can shut down for under the present law? I think there is. The working of the Mining Regulations as regards holding land never comes within my department at all, and I am not very conversant with it.

465. *By the Chairman.*—You know, of course, that there are a great many mineral leases held upon which no work is being done? Yes.

466. All over the country? Yes.

467. And you think that the enforcement of the labour clauses would be in some cases a hardship and an injustice? Yes, in some cases.

468. What would be the general effect of the enforcement of the labour clauses right throughout the country, even supposing a little injustice was done: would it not cause a lot of land to be thrown open to working miners? It would cause a great deal of land to be thrown open that is now held for speculative purposes.

469. Would it have the indirect effect of giving employment? I don't think it would make much difference.

470. Do you mean that the land would only pass from the hands of one set of speculators to another? Yes, to a very great extent; and I don't think a great deal of it would be taken up by tributary parties or holders of miners' rights.

471. I suppose these speculators would not hold the land unless there was some prospective value? Much of this land is simply held on the chance of something turning up. A great deal of land I know of has been held for years, and a pick has never been put into it.

472. And you don't think that throwing this land open would tend to give employment? I think it might give a little more employment in a few cases. There are certainly places where working parties would take up ground that is at present held by companies who are doing nothing to it. It would give a better chance of working parties taking up ground that is not utilised at present.

473. Are you of opinion that most of this land would be taken up immediately if it were forfeited? I don't think so, under the present condition of things.

474. Are rents being paid regularly on these claims that are not being worked? I don't know.

475. In one of your previous reports you spoke of the probability of coal being found on the Henty River? Yes. Some bores were put down, but none were found.

476. Has it been fairly decided that there is no coal there? No, I don't think it has; that would be a question of diamond-drill boring too.

477. In the event of coal being found there would it not be a great assistance to the development of the mines on the West Coast? Yes; but what I said in my report was that there were coal measures there, and in coal measures there is always a likelihood of finding coal.

478. Do you know of any unexplored gold country in that vicinity? Yes.

479. It has been suggested that the Government should give 3s. a day to men, and 6s. a day to an overseer to each party, and send them out to the Mount Horror district to look for minerals, giving them half the value of all the mineral they win. How do you think that idea would work? I do not think I could make any recommendation about that without seeing the country it was proposed to work.

480. Supposing that you found that the ground would probably give say 4s. per man per day, would you feel disposed to recommend it then? That is again rather a matter of policy. I do not think I should make any recommendation upon the matter.

481. Do you think you would be able to examine and report upon that country within the next two or three weeks? Yes; I could go there shortly.

482. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Do you know of any solution to the difficulty caused by the dummieing of mineral sections at present? It is a very difficult question, and has so many aspects that you are no sooner done with one than another turns up.

483. It has been suggested to me that companies holding land and not doing anything with it should be made to pay an increased rent every year? Pressure can be brought to bear on them under the present Regulations.

484. There are so many wheels within wheels under these Regulations: they would operate in the case you have mentioned also? The companies would do what they do now, make a pretence of working.

485. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Assuming that a battery of 50 heads were put up, and water found to work it, is there room there for 50 men to bring in ore for some considerable time? There is plenty of room for 50 men and many more, directly they were given facilities for working.

486. What would be the cost of bringing down water from a 50-head battery, or two or three of them? There are two very fine sites for conservation dams on the top of the Blue Tier, and neither of them would be very expensive. Of course no surveys have been made to determine accurately what would be the cost of making the dams, but I believe if they were constructed they would be a very great benefit to the district, and would not cost in all probability more than £2000 a piece.

487. Supposing this extra supply of water is obtained at the cost you mention, how many batteries could be maintained in working condition with it? There local conditions again come in the way. Owing to the distance and the fall, one of these dams would not be available for the New Moon or Full Moon Company's mines, but would have to be utilized for the land lower down the Wyniford River. The other one would give about 70 feet of pressure at a point a mile away from the New Moon claim. It is a matter requiring careful calculation to say whether it would pay better to put the battery with water power a mile away from the mine, or to put the battery with steam power on the mine.

488. Assuming you had the water power available at the New Moon mine, what extra amount of stampers could you put there so far as the water is concerned? I cannot remember what is the capacity of the dam, or the quantity of water it would supply. The present New Moon battery would not be available at all, as it is worked by steam and is not commanded by this dam. I think the proposal is that the battery should be put at the Falls of the Wyniford River, about a mile below the present battery of the New Moon Company. I noticed a proposal in the papers to the effect that if the battery was put at the Falls a number of men could go to work at once. That battery could only be worked by water power by making this big dam, and the big dam is right on the top of the hill, and would require more careful measurements than have been made yet to know what quantity of water it would contain, and what would be the regular supply; in fact, I have no data to say how many stampers it would drive.

489. Assuming that you could get sufficient water for £2000 to drive a 50-head battery, the next point is, is there sufficient tin to be got to pay these men for bringing it in for crushing and to pay some sort of interest to the Government upon the cost of the battery? I think there is. The principal fact that I am going on in saying that I think it will pay, is the work that has been done on that particular Section I just referred to. The old Full Moon Section yielded about three times as much tin as the M'Gough Section did, which just paid expenses, and therefore I think it should pay very well.

490. Is the supply of tin of this character likely to last for any considerable time? I think so.

491. Supposing this 50-head battery were put up, it would only afford employment for about 50 men? Yes.

492. And would this 50 men be able to find employment for any considerable length of time? They would find employment for a few years without going below the present water-level.

493. Could anyone obtain wages at the work, or must the men employed be miners? I think it will take a miner to make wages.

494. So that the work would only relieve the unemployed miners? Yes.

495. *By the Chairman.*—Is there not a plant at the New Moon mine now? There are two plants. The New Moon Company hold two sections, which were originally held by the Full Moon Company and the M'Gough Company. The two batteries are a considerable distance apart, and one of them, on the Full Moon section, is only half put up. It was a 30-head battery, but the company got into difficulties, as the V.D.L. Bank broke before they could finish their work. The other battery is a 15-head one, and has a Huntingdon mill, which is equivalent to about 10 heads.

496. When that plant was at work how many men did it employ? I think about 30, all told.

497. And is that plant in working order now? I think so.

498. If the Government took that claim over and worked it as economically as the late company did, could they not find work for 30 miners at present? The company lost about 3d. or 4d. a ton.

499. And the Government, by working as economically as the company did, could find employment for 30 men at that loss? Yes.



500. And if they completed the other battery, how many could they put on? About as many more.

501. And the Government at a slight loss could find employment for 50 or 60 men? Yes, by working as economically as the company did.

502. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—What fall would these dams give? About 70 feet.

503. Do you know the Californian electric system of working? Yes.

504. Are there any of these dams which would enable that system to be employed? A good deal could be done in that way about the Blue Tier.

The Committee then adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 1894.

WILLIAM SMITH, *recalled and examined.*

505. *By the Chairman.*—You stated that you would be able to give us further information about the works available under the Crown Lands Act and the Waste Lands Act: have you that information at your disposal? You asked me if I thought it was possible that a sum could be set apart at once, or an expenditure take place immediately under those Acts. I have gone through the several districts carefully, and this is what I find:—Funds, Waste Lands and Crown Lands Acts.—I have no doubt that the following sums would be immediately available for expenditure under the provisions of the said Acts in the Districts stated, and tenders could be invited, or relief work afforded by day labour, as soon as inspections of localities had proved these sums to be due, and the most desirable work to be carried out in each locality had been arranged by Inspectors. In the South: Huon, Channel, Tasman's Peninsula, East Coast, New Norfolk, Uxbridge and Hollow Tree Districts—say about £5000. In the North: Cam and Seabrook, Flowerdale, Rocky Cape, Upper Piper, Springfield and Scottsdale, Patersonia and Gunn, and other Districts—say about £7000. I stated approximately (subject to correction after details were obtained) that about the sum of £60,000 was available for works under special Public Works Acts. The details taken out since my evidence show that this sum may be increased to £72,000. I also stated approximately that from £12,000 to £15,000 were available out of the provision for works under the urgent column. The details taken out since show that this is correct, but the estimate of works for which tenders are advertised and for which plans and specifications are now in preparation amount in all to about £9000; and after allowing for this sum there will only be about £6400 available for works sanctioned by Parliament under the urgent column. Buildings.—In addition to the £15,000 available for buildings generally under special Public Works Acts, I find there is a sum of £5000 available also for School Buildings. I also submit the following particulars desired by Committee:—

ELECTORAL DISTRICT.	Votes or portions of Votes for urgent works which have been expended.	Amounts required for			Votes for deferred works the Expenditure of which has been authorised by late Ministry.	TOTAL.
		Urgent works in course of construction.	Urgent works for which plans are in preparation.	Urgent works for which Tenders are advertised.		
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Campbell Town .....	...	...	119	...	...	119
Brighton .....	...	200	...	...	...	200
Cumberland .....	7	1300	...	...	...	1307
Cressy .....	...	...	...	...	30	30
Devon, East .....	...	...	...	...	1095	1095
Devon, West .....	63	190	1253	210	...	1716
Deloraine .....	19	140	227	...	...	386
Evandale .....	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fingal .....	327	165	214	130	...	836
Franklin .....	180	115	611	214	390	1510
George Town .....	131	...	366	...	175	672
Glenorchy .....	139	480	...	130	250	999
Glamorgan .....	43	...	119	...	...	162
Kingborough .....	1535	460	...	50	1930	3975
New Norfolk .....	59	150	...	...	640	849
Oatlands .....	99	465	50	...	100	714
Richmond .....	100	...	125	...	422	647
Ringarooma .....	279	280	756	105	...	1420
Sorell .....	1214	395	734	504	800	3647
Selby .....	173	100	959	320	1275	2827
Wellington .....	610	280	1591	160	160	2801
Westbury .....	...	...	...	...	...	...
	4978	4720	7124	1823	7267	25,912

506. Are there any special claims from the country districts for schools? That is a matter for the Education Department to reply to.

507. Are you preparing any plans in your office for any schools that would be paid for out of that £5000? I cannot say definitely without going back to the office to see. I find there are two, viz., new buildings, West Zeehan, and additions, East Devonport.

508. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Do you know if the Macquarie-street School is embraced in that vote? There is no list of schools submitted; the vote is a general one for new schools. When any school of an expensive character (£1000) is proposed, then the plans have to be submitted to Parliament.

509. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think you can make any further suggestions which would be of value to the Committee? No, I don't think so. I noticed some reference was made to the Derwent Park road by Mr. Helmer.

510. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Is it not almost throwing away money to leave the road in the state it is at present in? Yes. I think the work would be a very desirable one to put men on, and we could get stone on the Derwent Park estate very readily.

511. If all these works referred to by you are to be pushed on, will not the Inspectors require some help? We will necessarily have to increase the staff of Inspectors, but they would only be appointed temporarily, and they would not need to be expensive men, as the work is of a simple character.

512. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Can you give us any information about a piece of work which came under our notice yesterday,—a vote of £900 for a piece of embankment near the railway bridge on the Tamar: I am informed that £400 of it has been spent? It is a railway item, and only £400 has been expended, leaving a balance of £500 available to date.

513. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Is it an understood thing that some of these works can be pushed on without necessitating us to wait until Parliament meets? All works in the urgent column can be pushed on at once. There remains about £6400 for works in the urgent column. Particulars for contracts are coming in daily and will be dealt with either by tender in the usual way, or else as relief works. These Waste Lands and Crown Lands funds we can no doubt deal with at once, on the Inspector viewing the locality and deciding upon the best class of work to do. I would like to specially recommend the Derwent Park road to the Committee, because the money we have spent there is really no good at present, and the road serves no good purpose whatever. There is any amount of stone on the Derwent Park Estate, which would give men a job stone-breaking, and relieve many at once.

514. *By the Chairman.*—You strongly recommend that road? Yes, I believe it to be a useful work.

515. *By Mr. Woolnough.*—What is the present practice of the Department in regard to carrying out these works under the Waste Lands Act? It is done by tender as a rule, but occasionally by day labour when required as relief works.

516. Something has been said on the subject of the undesirability of sending men from a distance to work on small jobs where there was not much money voted? I think I said something on the subject myself; at any rate, the practice is very undesirable, because you have to incur almost the same expense in preliminary matters for a small job as you have for a large one.

517. So there would be only the larger works to which men could be sent from a distance? Yes, unless you could get a locality where there were several small works not far apart. 5 or 6 small works would be satisfactory in this respect.

518. Is it not an unacknowledged rule in your Department that the work, as far as possible, shall be apportioned equally between the city and country unemployed? Yes, that is so.

519. And unless otherwise ordered by the House, I suppose it is the plan that would still continue? Yes, it is a Ministerial order.

520. *By the Chairman.*—You have to do with the roads throughout the Colony? Yes.

521. Do you know of many roads that are constructed beyond settlement into Crown lands? I do not.

522. Do you know of any roads that have been constructed to Crown lands and allowed to remain unused, so that the saplings have grown over them again? I have heard a remark of that kind, but I cannot speak with any authority in the matter. Nothing official has come before me.

523. Has anything official come before you in regard to roads made to alienated lands which have been allowed to lapse into a state of nature again? No, but it may be so without my knowledge, which is confined to office documents.

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*Mr. Macdonald* said he had met a farmer who said he could get a number of neighbouring farmers to guarantee to take 20 men within 3 or 4 days. All the Government needed to do was to get them to Campania and give them a rabbit trap each. There was no need for them to take tents or anything of that kind, as the farmers would provide house accommodation and tucker, and in some cases they could take their wives and children. All the rabbits they got would be their own, the bodies being saleable if Mr Peacock started his rabbit-preserving works again, and the skins as well. His informant said a great many farmers would be willing to take men on these terms. The man's name was Perkins, and he was a farmer at Campania, but was at present in Hobart.

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THOMAS BUDGEON, *called and examined.*

524. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Thomas Budgeon.

525. You have had a good deal of experience in managing tin mines? Yes; I was one of the pioneers of the Blue Tier, and I sent out the first ton of tin got there.

526. You know the locality well? Yes, the whole of it.

527. Do you know any other portion of the North-Eastern Tin Mining District? Only about George's Bay.

528. Do you know Ruby Flat? Yes.

529. You are aware of the object of this Committee? Yes.

530. Can you make any suggestion to the Committee by which men could be employed on the mines to any number, with some Government assistance given either directly or indirectly? Yes; I have a scheme, which I have written out, and now produce.

531. What is the capacity of the battery of the New Moon? It is capable of reducing 200 tons per week.

532. And what would it cost per week to work that battery? £60 10s. I calculated.

533. And you base your estimate upon the present rate of wages paid at the Full Moon, from 7s. 6d. to 8s. 4d. per day? Yes.

534. And £4 a week for a managing engineer? Yes.

535. What do you estimate would be the returns? The previous output there was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. tin ore, which would be valued at about £60 on the Tier.

536. Do you think there is any better stuff to be obtained? Yes, by bringing up an open cutting along Haley's Creek 20 feet deeper than any ground hitherto worked there. From what I saw on the mine, I believe the stone underfoot of the old workings to be more defined and of better quality than any previously worked.

537. Are there any other mines besides the New Moon which would pay to work? There are several others, such as the Cambria.

538. Is that mine close to settlement? It is between Thomas's Plains and the Lower Junction.

539. Is there a road to it? Yes.

540. Is there any machinery on it? No. The mine is proved by a shaft and tunnel to a great depth; there is a good body of stone there, giving a fair percentage of tin ore.

541. Is that a mine on which it would pay to erect a reduction plant? Yes, I firmly believe it would.

542. Do you know the Anchor mine? Yes.

543. Is that a mine that would give employment to many more men if they had a more powerful plant? Yes; it would give a lot of employment, if the company had the means of putting a bigger plant on it and did away with their present water-wheel and put up a Pelton wheel, which would give four times the power with the same amount of water.

544. I see this proposal of yours would only give employment to 25 men to deal with the 200 tons a week? 26, with the manager.

545. And that is all that the present plant is capable of doing? Yes.

546. How many shifts would they work? The battery would work three shifts a day, but the men would only work one.

547. So even if the Government did take the matter up, they could only employ 26 to 27 men? Only 30 at the outside.

548. Is there much alluvial ground on the Blue Tier? Yes; but unfortunately it is all held by various companies, and it is not good enough to let on tribute.

549. If a man were free to go on to that land without having to pay tribute, do you think he would get enough tin to pay wages? Yes; there is a very large scope for that if a man could go where he wished.

550. Do you think it would be beneficial if the labour clauses were enforced in these particular leases? Yes; in the alluvial ones.

551. Would any injustice be done to the owners? Yes; if the lode tin were taken away from them, but not if the alluvial were taken. In Victoria we have two forms of mining, alluvial and lode, and one party might take up along the line of lode while others held the alluvial.

552. What remedy would you propose that the labour clauses should be enforced, or that the law should be altered? The law should be altered to conform to the Victorian law I mentioned, because many of these people have developed their lodes, and I do not think they want the alluvial at all.

553. Do they prevent men from going on their properties to work the alluvial? Yes; they demand a tribute.

554. Are there not a number of sections upon which men might go and get tin if they were allowed by the holders to do so? Yes; there is a lot of country of that kind. The Lottah Company, for instance, possesses a large area of ground.

555. The Lottah Company is a lode mine, I believe? Yes; that is the only part of it that is of any value to the Company.

556. Is there alluvial on it? Yes; all the little creeks and the hills contain alluvial.

557. Can you give us any idea of the number of men that would be employed, supposing the present restrictions, in the shape of demands for tribute, were removed? I should say about 200 men would find employment.

558. Do you mean to say that 200 men besides those now working could find profitable employment if they were allowed to enter freely on the mineral lands? Yes.

559. Is that opinion based on your knowledge of the tin fields of the North East Coast? Yes.

560. Are there many unemployed at the Blue Tier now? About 20 or 30, at the outside. These men, too, you can hardly call unemployed, because they go fossicking, and get from half a bag to a bag of tin per week per man.

561. So it would not interfere seriously with the local unemployed if men were sent there from other places? Not at all.

562. And it would not alter the local wages market? No.

563. You know Ruby Flat? Yes, but I have not been there for many years.

564. When you were working there was the price of tin good? No, very low, only about 9s. 6d. per unit. It was the cause of the mine I was in not paying its way, and I advised the company to shut it up for a couple of years till tin rose.

565. Is the field a large one? There is a very large alluvial country there.

566. Is there not a difficulty in working that field owing to its being level country? It is deeper ground than anything about the Tier, and requires heavy stripping.

567. Is there sufficient get-away for the tailings? No; it is a very flat country.

568. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Does the machinery now on the New Moon include a pumping plant? Oh, no. They have all the machinery that is required.

569. The last returns from that mine, before they shut up, showed three-fourths per cent. of tin ore? Yes, I think that was the average percentage throughout the workings.

570. And your idea is that they could get about 20 feet deeper without pumping gear? Yes, because they would bring up an open cutting.

571. Have you good grounds for saying that the tin is richer at that extra depth? I have seen it everywhere it has been worked.

572. Is not that ground very patchy? It is far more defined underfoot than on top. I attribute the crushings being so low largely to the fact that the ground was mixed. There was no mullock-tip, and everything was put through the mill.

573. Is there much of the deep ground exposed to give you grounds for being so hopeful? One shaft was put down near the northern boundary, and out of that they got two tons of tin.

574. That would point to the necessity of the company erecting pumping gear in the near future? There are two or three years' work in sight which will not require pumping gear; after that they would have to sink.

575. Any way, you think this richer tin would warrant hands being put on at once? Yes; I have every reason to believe it will give from one to two per cent. of tin ore.

576. Is this claim still in the hands of the company? The Bank has it, and it is not being worked now.

577. I suppose it would be hopeless to put the unemployed on the Ruby Flat country? Yes; it is too flat, and the stripping is too heavy, and there is no get-away for the tailings.

578. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Do you know Mount Cameron? No; I do not know anything about it.

579. Can you suggest any means of forcing those companies who hold land and are not working it to either work it or allow others to do so? It would be a boon to any company to take away the portions of their land which is no good to them; the lodes are all they require.

580. Would you advise the adoption of the Victorian system, that the surface alluvial be taken from them, and they be allowed to retain the lodes? Yes.

581. And that would give employment to 200 men more? Yes, if the fields were open to any prospector.

582. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Do you know Mathinna? It is many years since I was there.

583. *By the Chairman.*—Are there any other good shows for lode-mining at the Blue Tier? Yes, such as the Cambria and the Liberator, the Puzzle, Beals & Mills, Mt. Michael, and Masher, also No. 2 New Moon.

584. Do you know of any particular section where there is a fair show of alluvial? No, I cannot point to any particular one.

585. The most important part of your evidence is your statement that if these claims were thrown open so that miners could come upon them with Miners' Rights and mine for alluvial, it would give work, at a rough estimate, to 200 men, without depreciating the market price of labour? Yes, that is so.

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THOMAS MEATS, *called and examined.*

586. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Thomas Meats.

587. What are you? I am a practical tin-miner.

588. Do you know the tin mines of Tasmania generally? Most of them.

589. Are you particularly acquainted with one part more than another? I know Mount Cameron best.

590. And do you know the object of this Committee? Yes.

591. Do you think you can suggest any scheme by which we can help men to get to Mount Cameron with a prospect of getting profitable employment there? There is ground at Mount Cameron available, but it will require an expenditure to enable it to be worked. It will require 20 to 30 chains of boarded fluming to be made.

592. Do you know the ground from your own experience? I have not prospected it, but I know it is there.

593. Is it available? Yes; it is Government ground.

594. Is it the reason that ground has not been worked because there was no water obtainable? There is plenty of water, but there is no tail-racing.

595. The fluming you mention would be for a tail-race? Yes.

596. And what employment do you think would be given? It would employ about 15 men altogether. If you made a good sized tail-race you might open 2 or 3 faces, and run all the stuff into one race.

597. Would that fluming cost very much? I suppose it would cost about £70 or £80. The timber would have to be carted from Boobyalla.

598. Is there no timber handy? No, it would all have to be carted. There are other places in that locality which have not been prospected which might prove payable.

599. Would the men employed require to have special experience? Not necessarily, except for lode-mining.

600. So the greater part of the surface mining could be done by unskilled men? Yes.

601. Is there much unworked alluvial ground at the Blue Tier? You cannot get the water to it without pumping.

602. Is there much alluvial ground held by lease where men could make wages if they were allowed to go on it? There is the Lottah Claim.

603. Are men allowed to work the alluvial there? Not unless they pay tribute.

604. Supposing they could go on without paying tribute? I believe in that case they could do fairly well on it.

605. Do you think there would be much alluvial ground available supposing men had the right to go and mine upon it without any other expense than a miner's right? Yes.

606. About the Blue Tier? I can only speak of the Lottah claim.

607. Do you think it would pay on that claim if there was no tribute? Yes.

608. Have you any idea of how many men could find employment there? No.

609. On what system would you propose that the Government should pay the men whom they put on the land? I think they should pay them so much a week while they are getting the races put in, and then by results when they begin winning mineral.

610. Do you know of any district where you could recommend that plan being carried out? No; all the Mount Cameron district is broken up and being worked.

611. Do you know the West Coast? No.

612. Do you know Cox's Bight? Yes; but there is no room for men there; they could not possibly make wages. It might be a good plan to get the unemployed to cut tracks through the country.

613. *By Mr. Bradley.*—I suppose you know that most of the companies that have tried to develop the tin lodes have lost money? Yes.

614. About the Blue Tier in particular? Yes; I don't think it would be of any benefit to the Government to take up any of these claims. It would be too expensive.

615. As far as I know the ore is too poor to work? Yes.

616. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would not the extension of the race from Edina Hill tend to develop tin mining in a fresh portion of the country altogether? Yes; if the water was brought to the other side of the Ringarooma River it would tend to open up ground which cannot be worked now for want of water.

617. As Mr. Ogilvie is bringing water there himself, would you suggest that the work be done? No.

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BENJAMIN DYER, *called and examined.*

618. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Benjamin Dyer.

619. What are you? I am a builder and contractor.

620. You were formerly mining, I believe? Yes.

621. Whereabouts? At Mt. Horror.

622. Do you know of any mineral country there, that is not taken up, that would give prospects of gold or tin? There is a large tract of tin and gold-bearing country there, and I don't think anyone is occupying it at present.

623. Do you know the ground? Yes; I have worked on it.

624. Does it give good prospects? There was a good bit of gold got there in patches, but the average was what miners call "tucker-ground."

625. Would there be any difficulty in working it? No, it is a fine open country.

626. Is there any necessity for constructing a race at a high level? Yes, I think a race would have to be brought in in order to make the ground workable.

627. Would that be a very costly undertaking? It is 6 or 7 years since I was there, but to the best of my recollection the water would only have to be brought about 3 miles, and it could be done for £100 a mile. There is plenty of water available from the Boobyalla River and other streams.

628. And would this water open up a large area of country? Yes, some hundreds of acres.

629. So far as you prospected the ground, do you think if such a race were cut employment could be found for 100 men? I think 50 men could be employed to start with.

630. I don't mean in making the race? No; I mean in mining.

631. Do you think these men would earn fair wages? I think so, if they had the water; from my experience of the place.

632. Is there any other mineral besides gold there? Tin is mixed up with the gold.

633. In payable quantities? Not sufficiently to make tin mining alone payable; you would have to save both the gold and tin.

634. Is there any difficulty in getting to this place? No, not now; there is an easy road to it all the way, which is about 7 or 8 miles from Branhholm.

635. Is the only reason the land was not taken up privately because there was not sufficient water? I cannot say about that. The reason I did not take up any land there was because the place had been proclaimed a goldfield, and there was no provision for leasing 10 acres—the area I wanted—on a goldfield.

636. Are you acquainted with any similar mineral areas? No, not that men could be put on with advantage.

637. *By Mr. Bradley.*—You say it is about seven years since you were there? Yes; and the land was only available in small quarter-acre sections.

638. Was there ever any extensive practical test made as to what return of gold might be expected from that ground? I am informed that the original prospector took out about 184 ounces of gold, and that that caused the rush there. I feel satisfied that a man with a dish could get 1 dwt. of gold a day out of the flats.

639. Have the flats been prospected much? Yes; I put down a lot of holes on them myself.

640. The field was not worked extensively afterwards, was it? No.

641. Because there was not enough water? No; the ground would just barely pay tucker, though there was always the chance of coming on one of these rich pot-holes. There were 20 ounces of gold taken out of a place about as big as your table and about 4 feet deep.

642. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would you take up a 10-acre section on this field if water were available? Yes, certainly; I would not have the least objection.

643. You would have to pay for the water? Of course, at so much per head.

644. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Would the 50 men you mentioned be working on their own sections? No; under a director or superintendent.

645. Assuming the water is there, do you think these 50 men could make wages? I think so; I would recommend that they got a small wage, and then a royalty on the mineral won.

646. Do you think these 50 men would be employed for any length of time? It would be impossible to say, as you cannot tell what is in the ground. I believe it is poor ground, but if systematically worked and the whole of the ground put through by hydraulic treatment, I think it would bring in a good return.

647. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think the prospecting you have done would be sufficient to warrant you in spending £300 or £400 on a head race to bring water in? I would not incur that expenditure without making further tests on the ground. It could be very easily tested.

648. Assuming that the ground is tested further, and this expenditure on the head race is thought to be justifiable, you would propose to pay the men Government wages and half by results? Yes; I don't think it would be satisfactory otherwise.

649. You say a man could get about 1 dwt. of gold a day? Yes, with a dish, but sluicing is very far in advance of that.

650. You think by sluicing more gold would be won? Yes; you could get over more ground.

651. Have you any further suggestions to make to the Committee? There is plenty of good agricultural land available in the country if roads or trams were made to it, and I think the Government might put men on to clear it and then lease it out. In the Huon district alone I know of a large area of good land.

652. Do you think the land would be leased under those conditions? Yes, under a 99 years' lease.

653. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Supposing roads were first made to these areas of good land, and a higher price charged for the land, to include the cost of roadmaking, do you think people would be inclined to take it up? Instead of selling the land, I think it would be better for the Government to lease it.

654. Would not there be a risk, after the Government had made the roads, that the selectors would not come forward to take up the land? Yes, to a certain extent, but you could begin on a small scale.

FREDERICK WILLIAM HORTIN, *called and examined.*

655. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Frederick Wm. Hortin.

656. You have had charge of mines? Yes, this last 20 years.

657. You know the object of this Committee? Yes.

658. Have you any suggestions to make in regard to putting men on the mines which you think would be of value to the Committee? There is a tract of country in the vicinity of Mt. Horror, heading towards South Mt. Cameron, where men could be employed winning minerals.

659. What kind of minerals? Gold is the principal mineral in that particular place, but is associated with tin in many cases.

660. Is it in payable quantities? I have not tested the land personally, but from information I have received I am led to believe it is.

661. Do you think it would be sufficient to pay men wages? Yes, if men were employed that would do justice to the work.

662. Would it not be necessary to construct a water-race to that land? Yes, I believe the absence of water is one of the reasons why the ground has not been worked.

663. Supposing water was brought on to the ground, how many men do you think it would employ? If the ground was opened by an ordinary ground-sluiice, I think it would employ about 60 or 80 men; probably more later on when further faces are opened.

664. You suggest in your communication to the Committee that an expert be sent to the spot to see the wash taken out and tested, and to investigate the probability of the ground being worked on a large scale? Yes, by the hydraulic system, but that is a larger scheme than the one I am now suggesting. The ground-sluiicing would test the ground, and would cost very little to carry out.

665. Assuming the ground proved to be payable, or nearly so, you think men could be employed there without much risk to the Government? Yes; I think they could be employed there partly by wages and partly by results. I would suggest that the men be paid 3s. per day wages and half the value of the minerals they won. Supposing, for illustration, a body of 10 men were put on at 3s. a day, with an overseer at 6s. per day, and they won 48s. worth of gold or tin, or both together, per day, half the value of this when divided, 2s. per man and 4s. for the overseer per day, would make their wages 5s. a day for each man and 10s. a day for the overseer. The loss to the Government would be then 12s. a day; but if the product of their labour was higher, the loss would be less in proportion. The men would thus be induced to work, as they would have something to look forward to, and in my opinion the Government would not have to pay anything, as the concern would be self-supporting.

666. You think, then, that the men would be able to procure more mineral than would be required to pay them? Yes, judging from the information I received from parties who have tested the ground. I fully believe each man would procure over 5s. worth per day.

667. How would you propose to recoup the Government for their outlay in constructing the water-race? My view would be to do the same as would be done in a private enterprise, to take it out of the profits when they become large enough.

668. You don't indicate that there will be a very large profit? There have been some nice patches taken out of that field, and the Government may get some of them.

669. But there will be a certain amount of risk? There is always a certain amount of risk in taking up mining ground; but if you sent a practical man to the ground to test it, I don't think much risk would be run. I received my information about the field from two very reliable men, Mr. Dyer and Renison Bell.

670. Do you think the ground is good enough to warrant us in sending the Government Geological Surveyor to report upon it? Yes. The ground is easy of access, and he would only want a couple of men to bottom some holes, and let him try the wash for himself. I understand the lead is of pretty good length and very fair width, and apart from that there is a larger area of ground carrying gold, where Mr. Renison Bell prospected some time ago.

671. Would the water-race command that other country? Yes. You would tap the Boobyalla River, which, I am told, is a pretty big stream.

672. Do you think men would be found willing to accept these conditions? That I do not know. Of course, when they went there to do the dead-work they would not be getting gold or tin for a certain time, and they would be handicapped at 18s. a week; but if they were advanced a sum for that time it could be deducted later on.

673. *By Mr. Bradley.*—This land has been open for some years, I believe? Yes.

674. And, so far as you know, no parties have availed themselves of it: what is the reason of that? I believe the only thing that has prevented people from working the land is the outlay necessary to bring water to it.

675. So far as you know, it would not pay for ground-sluiicing without a race? You could not command it without a race. The race would only need to be two or three miles long, which would not be a heavy item in such country.

676. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Have you any personal knowledge of the country. Only from having been across the country there some two years since.

677. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know of any other mining districts where there is a prospect of men finding work? No, I cannot say I do. I know places, but they require money to be laid out, and I would not recommend them to the Government.

678. Would you, as a practical man, be willing to take charge of a party under the terms you proposed? Yes; if I saw there was gold enough.

679. Supposing there was gold enough to enable the men's wages to amount to 5s. a day, and the overseer's to 10s. or 11s.? Yes; if I saw the ground tested I would be quite willing take a party.

680. *By Mr. Woolnough.*—Is there not a large area of good agricultural land near Victoria, on the Huon? I have been about six miles at the back of Franklin, and there is a large valley of likely looking country there; that is all I can say.

681. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know the Blue Tier at all? Yes.

682. Is not nearly all the land there held under lease? Yes.

683. Do you know of any alluvial land which would pay men wages if they were allowed access to it without paying tribute? Yes, if they were ordinary practical men, but the class of labour you have in the cities would not be suitable. Probably there are large areas of land where parties of two or three could go and squat in if they had all the tin to themselves.

684. Do you know the Lottah ground? Yes.

685. Is there any alluvial there? There are not many gullies on the Lottah which would employ many men.

686. What, in your opinion as a practical man, would be the effect of enforcing the labour regulations generally? I do not think any good would be done by it, or that it would be an advisable thing to do.

687. Granting that injustice was done in some cases, would not the general effect be to give employment to many now seeking it? It would not have much effect unless all the land was forfeited that is not now being worked.

688. Would not a good many companies comply with the regulations? They would try, of course.

689. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Do you think it would be better for the Government to have the Act altered, to separate the alluvial from the lode mining, and thus leave the alluvial open under miner's rights? I think it would be a judicious plan.

690. That would do away at once with tribute? Yes; but then you would have to compel the leaseholders to work a certain number of men to keep within the labour clauses?

691. If the Government put the screw on in regard to the labour clauses would there not be a danger of many holders of sections throwing up their leases? Yes, there would.

692. Rather than that you would like to see the Act altered in the way indicated? Yes; it would be a far better plan than compelling them to give up their leases, which they would do in many cases.

The Committee then adjourned.

THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 1894.

ROBERT SYDNEY MILLES, *called and examined.*

693. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Robert Sydney Milles.

694. What are you? I am City Engineer and City Surveyor.

695. Have you had any experience on the Blue Tier? Yes, I was there about 18 months.

696. Were you managing a mine? Yes, the Full Moon Company. I was also connected with the Anchor mine afterwards.

697. Do you know the district? Yes; I know the whole of the country very well.

698. Do you know the object this Committee have in view? Yes.

699. Can you make any suggestions in regard to men being employed at the Blue Tier, either by the Government or through Government assistance? Well, I cannot say that I could mention anything definite that would be sure of success, because the subject is fraught with so many difficulties. There are a certain number of men there that can hardly get a living now, and if other men were brought into the district they would compete with them. I take it that the alluvial is the only thing you could put men on up there, and the price of tin is so low that it would not pay to work that at present.

700. Is there much alluvial ground on the land there that is leased from the Government? It is only in patches, and there is no great extent there that is not now being worked.

701. If men were allowed to enter upon all leaseholds to work the alluvial, would there be payable work for any large number of men? I don't think it would employ a large number, and these men would have to be, to a certain extent, practical miners. You could not send the men out of the towns there.

702. We are not dealing with the question as regards the towns alone? If the men had a knowledge of alluvial mining you might find places here and there where they could be employed.

703. Do you know the New Moon lode? Yes.

704. Is that formation of a character which would give payable employment to a large number of men if machinery was put on it? If you put a fair sized battery on that claim I don't think you could give employment to more than about 80 men altogether, and most of them would have to be real miners.

705. Are the prospects of that mine good enough in your opinion to justify the erection of such a plant as you have spoken of? It has been proved from the stone put through to be one of the best mines in the district; it gives about 1½ per cent. of tin ore all through, but it must be worked on a large scale; it would not pay to tackle it on a small scale again.



706. Do you know that that mine was worked with results that very nearly paid expenses? It just paid expenses, but then it was worked on a very small scale.

707. Do you know the number of men it gave employment to? I think somewhere about 25 or 30.

708. So you think if the work were proceeded with it would give employment to about 25 or 30 men without actual loss? I would not venture to say that with regard to M'Gough's section, but as to the New Moon I feel perfectly certain that a fair-sized plant would pay more than expenses. The old Full Moon was the original claim and was worked by three different companies. The small plant put up in my time was on what is now the New Moon, and it just paid expenses. Then M'Gough had a small plant put up, but the result of that I cannot say. The big plant they intended to put on the New Moon has never been completed.

709. You think that if the mine was managed economically and a sufficient-sized plant erected, there would be very little risk of any loss? Yes; there would be very little risk.

710. And employment could be found for 80 men or more according to the size of the plant? Yes.

711. Has the ground been prospected to any depth? There is stone enough in sight to keep the battery going for the best part of 2 years.

712. Do you mean a 100-head battery? No, about a 70-head one.

713. Has the ground been tried to any depth? It has been proved that there is a large body of stone to 40 feet down.

714. Is the ore at that depth as rich as at the surface? There is some stone at the bottom of the prospecting shaft which is the richest they have got on the mine, but it is in such a position that they cannot get it out.

715. Anyway you are of opinion that there is ground there which will give employment to a large number of men? Yes.

716. Do you know anything of the Mount Cameron District? I was there during the laying out of the Mount Cameron Water-race.

717. I would like to ask you while you are here if you think the scheme of the Metropolitan Drainage Board would be a justifiable work to proceed with? It would be so from a sanitary point of view, no doubt, but the financial aspect of the question would have to be definitely settled.

718. Is the Corporation now doing any work which would be practically useless if this scheme is carried out? We are working in some instances in the dark. There is a certain amount of work which has to be carried out in small drainage matters, but we are trying to do it with as little risk of its not being utilised as we possibly can.

719. Are there any works in connection with the Corporation that you suggest as being of benefit to the citizens? The chief works I know of would be Bath and Quayle streets; the greater part of our work inside the city is mason's work.

720. Will the land now being reclaimed at the back of the slaughter-yards be Corporation property when reclaimed? I am not in a position to say. Various suggestions have been made as to what to do with it.

721. Have not the Corporation gone to the expense of reclaiming it? Yes. We have always one man, sometimes two, looking after the tipping, and that is a permanent expense to the city.

722. What is the area of that land? About two acres or more.

723. Do you believe if work was found filling in that place do you think it would be paid for by the additional value given to the land? That all depends upon what it is proposed to put on the land when it is filled in. No doubt the sooner it is filled in the sooner a return will be got from it, as it will then be very valuable. It might be filled in very soon if the work was started straight off.

724. Do you think if men were put on the result would pay for men's labour? If the Corporation had it I think they would soon get the value back again.

725. If the Government gave that land to the Corporation when they reclaimed it, do you think it is a work that might be justly undertaken to give employment? Yes.

726. Would not that work largely employ unskilled labour? Yes.

727. Would the situation of the ground make it useful to the Railway Department or the Marine Board? Yes, it could be used jointly by them, or independently. I have been looking out for a block of ground to make a general depôt for the Corporation and Waterworks, and have had an eye to this place amongst others.

728. Have you any idea of how much the Corporation have spent on that place? The work of piling has been done by the Marine Board.

729. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Are there two sets of machinery on the New Moon? Yes, one working recently on M'Gough's section, and one not complete on the New Moon.

730. How many heads of stampers are there there? I believe the battery on the New Moon was intended for 30 heads. The battery on M'Gough's is a 15-head one.

731. Is there any pumping gear there at present? No.

732. You think that mine would pay handsomely if a larger plant was put up there? Yes.

733. Not less than 70 heads? Yes.

734. Would not that necessitate pumping gear? They would not want pumping gear for some time to come, not until they worked below the present level.

735. Have you any idea of what that plant would cost? Using the old plant, I don't think you could put it up under £6000 or £8000.

736. And how many men would it employ at remunerative wages? Somewhere about 80.

737. I understand you to say that the old mine was only proved to the depth of 40 feet? There are two pieces of ground there. The old Company, after the alluvial was taken away, sunk two shafts to test the lode, but they were abandoned as the money ran out. Then what was called the Full Moon Company was started, and put up a small prospecting plant, and ran through some 2000 tons in different parts of the stockwork lower down, and that proved to contain about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of tin ore. The stockwork is in a different place from the two old prospecting shafts, being in a fork of two creeks coming together, and is a big block of land some 4 chains by 7, carrying tin, and the deepest place is about 26 feet deep. In the centre a 40-feet shaft was sunk. We can command about the 20-feet level without pumping gear.

738. According to the present prospects, do you think the Government would be justified in putting up a plant there? Yes. Of course, tin is low just now, but there is every prospect of its rising, which would make a great difference in the returns.

739. With regard to the underground drainage of the city, do you think it would be better for the city to dis sever its connection with the outside Boards? If the suburbs can bear the cost I think it would be better for them to join in; but if the city were to undertake the drainage in the first instance, the scheme would have to be designed so as to be extended to the suburbs at some future time.

740. Do you think it would cost much more than the present sanitary system? I think it would cost more, but not very much, except during the construction.

741. You think this would be a beneficial work to carry out, both as a sanitary work and as a means of supplying employment? Yes, I certainly do.

742. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—How long is it since you were at the Blue Tier? I visited it on three occasions about four years ago since I left permanently.

743. You would not know what has been done in the way of prospecting for alluvial tin during those four years? No.

744. But from your previous knowledge of the field would you recommend the Government, or any Company, to spend £8000 to put up a large plant there? Yes, on the mine I named.

745. Can you suggest why this £8000 has not already been found by capitalists to work that mine if the prospects are so hopeful? So many of these companies have failed from want of capital at the beginning that I suppose they have been discouraged.

746. Do you know if there is a better system of tin mining than that now in existence on the East Coast? Very great improvements have been made during the last few years. There is a great question as to the best class of machinery to treat the stone at the New Moon. It is a very friable stone, and to my mind we have not gone quite in the right direction in regard to the plant.

747. As a matter of fact, the present plant might be useless from a modern point of view? A portion of it might be used or adopted.

748. Is the Pelton system in existence there? It is only used on a small scale. There is a small Pelton wheel at the Anchor mine for driving the machinery, and one at Cream Creek. The New Moon mine is on the top of a hill, and it is not possible to get hydraulic pressure up there. Of course they could get electric power.

749. *By Mr. Woolnough.*—Would not a 70-head battery require a larger supply of water than there is at present? Yes.

750. Have you an idea of what that extra water would cost? There is no actual estimate made at present of what it would cost to bring in water on a large scale.

751. Would it be possible to bring it in at a higher level than the mine? No, you could not do that; there is a large range of hills above the Blue Tier from which the water could be collected and brought down the water-shed and transmitted back to the mine in the form of electricity.

752. Can you give us any idea of the time that is likely to elapse before any work could be gone on with, such as the unemployed could be utilised upon, in regard to the Metropolitan Drainage Scheme? The matter of the disposal of the sewage has to be first settled, and it would take some considerable time after that to make the plans ready for the contract, as a good deal of the work would be done by contract.

753. How long will it be before the preliminary work is settled? It will take about three months, and then the question of the best method of disposing of the sewage has to be settled; that is bound to take up a considerable time; you could put six months down as the shortest time in which it would be possible to make a start.

754. *By the Chairman.*—Whatever scheme is adopted, the calculations would be practically the same? There are a number of points which would involve technical discussion amongst practical men before they could possibly be settled.

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MALCOLM KENNEDY, *called and examined.*

755. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Malcolm Kennedy.

756. You are connected with silver ore smelting works? Yes.

757. Are your works at present employed? Yes, we are working now.

758. Are you employing many men? I suppose we are employing about 16 hands just now.

759. Is that the full capacity of your plant just now? We have to roast the ore before we can smelt it in the water-jacket. When we smelt with the water-jacket we employ about 30 or 40 hands, and ours is only a small plant.

760. What is the reason you are not kept in full work? It all depends on our purchasing powers. The foreign buyers are able to smelt the stuff a little bit cheaper than we can, and can afford to pay a little more for it, though for some ores we are able to pay the same amount as they can.

761. The ore you smelt you purchase? Yes.

762. And the reason you are not fully employed is owing to the competition of the foreign buyers? Yes, that is the principal cause. Our works are very small, and, with the full complement of men on, about 40, we would not smelt more than about 40 or 50 tons a week.

763. What amount of employment would that give? One ton of ore employs about one man.

764. Supposing that all the ore raised in the Colony was smelted locally, what amount of employment would it give? I dare say that if it were smelted on a large scale it would employ four men for every six tons. Including getting the flux and limestone, and shipping, and so on, I suppose it would employ one man for every ton of ore that goes out of the Colony now.

765. Do you know the quantity of ore exported now? About 2400 tons a month.

766. And if that was smelted in Tasmania it would give employment to 2400 men? Yes, directly or indirectly, I believe it would.

767. Can you make any suggestions by which the smelting of the ore in the colony might be encouraged? The only thing I can think of is by establishing large works. If we could smelt 100 tons a day, we could compete with the Germans, who are the principal buyers at present, and the only way to do that is to give a bonus on the ore smelted in the colony, and allow differential railway rates until the work is established.

768. Would you recommend that the Government erect smelting works? The German Government have smelting works at Freiberg, but I don't know whether it would be a good thing for a colonial Government to enter into. If they only give encouragement to local enterprise there will be enough only too glad to enter into it. Smelting works have been started on the Zeehan and Dundas fields now, and it only wants more roasting furnaces to enable them to treat all these sulphide ores.

769. Is there any additional advantage in smelting the ore here? It saves about 25 per cent. of freight.

770. Is the bullion and the ore taken to Europe at the same price? Bullion could be taken much cheaper than ore.

771. Do you think, then, that smelting as an industry deserves the encouragement of the Government, with a view of benefiting the Colony, as well as giving employment? Yes, we are sending away about 2400 tons of ore per month, and if that were smelted in the colony we would be paying £3000 away in wages at the very least.

772. Is that a class of work which requires skilled labour? Out of the 40 men we employ you would not want more than 5 skilled men, because most of the work is only wheeling and dragging. We take any labour that comes into the place, and we break them in in one shift.

773. Your plant has been shut down for a considerable time? Yes, during the last four years we have not worked four months in every nine.

774. Under different circumstances you could have kept 40 men employed during the last eight months? Yes.

775. And during that time there was a great deal of ore being exported? Yes.

776. Can you make any suggestions to the Committee in regard to finding employment for a large number of men in this particular industry? I cannot say. The labour we use is mostly unskilled labour, and we could find plenty of employment if we had the capital.

777. Of course, you as an owner of a smelting plant, would be in favour of the Government giving a subsidy? Yes; but we don't care whether we get it or not. A little assistance would enable us to keep two or three skilled men about us. We have no skilled men at present but my brother, and he has to go and buy the ore.

778. Do you know anything of the Zeehan and Dundas plant? There are two 60-ton furnaces. They were fitting up the second one when I was there.

779. What is the size of yours? It is only about a 12-ton per day one; but it all depends on the class of ore. It will not do more than eight tons a day with some ores, and considerably more with others.

780. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Your idea is the Government should give a small bonus on the ore smelted in the colony? Yes. Colonel North has erected the smelting works on the coast that were just mentioned, and I am sure it would hurry him up if he knew that the colony would give a bonus. I believe if the Silver Queen Company knew they could get a little help from the Government they would put up smelting works at once.

781. You reckon that a man per ton of ore could be employed if smelting was done in the Colony? Yes; it takes from 30s. to £2 per ton money value to smelt a ton of ore; so it would employ a man per ton, I am sure.

782. And besides that it would save the proprietors of mines the profits of smelting it? There is not a great deal of profit in smelting. It takes nearly all the money you pay for the ore for one week to smelt it—it all depends on what you save out of it.

783. We actually lose by exporting this ore? Yes; we lose the work of 2000 men, and any profit that is made in smelting it. The wear and tear of the smelting furnaces is very great; and, in fact, a furnace like one of those at Zeehan would keep a small foundry going.

784. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—What is the reason that private enterprise in Tasmania has not gone to the necessary outlay to meet outside competition in smelting? When we started this smelting business we sent circulars to the different mining companies, asking if they would support us, and seven out of every ten replied that they would be only too glad to do so. Unfortunately they have never given us very much assistance, and I dare say that stopped other people from going into the business. If the different companies would get their ore smelted here, even if they got within 15 per cent. of the returns they got from Germany, there would be large works established. There are five buyers now on the West Coast buying for foreign smelting works, and we have to put up with that competition. If we only had to compete against Dry Creek, in South Australia, we would have smelting works five times as big as we have now. We are not afraid of Australian competition, but of the foreign competition.

785. Would you be afraid of foreign competition if you had a plant capable of treating 100 tons of ore a day? No, certainly not.

786. What is the real reason that has prevented you from putting up larger works? Well, we are cautious people, and we like to go along gradually and let the thing work itself up. We would not stop in the business if we could not see a profit in it, but we do not want to rush into too large works. We believe there will be plenty of ore. One of my brothers is on the West Coast now, and he believes that if we had a place 10 times as large there would be work for us.

787. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—If a large capital was invested in your business would it enable you to compete with foreign buyers? Yes.

788. And it would enable you to employ more skilled labour? Yes.

789. Would that enable you to employ a correspondingly larger amount of unskilled labour? Yes. The only skilled labour at our works is my brother, and he has to buy the ore as well. When he buys sufficient ore he comes up to town and smelts it. With a larger establishment we could employ a skilled man to carry on the work while my brother bought the ore. We would thus be able to keep the smelting going on constantly, say for the outlay of another £250.

790. What plant would you require to enable you to compete with the foreign smelters? We would have to put up a new plant altogether, capable of smelting 80 or 100 tons per day.

791. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Would you put that plant on the West Coast or at Hobart? I cannot say; we would have to be guided by circumstances.

792. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think that if the Government were to put an export bonus on bullion it would encourage the establishment of larger works at once? Yes.

793. Do you think the bonus would need to be permanent? No, I don't think it would at all.

794. Would such a bonus for 2 or 3 years be sufficient to induce the establishment of large works? Yes, I think so. It would cause a larger amount of skilled labour to be available, for one thing, which would be a great benefit to employers. There was one matter which came into my mind which I would like to mention to the Committee, and that was in connection with slipping foreign whalers. The Victorian Government allow these whalers the use of the Graving Dock free of all charges, except for the actual labour in slipping and launching. We could easily do the same thing here, and thus bring a lot of vessels to the port, as it would suit them much better than Melbourne.

795. Why not our own whalers too? Yes; there is no reason why they should not have the same facilities. When that Norwegian whaler went into Melbourne a short time ago, I believe if a telegram had been sent saying that she could be slipped here free, she would have come here,—in fact she is on the coast now.

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ALFRED MAULT, *called and examined.*

796. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Alfred Mault.

797. What are you? I was Engineer of the Metropolitan Drainage Board and am Inspecting Engineer of the Central Board of Health.

798. Some of the Committee are of opinion that by hastening the work under the Drainage Board some relief might be given to the unemployed; would it be possible to so hasten the work that some of it might be gone on with at an early date? A commencement might be made within one month of work that would cost £6000. At present the Metropolitan Drainage Board is acting under what it considers, and what I believe Parliament considers, as a preliminary Act; it is empowered to make surveys and prepare plans, but it is not empowered to carry out works; and consequently, if you wished to carry out the works you would have immediately to pass either the main Act or some modification of it. There has been some question in the Board as to the disposal of the sewage, but the £6000 worth of work to which I have referred does not trench upon that at all. Whatever system is adopted ultimately for the disposal of the sewage, this particular work would have to be done, and done precisely in the same manner.

799. What character of work is it that you refer to? The outfall work: the portion of the main drain which would pick up the drainage from the Hobart Rivulet Basin, the basin to the south of it, and the Park-street Rivulet Basin. The whole of the survey is complete to about as far up as the Theatre, and the whole of the work in the district from the Theatre to Macquarie Point could be immediately commenced. The only material wanted would be the detailed working plans, and they could be prepared within the time necessary for passing the Act of Parliament. I take it that that Act could be passed within six weeks from now, and if I commenced at once I could be ready to start work as soon as it was agreed to.

800. Would there not be a danger of your plans being altered by some expert whose advice might be called in afterwards? Of course, I cannot answer that. Without blowing my own trumpet, I may say that I do not know any expert whose opinion I would take in preference to my own.

801. Do you consider this work would be beneficial to Hobart? It is absolutely necessary from a sanitary point of view, and besides that it is about the most economical thing the Hobart people could go in for.

802. Mr. Henry Dobson has written to the Committee, giving us some figures to prove that under this drainage scheme the taxation of the ratepayers would not be greater than it is at present? I can quite endorse that. If the whole of the money is borrowed at once, and the portion not immediately wanted is placed on fixed deposit, the interest on it would provide a sufficient sum to tide over the interregnum between one system and another; so that the citizens would not have to pay two rates. There has been some talk, as you are aware, of limiting the area to Hobart proper. If that were done I believe that not only might you include the sewage within the estimate I have made, but the house drainage as well, and the borrowing of some £80,000 or £90,000 at once would put you in a position to relieve the ratepayers of the burden of paying rates for the sanitary service as well as the rates for drainage. The drainage might be met by the rates as well as the sewerage, so that the poorer owners of property would have no greater burden to bear than the present.

803. Would the work which would be done for that £6000 be work which would require skilled labour? The greater part would be labourer's work; but it would include the providing of materials, such as pipes and bricks and bricklayer's work.

804. With regard to making as speedy work for the unemployed as possible, would you be prepared to advocate the severance of Hobart from the surrounding local authorities? The work I propose under this £6000 does not trench on that question at all; it must be done whether these local authorities remain or not.

805. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—The question of the ultimate disposal of the sewage can make no difference with regard to the expenditure you refer to now? Not the slightest.

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EDWARD GILES FORD, *called and examined.*

806. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Edward Giles Ford.

807. You are a saw-mill proprietor? Yes.

808. You know the object of this Committee? I do.

809. Do you think you could assist the Committee by any suggestion as regards finding employment for men in your own industry? Yes; I made a suggestion by letter. Mr. Bradley has a copy.

810. You are aware the Government have arranged with the mill-owners to send home about 300,000 or 400,000 feet of timber in the form of paving blocks? Yes.

811. And you think the Government ought to go further in the matter? Yes; I cannot see anything better to relieve the distress at present, and I don't think the Government would lose one shilling.

812. You think the Government ought to purchase from the saw-millers here from £40,000 to £50,000 worth of timber? Yes; they would be perfectly safe in spending £100,000.

813. If the profit is so certain, how is it that the mill-owners don't take up the matter themselves? They are not in a position to force the market; but from information in our possession I believe the Government would be perfectly justified in taking the risk.

814. It is simply want of capital that prevents you? Yes; the assistance we get from the Government now is not very much, only about two-thirds of the value of the timber. To pay the mills, it cannot be produced under 6s. 6d. to 7s. per 100 feet, while the Government guarantee 4s. only.

815. Can you give the Committee any idea of the amount of labour that would be employed in cutting these blocks? Well, our mill employs 30 to 40 men, and our capacity is about 40,000 feet per week.

816. About 1000 feet per week per man? Yes, about that. You might say that 40,000 feet of timber would give employment to 30 men for one week.

817. I suppose there is plenty of timber available? Any amount. Our mill could cut for the next 50 years before exhausting the supply come-at-able, and then its only beach-combing.

818. Can you give us any idea of the number of saw-mill hands at present out of employment? About 400 or 500 men.

819. *By Mr. Bradley.*—The wood-blocks have to be cut out of full-sized timber? Yes; it has to be good timber, clear of heart and sap.

820. And this particular class of timber would have to be cut on the quarter? Yes, or nearly so.

821. Would the waste from this class of timber be worth anything? At present, on account of the prohibitive duty and the depression in the colonies, there is little demand; it is almost valueless.

822. Would it not lessen the cost of production if various sizes of timber were taken? Certainly, it would be a big advantage if 6 × 3 would be taken.

823. Would it not be wise for the Government to wire home to see if various sizes of timber would be taken? They have done so, and the reply was that nothing but 9 × 3 timber would do.

824. The unemployed men could be put on this work at once, couldn't they? Yes, within a week.

825. If these blocks are cut on the quarter out of good old full-sized timber, do you think they would stand the weather in Europe? In London it is not the rot, but the wear that has to be considered.

826. Do you think our wood would compare favourably with the jarrah from Western Australia? Yes, for the purpose, equal and superior to any other used at present.

827. Do you think these blocks would require much seasoning? They should not be seasoned at all for road work. The sooner they are in the roads after they are cut the better. The jarrah timber from Western Australia cannot be landed in England under 20s. per 100 feet, while we can land our timber at a profit at 14s., so that I believe we could drive the Western Australia trade out of the market.

828. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Do you know of any attempt that has been made to test these wood blocks locally? They have been laid in the old market for the last 40 years, and have worn well, and from appearances will last 40 years more.

829. You plead poverty on behalf of the saw-millers for not sending these blocks home themselves? Yes, you may put it that way. The saw-millers in this country have about a quarter of a million pounds' worth of property lying idle at the present moment. It will cost many thousands of pounds to properly develop this industry: the mill-owners are not in a position to force this at the present time, but it will come all the same, whether the Government assist or not. It is to relieve the present depression that I urge the Government assistance.

830. Would it not be an important thing for the whole of the community if a considerable step like that you propose were taken? Yes. The timber trade used to keep the southern part of the Island alive. It would take a 200-acre farm to keep our own mill supplied with food. I think this would solve the village settlement better than any scheme I have seen or heard suggested.

831. *By Mr. Woolnough.*—Do you think our woods would stand the wear and tear of a big European city? Yes; quite equal to jarrah, which is considered at the present time the best in use.

832. I have seen two blocks of wood, one from Western Australia and one from Tasmania, in the Treasurer's office, which have been from Tasmania to England and back. The Tasmanian specimen has lost its shape, while the West Australian specimen has preserved it? That will probably be owing to the Tasmanian wood having been badly chosen, either from small saplings, or wrongly cut.

833. Do you think the moisture of the English climate would affect these blocks? Not in the least.

834. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would it not be wise to appoint some one to see that proper timber is sent? Yes. I think the Government should appoint some one to see that proper timber is sent, and to put the Government brand on the timber that he approves as a guarantee to the purchasers.

835. *By the Chairman.*—You say the mill-owners would send home these blocks themselves if they had the capital? Yes, they will do so now, but to relieve the present depression my suggestion would bring the development about more quickly.

836. Could they not make arrangements to get advances from the banks? The banks would be perfectly willing to assist, but not to this big extent, without being guaranteed. This is where the Government should step in.

837. I mean against shipments? Yes, when the trade is fairly established there will be no difficulty by-and-by.

838. Could not you arrange with the Government to guarantee the necessary amount to the banks against shipments? This is what I would suggest. They can secure themselves on the shipment.

839. Have you sent any of these blocks home? Yes, to London, and they were highly approved of.

840. Is it proposed to send these shipments home by sailing vessels? No, by steamer; we want to get the timber home and get it laid this season, or else we will lose a year or more; it should be home by the end of July. This refers to the first lot of 300,000 only. Sailing vessels will carry it when the trade is fairly established.

841. Then there would not be any immediate prospect of finding work for the unemployed unless the Government took a big risk? It would not be a big risk, but a reproductive work. The unemployed, difficulty, to a very great extent, would be got over easier than any way I have seen suggested.

The Committee then adjourned.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 1894.

EDWARD GILES FORD, *recalled.*

842. *By the Chairman.*—I believe you have some further information to give the Committee? Yes. Since I was here yesterday I have received a copy of a letter, which will fully bear out my statements. This letter was received by Mr. R. J. Lucas from Mr. Ladelle, who is now in London. I will read it to the Committee:—

Dear Mr. Lucas,

After a lot of negotiating, I have obtained from the Marylebone Vestry a trial order for 75,000 paving blocks of Tasmanian stringy barks at £6 5s. per 1000 blocks. This price is equivalent to 13s. 4d. per 100 superficial feet of timber, the blocks ordered being 9 inches by 3 inches by 5 inches. Messrs. F. Green and Co., shipbrokers, of 5, Fenchurch Avenue, London, Managers of the Orient Line, have written me, stating that as soon as I can load sailing vessels of 1000 to 1500 tons they can charter same to bring the timber to London from Tasmania, at a maximum of 6s. per 100 feet super. The timber will have to be sent in planks 9 inches wide by 3 thick, in lengths from 7 to 12 feet, and will have to be cut into blocks here. Lighterage from ship to timber-yard, cutting and delivery to Vestries, will cost about 1s. per 100 feet super. I have got estimates for everything. This leaves 6s. 4d. per 100 feet super. for the timber f.o.b. in Tasmanian port. This is, I think you will admit, a very good price, especially considering the size of the timber. There is practically an unlimited market, as the paving blocks required yearly in London alone far exceed the quantity of timber produced by all the mills in the Colony.

in most prosperous times. Besides, Manchester and other large towns have just decided to pave extensively with wood. The surveyors of the various London Vestries to whom I have submitted samples tell me that they are very favourably impressed with the timber, which they consider completely eclipses every other in the market, both as to quality and price, for the purpose. This lot of blocks will be laid down in or near Oxford-street, than which no better part of London could be found for bringing the timber into notice. If approved, of which I think there is no doubt, very large orders will follow at once. I need hardly point out to you the enormous advantage to the Colony of securing such a market for its timber. In view of this I suggest that the Government should immediately order the timber and ship it to me, care of Messrs. F. Green & Co., 5, Fenchurch Avenue, E.C. I cannot get any commercial firm to take up the order, because the Marylebone Vestry stipulate that the blocks shall be delivered in about four months, as they wish to do the paving at the close of the London season, at which time of year the streets can be blocked with least inconvenience. This necessitates the timber being sent by steamer instead of sailing vessel, which I am afraid will raise the freight to 8s. or 9s. per 100 feet, and will cause a loss of £35 to £50 on the order. No business house will take an order on which there may be a loss unless they can keep the future paying business to themselves, which in this case is not possible, as directly the trade is established it will be open to all the mills in the colony to compete. But it would be very well worth while indeed for the colony to lose £50 or even £100 to secure such a market for its timber. It is possible that freight might be arranged at a rate which would prevent loss. This I cannot tell here, as it depends entirely on what freight is offering at time of shipment. If the Government agrees to my suggestion I shall receive payment for the blocks on delivery, and would hand over the sum advanced by the Government, less the loss, if any, to the Agent-General as soon as I was paid. Will you lay this matter before the Cabinet at once, and let me have a reply by telegraph as soon as possible.

Yours truly,

ROLAND LADEILLE.

P.S.—I have sent a copy of the above to other mill-owners, and shall be glad if you can meet at my office on say Thursday next, 19th instant, at 2:30, for a conference, at which I shall be glad to lay before you some important information on this subject obtained from Mr. Ladelle some time ago, which I was not at liberty at the time to divulge. I think a vast and remunerative trade in our timber can be opened up through Mr. Ladelle. Please reply.

Yours faithfully,

R. J. LUCAS.

843. Do you know when that letter was received? I received it yesterday, but I fancy Mr. Lucas has had it in his possession for some time, but was not at liberty to divulge it.

844. This letter really strengthens your opinion that a trade could be opened up on a large scale with England? Yes, without the slightest risk.

845. Might not the Government go to a considerable extent further in the matter than they are going now without risk to the colony? Yes.

#### ARTHUR EDMUND RISBY, *called and examined.*

846. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Arthur Edmund Risby.

847. You are a saw-mill proprietor? Yes.

848. You know, of course, that it is proposed by the Government to send a shipment of Tasmanian timber home in the shape of paving-blocks? Yes.

849. And you also know the object of this Committee? Yes, to assist the unemployed.

850. The Committee have sent for you to know if you can make any suggestions in regard to your particular trade, especially as to increasing the export of Tasmanian timber. Do you think it would be possible for the Government to find employment in cutting the timber for these paving-blocks without risk to the colony? I think so. I am certain that the demand in London for these blocks would be such that the Government would stand no risk of losing money. We are to cut it here for 4s. a hundred feet, thus taking a third of the risk; but I am sure the millers would not cut it for that if they did not think they were going to get more than 4s. for it. I have received several letters lately enquiring about these blocks, which I produce.

851. I see these letters confirm the opinion you have already expressed? Yes; I have answered these letters, stating what the Tasmanian Government intended doing in the matter.

852. One correspondent, I see, states that the ordinary Tasmanian hardwood could be advantageously adopted in London as well as the jarrah and other timbers used now? Yes; they use the same sort of timber as our hardwood in Sydney and Melbourne, and it answers splendidly. The "messmate" they use there is very similar to our hardwood.

853. Is the correspondent who I have just referred to one that has had colonial experience? Yes.

854. And you have also received information that the Western Australian jarrah is being sold for £13 5s. per 1000 blocks in Leicester? Yes.

855. And what would be the cost, without the freight? According to the letter, it would be £9 10s.

856. Can Tasmanian timber be landed in London at a cheaper rate? Yes, at £3 15s. per 1000 feet, profitably.

857. Are you acquainted with the jarrah? Yes.

858. Do you know anything about its qualities? I know it to be a splendid wood.

859. Do you think it better than the Tasmanian wood for paving? I think it is; but hardwood is equal for the purpose.

860. How many men do you generally employ? We are short-handed just now, but when we are in full swing we keep about 50 or 60 men going in cutting timber and bringing it up, in hardwood alone. At present we have only about 25 employed.

861. If your mills were going to their full capacity you could employ from 25 to 30 more men? Yes, certainly, and more when we work night and day.

862. Then if some arrangements were made for sending home a large shipment of these blocks, you could find employment for a good many men? Yes, if we got a fair price.

863. Supposing your mills were going at their full capacity cutting these blocks, how many more men could you employ? 20 to 25 men.

864. I suppose most of the saw-mills now are pretty well idle? Yes, they are all practically idle, and their tramways are all going to ruin.

865. Can you give us roughly any idea of what labour is required for producing about 1000 feet of these blocks per week? I cannot tell very well off hand. It costs 2s. a hundred to produce the timber in log.

866. Do you think out of about £3, the average price for 1000 feet of timber, 50s. would be spent in labour? Yes, that is about it. The labour is more than the timber; it is all labour.

867. Do you refer to these blocks now? Yes. They will have to be cut "on the quarter"; and you will not get more than half of a log.

868. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Practically the £3 per 1000 feet nearly all goes in labour, and horses, and horse-feed? Yes.

869. So there is very little margin left for profit? Very little. Our timber is all labour from the time you get the tree down till you get rid of it.

870. Do you think it desirable to send one of the mill-owners home with the first shipment? Most undoubtedly. Some one should go who thoroughly understands our timber. I am prepared to give a share towards sending a man home if the Government will not do it; otherwise the timber would be left to the Agent-General, who would probably know nothing about it. The mills are all idle now. I know a good man who could get away without any derangement to his business.

871. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Can you give me any estimate of the cost, delivered at the ship's side, of cutting 1000 blocks? We reckon about £3 per 1000 superficial feet.

872. The cost of jarrah delivered in London is £9 10s. per 1000? Yes, in ship's slings.

873. At what price could we deliver our timber? I think from £6 15s. to £7 per 1000. We reckon on the average about £7.

874. Have you any idea of whether stringy-bark or blue-gum would be the best to send? No, I think one answers as well as the other for this purpose. There is no doubt blue-gum is harder.

875. Are these two woods the only two spoken of for the purpose? Yes, that is all. I might mention that about 3 or 4 years ago I had an enquiry from Cairo, from a contractor there, about these blocks; I sent a couple of cases of blocks to him, and he found they suited admirably.

876. Can you give me any idea why there is such a difference between the price of jarrah and our woods? I have heard that there are only about 4 or 5 trees of jarrah to the acre, and the wood has in many cases to be carted long distances, from 25 to 30 miles, which makes it more expensive.

877. Assuming our wood proves to be as good as the jarrah, will we not have a great advantage over Western Australia in the price at which we can deliver it? Yes, that will give us a big pull. It is not the first time we have tried this thing. I arranged to send a shipment to Egypt, and had agreed on the price and everything, and I could not get a vessel to take them there. None of the mail boats would carry them, and it would not pay a sailing vessel to take them.

878. Do you know how the jarrah wood is carried? By sailing ship. I have known one or two sailing vessels leave for W. Australia to load jarrah after discharging here. The jarrah timber company opened an agency and laid a street in London, that is how they got introduced. The way the thing is done there is that a brass plate is put on a section of the street "This was laid by so and so."

879. Don't you think it would be desirable to have some sort of Government inspector appointed to see that none but the very best timber was sent? Yes, we have already suggested that to the Government.

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THOMAS FISHER, *called and examined.*

880. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Thomas Fisher.

881. You are interested in the timber industry? Yes.

882. You know that the Government propose to assist the saw-millers in sending home a shipment of Tasmanian wood-blocks? Yes.

883. Do you think there would be any risk incurred by the Government in doing so? I don't think there will be any risk to the colony. I believe the timber will realise more than it will cost to send it home.

884. You think the results of sending the shipment will be a profit? Yes.

885. And there is very little chance of loss occurring from it? Yes.

886. Have you received any information from timber merchants at home about the matter? Not lately.

887. Have you ever been a saw-mill proprietor? For a good many years.

888. We have been informed that the principal cost in the production of sawn timber is for wages? Yes, for labour.



889. Is the price the saw-millers are receiving from the Government a fair price for these blocks? Under the arrangement with the Government at present the mill-owners are taking part of the risk in the speculation. The cost of cutting the timber would be 6s. per 100 feet on the wharf in Hobart, but to assist this shipment the mill-owners are putting it on the wharf at 4s. per 100 feet, and thus sharing the risk.

890. Do the mill-owners consider 6s. the price they ought to receive? Yes, that is a fair price.

891. That is £3 per 1000 feet? Yes.

892. Can you say how much of that £3 would be spent in labour? About 45s., say 75 per cent. of it.

893. Suppose the Government, with a view to giving employment to saw-millers and others, were prepared to largely increase the quantity, do you think the mill-owners would fall in with the idea, and take the same risk as they do now? Yes.

894. Have you had any experience of the wear of Tasmanian timber for paving purposes? Not much. We have blocks in our old exhibition building: I cannot tell how many years they have been there, but certainly a long time; they are in good condition now.

895. Do you think the Government would not incur any risk in sending home a large quantity of this timber? I cannot see where they would run the slightest risk.

896. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Would there be any risk of not getting a fair price for our hardwood as against jarrah? No.

897. Do you not think that in sending this first shipment home it is highly essential to send one of the mill-owners home with it? Yes, it would be the best course to adopt.

898. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Do you know if any arrangement has been made for governmental inspection of the timber? I don't think the Government have yet made any such arrangement, but it is part of the scheme. The whole of the timber is to be inspected by a Government inspector.

899. *By the Chairman.*—Under the proposed arrangement each mill-owner will agree to provide a certain portion of the timber? They have done so. I myself have agreed to supply a certain quantity.

900. Would you have any objection to largely increasing that quantity under the same terms? No, not as a trial shipment.

901. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Do the Government place any condition upon you as to the mode of cutting the timber? Yes, they have taken every precaution. The timber is to be specially selected, and cut on the quarter.

902. *By the Chairman.*—Have the mill-owners yet begun to cut the timber? One or two of them have commenced.

903. What quantity is spoken of as being sent home? 300,000 feet from this end of the island.

904. That would be about £600 worth? Yes, to the mill-owners.

905. I suppose nearly all that £600 would go in wages? Yes, none of it will go into the mill-owners' pockets. Some of it will go for horse feed and that sort of thing.

906. Do you think the mill-owners generally would be willing to provide a larger quantity? Yes, to encourage the speculation—really it is a speculation.

#### HENRY CHESTERMAN, *called and examined.*

907. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Henry Chesterman.

908. You are a timber merchant and saw-mill proprietor? Yes.

909. Can you give the Committee any information in regard to your own business? Yes, in regard to the non-production of timber at the present time, which has very much aggravated the unemployed difficulty.

910. Can you make any suggestion as to the remedy? There are some 15 or 16 sawmills in the south, and only about three of them are employed. Each mill can support about 30 families, so that it will be easily seen how much the non-working of the mills has contributed to the difficulty.

911. Can you make any suggestion as to work being found for these mills? Seeing that all the Colonial markets are closed against us, it is certainly a little gleam of sunshine that there is a prospect of a market in London for these wood blocks.

912. Are you one of the mill-owners under treaty to the Government? I am.

913. The Government is going to pay a price equal to about two-thirds of the value? Yes.

914. Therefore the mill-owners are taking about one-third of the risk? Yes.

915. Do you think the Government would be justified in sending home a larger shipment than is now proposed? Yes, and I have strongly advocated that. A small parcel would be hardly worth dealing with in London. To place Tasmanian timber properly before London and other large cities it would be necessary to do the thing on a large scale.

916. Do you think the quantity of timber now to be sent is sufficient to give a fair test? Yes, I think so.

917. Do you think the Government would be justified in sending a quantity exceeding that, with a view of giving employment to the mill hands at present out of work, if they could do so without any undue risk to the colony? Yes, it would be quite justifiable.

918. Do you know the price of jarrah in London? About 24s. per 100 superficial feet.

919. Is that alongside the ship? I cannot say.

920. Could not we send home good timber at a profit at a very much lower price? Yes, at little over half-price mentioned to us as being paid for jarrah.

921. Have you had any opportunity of comparing jarrah with our wood in the matter of wear? No. There are qualities about the jarrah which recommend it for many purposes, but I don't know that it is specially suited for blocks. I saw a cargo of jarrah in the little steamer that brought Governor Weld here from Western Australia, and it was a timber that was second to none, and suited for better purposes than paving-blocks.

922. Have you any further suggestions to make to the Committee? I consider that in regard to a large number of the unemployed here work should be found for them as near the city as possible. Amongst them there are a large number of young hardy men, able to rough it, who might be sent by the Government to the works where hardships might have to be endured. Travelling to the Huon last week I saw a contingent of the unemployed under the charge of an officer, and I was pleased to find these men were about to be employed in piece-work.

923. What particular works would you suggest in the vicinity of the city? Well, for instance, there is a very wide scope for improvement in the Domain.

924. It will not be fair to ask the Government to devote the money of the general taxpayers to beautify one place? Perhaps it would be unfair to other portions of the colony, unless they were treated in a like manner; but the Domain is certainly an exception to any other piece of land. A drive round by the Cornelian Bay Cemetery is a matter that might well be taken in hand.

925. You are a member of the Marine Board? Yes.

926. Do you know the piece of land that is now being reclaimed at the back of the slaughter-yards? I do.

927. When that is fully reclaimed whose property will it be? That area I consider at present as being within the keeping of the Marine Board. As to whom it is to belong to when reclaimed I can hardly venture an opinion.

928. Whoever might be the owner of the property generally do you think it would be a valuable block of land? It would be of great value.

929. Would it be so valuable as to justify the expense of filling it in as a means of finding work? No, I think not, unless there was an urgency for it.

930. If the Government were to offer that piece of land to any of the public bodies who would go to the cost of filling it in, would it be wise of them to accept it? Oh, yes.

931. Therefore you think the cost of the labour required in filling it in would be met by the increased value given to the land? Well, it would be rather an expensive job.

932. Do you think it would cost a great deal to fill that piece of land in? Yes.

933. Don't you think it will be worth filling in sooner or later? Oh, yes, later on.

934. Do you think it would be possible to do the work cheaper later on than at the present time? I would fear the heavy outlay required to fill in so large an area. I suppose in the space of a couple of years the whole space would be filled in at a cost of nil.

935. Has it not been used as a tip for a considerable time? For a very short time, comparatively speaking. I noticed it was being filled in with considerable rapidity as soon as an area was left to tip stuff. I was astonished at the rapidity with which it was being filled in.

936. Have you any idea of who will claim the land? It will be between the Government and the Marine Board. I do not think any other body could claim it.

937. Is there any dispute between the Marine Board and the Government at present regarding it? The Marine Board has gone to the expense of piling it on the understanding that they would be repaid the whole of it when the work was done. Our correspondence all tends to show that.

938. You understand that the Government intends taking the ground, and paying the Marine Board for piling it in? Yes, when it pleases.

939. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Do not you think that that piling to be permanent wants to be strengthened? Yes, it wants backing up.

940. And also stone rubble inside? Yes; that would thoroughly secure the expenditure already incurred. My idea is that the piling should be returned in shore.

941. *By the Chairman.*—You know the Government have not sufficient room at the Railway Station? Yes; this piece of land would probably afford them the extra accommodation they require. If the engineering difficulties were overcome this piece of land might be used in connection with an extension of the railway along the wharves.

942. Do you think the Government would be justified in making a road to and surveying unselected land before allowing selectors to take it up? Yes; and second-class land would be taken up and worked which would otherwise lie idle. I have observed throughout the Huon district the indifferent land that has been utilised and planted with orchards and so on. I might suggest as another work a canal through East Bay Neck, which would very much shorten the distance to Spring Bay and all the East Coast ports; it would be a work of considerable magnitude, and one that might be taken in hand by the Government to find work for the unemployed. Eagle Hawk Neck would not occasion such an outlay, but the gain would be hardly worth contending for.

943. You would not mean the canal for small vessels? I would make it for coasting vessels and small steamers.

944. Has any action been taken in the past by the Government in relation to either of these canals? Yes, they tested the rock at Eagle Hawk Neck.

945. Do you know if any report was made as to the feasibility of the plan? I think there was; and on the whole I rather think it was favourable. At East Bay Neck there would be about a quarter of a mile of land to cut through, and it is thoroughly sheltered on both sides.

946. I would like to support the Surveyor-General's idea very much in regard to the survey of roads before selection. I think the construction of roads should be, if possible, in advance of settlement. In that way labour would be found for the unemployed.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 1894.

HENRY CHESTERMAN, *recalled*.

947. *By the Chairman*.—Can you give the Committee any more information in regard to the subject upon which we examined you before? Yes.

948. Have you any further suggestions to make that you have thought of yourself? Yes, there was one arising out of this wood-block business that is so particularly before us at the present time. I think it would be very opportune if the Government took upon themselves to open correspondence with the various European Governments to see if there was any likelihood of business being done with them. We know ourselves there have been some enquiries made from several places, but it is a difficult matter for private firms to broach the subject. The Government, however, could take the initiative with much better results possibly.

949. Do you know what countries are likely to use our blocks? Well, I am not sure that France would not. Belgium, I am sure, would use them, and also Berlin. There are firms in London that are anxious to do business with us in a general way, but when Governments communicate one with another I think the results are likely to be much more beneficial.

950. But that would not be likely to assist the immediate difficulty, would it? I think from the present outlook the difficulty is likely to last for some time. At any rate, there is a very poor prospect for our timber industries unless there is something done in this way. The timber industry has been one of considerable magnitude, both in the south and north ends of the Island, and the whole ground seems now to be cut from under our feet through each colony protecting itself so much.

951. Have you had any personal experience of wood-block paving? Yes, my yard on the wharf and my stables have been paved with wood-blocks for some years; and many of our back yards and stables have been so paved and found to answer well.

952. What size blocks do you use?  $6 \times 4$  inches.

953. *By Mr. Bradley*.—Laid end on? Yes, all end on, and  $6 \times 4$ ; they are there to be seen whenever you like.

954. *By the Chairman*.—My wish is to get some information from you as to the most suitable size of blocks; the size we propose to send home is  $9 \times 3$ , which seems to be the standard size? Yes, that is so, but it would make quite as good a job and facilitate the supply if a size smaller in width were sent.

955. If narrower sized blocks were used could you produce them at a lower rate? Yes; it would facilitate production both in quality, quantity, and price.

956. Can you give us any information as to whether smaller blocks would answer better than blocks of the standard size? I think the smaller blocks would answer better; they would carry their size through better, and would be less liable to warping.

957. Would they not be more costly to lay? There would be very little difference: on the contrary, I think they would be a decided advantage, as experience tells us that a large plank will get out of shape much more readily than a series of small ones.

958. Which will be best to send home, green or dry timber? Dry timber would not be the right thing at all. I wish to say very pointedly that there could not be a better time than the present one for cutting the timber; the sap is now down, and the opportunity could not be better.

959. *By Mr. Bradley*.—I would like to ask you a question bearing on our hardwood, as to its being used seasoned or green for different classes of work; of course you have been many years in the timber trade—and so have I, for that matter—and will be able to give a valuable opinion. Take, for instance, house-work, bridge-work, and ship-building—can you tell us the classes of timber required? For house-work and bridge-work seasoned timber is required, but for ship-building partially seasoned timber is the best, as it has to swell and make the ship tight.

960. If dry timber were used in a ship's bottom would it not swell too much? Yes, and would be a very serious defect at the meeting of timbers.

961. Now, with regard to the wood blocks, this is the point I am coming to: in your opinion would it not be an equally serious defect in wood blocks if they were put down in the streets seasoned? I have just expressed the opinion that dry timber would not do at all; I have experienced it myself in the wood-paving I laid in my own yard.

962. Do you think hardwood cut at this season of the year and sent home to Europe, to be put into the road at once, would be in proper condition? I think it would, most decidedly; my opinion is very decided on that point. There is always a quantity of moisture in thoroughfares, and seasoned timber would absorb it and get out of shape. It seems to me that though there is always a market in London for

these blocks, it will be always a question of price, and in that regard we can compete on favourable terms with other colonies. Our timber is water-borne in its carriage from the time of its production.

963. *By the Chairman.*—I suppose the propriety of using seasoned or green timber would depend in great measure on the climate of the country to which the wood is sent? I don't think so. The droppings in thoroughfares, even in the hottest countries, would give enough moisture to maintain a sort of equilibrium.

964. Would the 6 by 4 blocks be a suitable size? It would be a suitable size we could produce, but  $9 \times 3$  and  $5 \times 3$  would be favourable to supply.

965. Would it not be a size you could produce more cheaply, and with a better class of timber? Yes, just so, and it would facilitate the breaking of joints.

966. Have you any further suggestions to make? Yes; I think the time has arrived when the English and other markets should be open to our timbers. They compare very favourably with many of the best timbers used at home, such as the oak, teak, and jarrah. They are eminently suitable for house-building and flooring, being in that respect quite equal to the oak. The rapid and cheap transit from here to England will give us an outlet once a market is found for it.

967. Can you tell us anything further in regard to that piece of land that is being reclaimed at the rear of the slaughter-yards? Yes, but I have a few words more to say in regard to our timbers. They would be very suitable for flooring and agricultural implements, and some agency should be established to bring them before European buyers. As to the land being reclaimed, it will be a very valuable area, and some authority should continue the reclamation.

968. Can you give us an estimate of the amount of damage done by that gale which carried away a portion of the piling? The Marine Board, at its own cost, saved the wreckage that was floating about the river.

969. How much would it cost to replace the piling that was washed away? I would not recommend the replacing of it at the present stage. I would recommend a return of the piling so as to make that done now more substantial.

970. But surely you would not leave that gap open? I would for the present, decidedly, unless we were prepared to go in for a large expenditure.

971. Is not the remaining portion in danger? It is to some extent, but from the piles having been driven into a clay bottom I think it will stand. The present breach will make an outlet for the tidal waters, which will leave it fairly secure.

972. Would that piling have carried away if it had been backed up inside? No, it would not.

973. That piling has been constructed with the public funds? Yes, with the Marine Board's funds.

974. And money has been wasted because it was not backed up? Yes.

975. And there is the same risk of the remaining portion being carried away? Yes; except as before stated.

976. And that risk would not continue if it was backed up with earthworks? No, it would not.

977. And the earthworks would be a portion of the reclamation? Yes.

978. Have you any idea of the area to be reclaimed? No, I have not; but I suppose our plans in the Marine Board Office would show that; it is extensive.

979. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would it be advisable to send the timber home in planks or in  $9 \times 3$  in. blocks? It has been already decided to send it home in planks. Sending it in blocks would add materially to the cost.

980. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Was there any arrangement between the Government and Marine Board as to backing up the piling? No; the Marine Board's work terminated with the present wooden structure.

981. What they did they did independently of the Government? No, at the instance of the Government.

982. Without any definite arrangement with the Government? No, there was an understanding between the Board and the Government.

983. To what length did that understanding go? The Marine Board was under the impression that as soon as they had completed the piling they would have nothing to do but ask the Treasury to refund the amount so laid out.

984. Was the Marine Board under the impression that the piling would be sufficient to resist the water without anything further? There was a doubt about it, but the Marine Board was in the hands of the Government as to the extent of work to be done.

985. And experience has shown that a mistake was made? Yes; it should have been further supported by backing it up.

986. Is there any difference, in regard to wood paving, between blue-gum and stringy-bark? I think the stringy-bark would be almost preferable to the blue-gum.

987. I am told that the stringy-bark has a tendency to split under the pressure of heavy traffic? There is no chance of its splitting when it is packed. One block protects the other. There might be a percentage of blocks split, but none of the wood could get away.

988. Does stringy-bark split easier than blue-gum? Yes, it will split easier in some cases.

GEORGE FISHER BEARDSLEY, *called and examined.*

989. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? George Fisher Beardsley.

990. What are you? My profession is that of a metallurgist.

991. You have held the position of manager of the Zeehan and Dundas Smelting Works? Yes.

992. Can you tell us roughly the quantity of silver-lead ore exported per month from this Colony? It will average at the present time about 1700 tons per month. That is the raw ore, of course. I believe for the month of March it was 1900 tons, and for April about 1700 tons. I have not got the exact figures.

993. Is that quantity likely to be maintained or increased? I think the quantity will be increased somewhat as the mines are more fully developed.

994. Can you tell us anything as to the character of the ore, and the possibility of economically smelting it here? The character of the ore generally is that of a sulphide ore, though not exactly the same as that at Broken Hill. It is freer from antimony, arsenic, and bismuth; indeed, the ores from Zeehan are clean in that respect. At Dundas there are more oxidised minerals with the ore, such as oxide of iron, though in the lower portion of the Maestri's mine more galena came in. I think that as the mines get deeper the ore will be found to be similar to that at Zeehan, though probably not exactly the same. With reference to economically smelting in the Colony, I see no reason why smelting should not be carried on here as cheaply as in any other part of Australia—Melbourne, Adelaide, or Sydney for instance.

995. Apart from any particular locality, you think it could be smelted as cheaply in Tasmania as in Australia? Yes.

996. Is our ore a difficult one to smelt? No, the ore is a kindly one to treat.

997. Have we in the Colony the proper kind of fluxes easily available? Yes; all round the country where the ore is got, fluxes are to be found perfectly suitable for the treatment of it.

998. Can you give the Committee any idea of the difference between the value of the ore as exported in its raw state and its value as exported in the form of bullion? It would mean all the value of the ore, less 10 per cent. of the lead that is lost in smelting, plus the value of the labour that was spent upon it.

999. I want to know the difference in figures in the export value? It all depends on the assay value of the ore.

1000. What would be about the average value of 1500 tons of raw ore exported? I don't suppose it would be worth more than from £6 to £7 per ton at the outside.

1001. Can you tell us about the average percentage of lead and silver that would be in ore at that price? There would be about 60 per cent. of lead; but that can be easily found out by taking the *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* of the beginning of the month.

1002. What would be the value of the lead and silver when turned into bullion? Its value then would be about £12 a ton.

1003. Then a ton of average ore worth about £6 or £7 would be worth £11 or £12 when turned into bullion? Yes.

1004. At any rate it would mean a large increase in the value of the export? Yes, a very considerable increase.

1005. As a practical man, can you give us any idea of the amount of direct employment given in smelting, say 2000 tons of ore per month? I can give you the figures exactly for 1500 tons a month, the amount we put through our smelters at Zeehan. With one furnace going we employed just 50 men, including the staff, for 24 hours. Besides these, there were seven men and six horses employed in getting fluxes. It will take half as many more men to put through 2000 tons per month, as it will require two furnaces and two crews to be kept going. I dare say 2000 tons per month would employ about 75 men per day, besides the men employed in getting fluxes. Besides all these, it will employ a great many men which it would be hard to trace out, as some would be engaged at a distance from the works. There will be the men who raise the coal and make it into coke, those who bring it to the smelters, the steamer men, wharf labourers, railway men, and so on, besides the repairs and foundry work, which amounts to £200 or £300 a year.

1006. During the time you were working you were dealing with one particular class of ore, were you not? Yes, with one class of ore altogether.

1007. Would the general class of ore have to be treated in the same way as you treated that you dealt with? There would have to be something of a change, and more men would be required. The sulphide ores would have to be treated by roasting or partial fusion to dispose of the sulphur before they could be smelted. That is different to the work I carried out with the Maestri's ore, and would require more men and a bit more plant in the shape of roasting furnaces.

1008. Supposing the plant was kept fully occupied, how many men would be employed? I employed 57 men to treat 1500 tons per month, and 25 to 30 men more would be required to roast 60 tons a day.

1009. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Do you charge more for smelting sulphide ores? It is usual to charge more for smelting sulphide ores than for oxidised ores.

1010. *By the Chairman.*—With the plant you had under your charge would it be possible to deal with all the ore now being turned out? Yes. I put through 3076 tons in 62 days.

1011. With the different class of ores you would require 75 to 80 men with the one smelter? Yes.

1012. And that would deal with 1500 tons a month? Yes.

1013. From that it would be fair to estimate that 2000 tons would require one-third more men? Yes; but, of course, there must be a small allowance made for some of the ore going away.

1014. What is the general character of the labour employed? With very few exceptions ordinary labour will do, for it can be soon trained into what is required. A few days' work will bring it into shape. The only skilled men outside the metallurgical staff are the engine-drivers and furnace-men.

1015. Do you know anything of the Tasmanian coals? I have had no experience of them. There is no reason why they should not be used for fuel as long as the price is in keeping with their calorific value. As to their coking powers I have no information on the subject.

1016. Is not coke a large item in smelting? Yes, it requires about a ton of coke to every five or six tons of ore.

1017. In the event of smelting works being established in the Colony, would there be a probability of low-grade ores not now being worked being utilised? I don't think so, because the working of low-grade ores depends more on the value of silver. The price of silver is now 2s. 5d. per oz.; and it requires a considerable difference in the number of ounces of silver in the ton to what it did previously to bring an ore to the paying point. If it were 3s. 5d. an ounce, then a few ounces would make sufficient difference to make an ore payable that would not now be touched. If the cost of smelting could be brought down, some of the poorer ores might be used up. The sulphide ores are nearly all mechanically treated beforehand, and it is really a matter of the amount of silver in the lead. Where it runs below 40 ounces to the ton it scarcely pays. I don't think, therefore, that further smelting facilities would bring forward much more low-grade ore at the present low price of silver.

1018. Do you think that ore-smelting as an industry is likely to develop into large proportions in the Colony if it once got a fair start? I don't know: it depends a good deal on the supply of ore. It cannot expand beyond a certain limit unless the supply commences to expand also, and that can only take place in the direction of new mines being started, or the present mines getting larger bodies of workable ores.

1019. You know a good deal of the Zeehan country, I believe? Yes.

1020. Do you think there is a prospect of further development there? The field is not half developed, on account of its peculiar characteristics. It is covered with dense scrub, and I firmly believe there are hundreds of lodes which it would pay to work which have not yet been seen. There is a good deal of back country which has never been touched.

1021. Are there any particular difficulties in the way of establishing smelting works here? One difficulty is, of course, the capital; but the greatest handicap the local smelter has to contend against is the foreign ore-buyer, who takes the ore away to a land where labour is nothing, in bounty-fed ships in many instances.

1022. Do you mean that he gives a higher price than the intrinsic value of the ore, or a higher price than the local smelter can pay? I mean a higher price than the local smelter can afford to pay, especially where our works were situated. We had to pay high railway rates, and high labourers' wages, 7s. to 8s. a day.

1023. Then the situation of your smelting works was one of the reasons you could not compete with the foreign buyers? Yes, and owing to the peculiar set of circumstances under which they were constructed in the place they were.

1024. You recommended the works being built at Strahan in the first instance, did you not? Yes.

1025. Could they have been worked more economically there? Yes; the ore could have been smelted 17s. a ton more cheaply at Strahan than at Zeehan; and out of that 17s. I could have returned 7s. or 8s. to the mines.

1026. Do you think Strahan would be the best place to establish smelting works in? I am undecided between Strahan and Hobart. The more I see of Hobart the more I think it would be the best place for these heavy ores. The ores which only carry about 10 per cent. of mineral available to turn into bullion it would be better to smelt at the mines. There are none of these mines, however, which will furnish any amount of oxidised material for any length of time. All the lodes turn to sulphide ores as they go down.

1027. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Would the difference in the value of the raw ore and the bullion be expended principally in labour? Yes. You can certainly reckon upon three-fifths of it being expended upon labour and the rest in fuel and fluxes. If suitable coal for making coke could be found, the whole of it would practically be spent here.

1028. You have just said that you think Hobart would be the best place for smelting works? Yes, for sulphide ores.

1029. Notwithstanding that you would have to carry a certain amount of dross between the field and here? Yes, we would more than cover that loss by the difference in the prices of labour and fuel. Coke landed here is from 42s. to 45s. a ton; in Strahan it costs 55s. a ton, and at Zeehan it is 74s. a ton. There is no way of treating it in bulk between Strahan and Zeehan. The railway authorities insist upon its being bagged, and the handling and the bags all cost money, and add considerably to the expense.

1030. Can you recommend any better way of carrying ore between Strahan and Hobart than bagging it? It would require a little preparation to carry it in bulk. The fine concentrates will always have to be bagged, but the coarse ores might be handled in bulk, provided there were preparations made at Zeehan to receive them.

1031. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Can you tell me the proportions which the silver ore smelted in the Colony bears to that which goes out of it? Kennedy's smelting works, the only one in the Colony at present, have accumulated about 270 tons during the last four months to commence smelting with. The proportion the ore that goes out of the Colony bears to that would be four times 1700, the average monthly export.

1032. Is it the Australians or the Germans who are best able to compete with you? A Queensland company are getting a little ore, but very little. Our chief competitor is the Hamburg Metal Company.

1033. Have you formed any opinion as to why the Germans can compete with you, having the freight against them? It has not been a case of fair competition. The company which I represented failed, and never came directly in contact with them. They failed through having floated with too little capital, thinking they could make calls when they wanted money to buy ore. When the crash came the calls were not responded to, as was the case in many mining companies.

1034. Is it then your impression that if there were men here with sufficient capital and energy to start works again we would be able to compete with the Germans? I do. I don't think we would make much out of it unless we had a little help at the start in some way, as the German buyers have the pull. Labour costs the Germans little or nothing, and that more than makes up for the freight, and the ships receive an amount added to the freight for delivering these ores in Germany. Germany has been short of lead for some time, and they pay a bonus for it. I have been told this, but I don't know how true it is. It must be something of that kind that is helping them. The Queensland Works, I know, are only just a feeder to large works in England owned by the Rothschilds, and it makes no difference to them whether they make anything on the smelting or not.

1035. Do the Germans take only first-grade ores? Yes, they want the greatest value in the smallest bulk. They won't touch the oxidised ores, unless they are very rich.

1036. *By the Chairman.*—You say you think that a Company starting smelting here requires some assistance: do you mean assistance from the Government, in the way of cheap Railway rates, or in what direction? It seems to me that an export duty on the raw material will meet the case better than anything else, because money will then come in; whereas a bonus would only come out of the pockets of the Government. A bonus on the bullion, however, might be given. A reduction of railway freights I do not think would be much advantage, though it might assist works at Strahan in treating low-grade ores, which would just pay to smelt. An export duty on raw ore would be a means of crippling those who are sending the ore away.

1037. Don't you think that extinguishing competition would have an injurious effect? It would work against the miner, there is no doubt of that, whilst paying a bonus would stimulate him. But then that bonus would come out of the pockets of the Government, though the increased value of the exports might make up for it.

1038. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—What is the difference in the price paid now by the Germans and the price you had to pay? That is a matter I can scarcely answer, for this reason—I did not have the smelting works in the best position to compete with them. Being located at the end of a Railway 29 miles long, I had to pay excessive railway charges, so that I could not come into direct competition with them.

1039. Assuming that your smelting works were here, and you were in the most favourable position for it, do you think you could compete with them on equal terms? I think we could, if the works were in Hobart.

1040. Then it really comes to this: assuming your works are in Hobart, there will be no need for any special assistance on the part of the Government. It will be a healthy competition? There would be no need of assistance, more than would be necessary to give the works a fair start.

1041. *By the Chairman.*—It would recommend itself to people as an ordinary commercial speculation? Yes.

1042. Do you think the offer by the Government of a small bonus per ton of bullion would hasten the establishment of large smelting works either in Hobart or at Zeehan? I think it should, most assuredly although I don't know the temper of those who would be likely to engage in it.

1043. How long would it be before those works could be put in working order? They should be ready in four and a-half months from the commencement of building operations. When finished it would not take two weeks to have them working and turning out bullion.

1044. Would it be necessary for the Government to offer a bonus for any length of time? No.

1045. For twelve months, say? That would be ample. Once the foreign ore-buyers were broken, the industry would be established here.

1046. Don't you think this would be as legitimate an industry as others for which bonuses are offered by the Government, the cultivation of beet-root for instance? Yes. I don't think the Government could establish smelting works themselves, as there is so much roundabout work to be gone through if the Government do anything of the kind.

1047. Do you know if there was a profit upon your smelting operations at Zeehan? I think there was a profit of from £750 to £780 for sixty-two days' work. It was on 3076 tons.

1048. You made no allowance for deterioration of plant? No.

1049. And of course you had nothing to pay for repairs? That is included. The blacksmiths and carpenters were all working directly we commenced to smelt.

1050. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Taking the ore from Zeehan to Germany must necessitate a fair proportion of loss? Yes.

1051. And that would be in favour of local smelting works? Yes. It amounts to a very considerable quantity—6 to 8 per cent. in some cases.

FRANCIS BELSTEAD, *recalled*.

1052. *By the Chairman*.—Since you last appeared before the Committee, you have visited Mount Cameron, have you not? Yes.

1053. And had opportunities of making enquiries into the subjects we asked you about before? Yes.

1054. Can you give us any further information now? The manager of the Mount Cameron water-race, Mr. Griffin, has given me certain information that I was not aware of when last here. I talked the matter over with him; and he pointed out an abandoned claim, near Gladstone, upon which twenty men could be profitably employed. Mr. Griffin, who is an eminently practical man, has a high opinion of the ground. It could be supplied with water from the race; and most of the dead work has been done. The men could start in to-morrow.

1055. *By Mr. Macdonald*.—On what terms is it proposed they should work the claim? It is suggested that they should be given rations and a fairly liberal percentage of the tin raised, as an inducement to them to work.

1056. *By Mr. Woolnough*.—Would they have any dead work to begin with? No, I don't think so. They would have to work until they had a clean up, which would take a month, possibly.

1057. *By Mr. Macdonald*.—Would the cost of the rations be deducted from the results? No, I don't think so.

1058. If they made 6s. or 7s. a day, you would not suggest that they should get rations as well? No. It would have to be so arranged that if the claim yielded so much as to give them their tribute, as we might term it, of anything over 6s. a day, they should have to pay for their rations.

1059. *By the Chairman*.—That would only give employment to 20 men? Yes, to 4 parties of 5 men each, working around the face. It is deep ground, and they would have to have some knowledge of mining. Mr. Griffin, the Manager of the race, lives close by, and he could visit the mine once or twice a day, and direct the work.

1060. Are there not plenty of men in that locality out of employment? There are plenty of men who are not doing any too well, but there are no unemployed there. I don't know of an unemployed man in the district.

1061. This scheme, then, would give employment to 20 men out of one of the cities? Yes.

1062. Don't you think it would be preferable to send married men there, giving them a low rate of wages and a percentage of the tin? The only difficulty is that miners have a strong aversion to the rate of wages being lowered.

1063. *By Mr. Macdonald*.—The feeling in Derby when I was there was that a small wage should be given, with a share in the results? Yes, that is the general wish. There is always a chance of making something.

1064. *By the Chairman*.—Would you propose to send these men up free of cost? They cannot get there otherwise.

1065. Would there be any initial cost to the Government? There would be an outlay required of £100 for piping, hosing, and tools. We calculated it out, and it came roughly to £100.

1066. *By Mr. Bradley*.—Did you come to any conclusion as to how long that tin-bearing ground would last? No; but there is over 30 acres of the ground, and it is all more or less tin-bearing. A good deal of this £100 would be laid out in piping and hosing, which are readily saleable in that locality.

1067. Is there any other part of Mount Cameron you know of where men could be sent? No, not immediately available. Most of the ground where a number of men could be sent is taken up.

1068. *By the Chairman*.—You are really of opinion that there would be no risk in spending this £100 to give the men a start? None at all. There is every chance of the Government getting it back fourfold. With labour at such a cheap rate and water for nothing, if the Government cannot get £100 out of the ground, then all I can say is that it must be hard lines for the men who are not subsidised in this way.

1069. Mr. Ogilvy has forwarded us some suggestions for utilising the unemployed. One is in regard to improving the public estate by irrigating it from the Mount Cameron water-race? The land there is of the very poorest description. On the other side of the Mussel Roe River there is good land, but it is hardly within range of the Mount Cameron water-race.

1070. There is another suggestion, in regard to draining Dowsett's Marsh? I do not know anything of the quality of the land there, but, by the look of the timber about it, I should not think it was worth much.

1071. Then there is a suggestion as to sending the diamond drill to the Blue Tier? I have recommended that on several occasions, but I don't think I have done so before this Committee.

1072. Have you any further suggestions to make to the Committee? No, there is nothing further that I know of.

1073. *By Mr. Macdonald*.—Do you think a more rigid enforcement of the labour clauses would be beneficial? I think so. But all miners know that if they make an application for forfeiture of a claim their applications will be dealt with and the land forfeited, unless there is valid reason for doing otherwise.

1074. It is stated at Derby that there is work there for 100 men if they could get hold of it? The lessees have fulfilled their labour covenants at Derby, so that no one can interfere with them unless the Act is altered, which would not be desirable.

1075. *By Mr. Woolnough*.—It is stated that in many cases all the available water has been taken up, and individual miners have been unable to get any. Have you had any complaints made to you in regard to that? None whatever. It is not likely to take place, because people have to pay for all the water they take, which is a safeguard against their taking more than they require to use.



THURSDAY, MAY 10TH, 1894.

JOHN GEORGE DAVIES, *called and examined.*1076. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? John George Davies.

1077. You are a Member of the House of Assembly for the Fingal District? Yes.

1078. Do you know the object of the Committee? I do.

1079. And you are acquainted with the peculiar mining features of your district, are you not? Yes, I am.

1080. And do you think you can assist the Committee with any suggestions in regard to the matter, either as to putting men to win tin, or as to altering the regulations so as to enable men to get on the ground? As far as mining is concerned I cannot hold out any hopes to the Committee of finding employment for men in my district, simply because there are so many men there who have been engaged in alluvial mining who are now thrown out of employment because they cannot get tin at a remunerative rate. Many of these men have just been hanging on for some time past in the hopes that some of the lode mines would be eventually worked by Companies; and it would be unfair—in fact, unjust on my part to say there would be any chance there to employ men from other places. I do know where employment could be given to 50 or 60 men in my district without in any way interfering with the labour market, so far as mining is concerned.

1081. In what way? I am able to speak not only from my own knowledge of my district, but from the opinions I have heard from others, and I can say there are one or two spots where labour could be employed, and profitably employed, with direct advantage to the State. I refer to the continuation of the road at South George's River, which has been made out of Waste Lands money and track money. If continued, this road would open up almost immediately a most important trade, in the first place between the settlement of George's River and Mathinna, and thus give an outlet to the small farmers there to get rid of their dairy produce locally, instead of having to send it to Hobart or Launceston. By opening up a road 18 or 20 miles in length, we would have a home market, which would be very beneficial; and it would also be the means of opening up a large tract of country, and I have reason to know there are several thousands of acres in that locality which would be almost immediately taken up for selection. Because there is no possibility of people getting ingress or egress to it, the land remains in a state of nature. I am strongly of opinion if 50 or 60 men were put on at a wage,—not a starvation wage, because I do not believe in that principle at all—under one or two good overseers, very good work would be done, and employment given, and within 12 months the Colony would reap the benefit by a great deal of this land being taken up for selection.

1082. Would there be a probability of opening up fresh mineral land? A certain portion of this land is withdrawn from selection, a fact which I deprecate strongly. I have every reason to believe that this road will lead to new mineral discoveries, more particularly at the head of the Scamander River, which locality, perhaps unknown to you, is attracting a good deal of attention just now. A new company has been formed to work there, and has made some very promising discoveries; and in fact I urged on the Government recently the necessity of sending up the Geological Surveyor to report on this country; I think such a report would be very useful I would also like to draw the attention of the Committee to this fact that there are tracks in that district which have been passed by Parliament and not gone on with; and although the work has been laid out the money has not been expended. However, the general run of labour in my district is fairly well employed, and it would not be out of place if some of the men from the towns were sent up there. One road, I may mention, going through properties owned by Lowry and others, has been advertised for tender four times, and none of the tenders have come near the estimate of the overseer. There is a chance now, if the overseer thinks he can get it done for the money, to put men on at once. It would employ 20 or 30 men for the next few months.

1083. What is the amount voted for that road? I cannot tell exactly, as it is under the Waste Lands Act. I know the overseer, and I think he is a very good and careful man.

1084. Is there any opportunity of sending people fossicking, as they do in the other colonies, up Mangana way? It would not do here, unless a man has some knowledge of the country. It is not like open country; a man must be a good bushman, and must know something about the business too.

1085. Would you be in favour of the Government giving Railway passes and free Miners' Rights to men who had had experience in gold mining? I would give them a Railway pass but not a Miner's Right, because I cannot see why you should make any difference between the unemployed in the cities and those who remain in the country. In my own district and in Ringarooma there are scores of men in the same circumstances as these men in the cities, but these poor fellows won't go into the cities. I don't believe in Miners' Rights at all—I think we should do without them.

1086. Do you know if there are many unemployed in your district—at the Blue Tier especially? I think there are about 40 or 50 men at the top end of my district who are on the verge of starvation; but on the St. Mary's side there is no such thing as poverty. Round about the Lottah and Gould's Country and that district there are men who can just exist. They have their little homes and families, and have been living on in expectation that something is going to turn up at the Blue Tier.

1087. Are not these people able to go "gully-raking"? They, most of them, do that now, but in consequence of the low price of tin and the pooriness of the ground they have to work, a man who can earn £1 a week does precious well. I am sure a lot of them do not earn £1 a week.

1088. Do you think there is any alluvial ground on any of the tin-mining leases there which would give employment to these men or others if it were available? From my own experience of the Blue Tier I think the small amount of alluvial ground that might be found would be hardly worth while interfering with. The ground is principally lode-mining, and can only be worked by machinery, and another great

difficulty is the water. If you throw these leases open you will only throw them into the hands of speculators.

1089. We have been told by a man who knows the Blue Tier very well, that if it were not for the large sum that is exacted for tribute, men could make a very fair living by getting the alluvial tin, if the land was free to them. He mentioned the Lottah particularly; he said about 200 men could be employed there? I happen to know the man who made that statement.

1090. Do you think it is correct? I would not like to set my opinion up against that of a practical man; but I know him to be a very sanguine man. I wish it were so; but I really don't think it is. I have argued the point out over and over again; and, in my opinion, the Blue Tier can never be worked to advantage unless capital is brought in to do it. It is a large lode formation, or a "blow" of tin, very much like the Anchor, and there is no doubt that the only way to work it profitably would be on a very large scale, which would mean a very large amount of capital. That is my opinion, and I think the opinion of all practical men who speak from an unprejudiced point of view.

1091. It has been suggested to send the diamond drill there? Yes.

1092. That has not been done? No. I have advocated it myself all through; but I think if the Government were to open up a prospecting shaft it would be very much better.

1093. Would you recommend the Government to open up a prospecting shaft? Yes, that is the view I have always taken; and it will have to be done eventually. A great many of these things will have to be done by the Colony; and it is very much better that a site should be fixed on, whether on leased or unleased ground, to test these tin mines to a depth, by means of a shaft, than by the diamond drill. If we got only one good mine opened up that way, capital would be immediately brought into the Colony. I think the Government should spend about £5000 in sinking a shaft 500 or 600 feet deep, and open it up, say, for 100 feet on each side, selling it by auction when finished.

1094. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Or working it on tribute? Yes, or working it on tribute. There has been a great deal of talk about a prospecting vote, but this is the best possible prospecting vote you can have.

1095. Do you think the Blue Tier is as good a place as any? As far as our district is concerned you could not have a better place. At Ben Lomond things are looking very well, and they don't want it. The Blue Tier failed as the West Coast and Mt. Heemskirk failed—they had to stop when they should have gone on.

1096. Do you know that the New Moon claim is for sale? Yes, with the machinery on it.

1097. Would you be in favour of the Government purchasing that property and developing it to prove the existence of such an ore body as would lead to sufficient capital coming forward to work it? Precisely so. We only want to prove it to a depth, and then private enterprise would come in. It is want of faith, caused by the losses many people have sustained, that is causing capital to hold back at present.

1098. Do you think there would be very much risk in the Government undertaking that work? I am not a practical miner, as you know; but, from all the information I have ever received on the subject, there is no doubt that if a shaft were sunk to a depth of 500 or 600 feet, and opened out, a body of stuff would be found which would make it payable for any company.

1099. Would it not cost more than £5000 to sink to that depth? Oh no; you could get the shaft put down for £3000 or so. It is very easy ground, and the stone is flaky, so that the difficulty of getting it out is not great. At Mathinna, nearly all the work of the Golden Gate Company, which is the chief mine of the District, is done by contract.

1100. Do you endorse Mr. Counsel's opinion as to the good land lying south east of St. Helen's? Yes.

1101. Do you think there would be plenty of settlers to take that land up, if it was available? I have not the slightest doubt in my mind, if the principle is adopted of first of all fixing the area, and putting the road through, and cutting the land into 50-acre blocks, that every block would be taken up and settled upon.

1102. Would you advocate survey before selection? I have always advocated it. Half the unnecessary expense in the past in roads has been caused by the absurd idea of people selecting here and there, whereas, if a certain block were surveyed, and a proper road cut to it, much of the expense would be saved. You have only to go to my district to see the absurdity of the present system.

1103. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Is there any pumping gear attached to the M'Gough machinery? No.

1104. Would not the Government have to get pumping machinery if they purchased it? I don't know. There is not much water there. The machinery is not very large. It is only a 30-head battery, and not nearly large enough to work the claim successfully, though it is large enough to prove it.

1105. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—What is your opinion as to the labour clauses—do you think they should be more strictly enforced in the mining districts? It is a very difficult subject, and includes advantages and disadvantages. There is no doubt in the world that if we were to insist on the labour clauses as they are at present being carried out we would do a great deal of injury to mining. In my opinion, it would be better to liberalise the labour clauses before insisting upon their being carried out. The number of men which a Company is required to keep at work is too great; and it would be very much better to reduce the number, and then insist on the labour clauses being carried out. I feel sure that if we attempt to carry out the labour clauses as they are at present, the country would lose a great deal of revenue.

1106. *By the Chairman.*—I will put the question in another way. What would be the effect of a general enforcement of the labour clauses in regard to giving employment—would it throw open land, and thus give employment to men? From my own experience I do not think it would, because it would occasion a considerable loss to the revenue, and I don't think we would reap any advantage from it. With very few exceptions, the land that is occupied now on lease is virtually only suitable for companies.

1107. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—When you speak of the Government spending money at the Blue Tier, is it with a view of prospecting new ground, or ground already leased? I don't care which it is. If the Government once proves that these lodes are payable at a depth, there will be no difficulty in getting capital brought in to further develop them, thus giving employment to hundreds of men.

1108. Do you not think the diamond drill would do as well? The diamond drill is all very well in some respects, but in a country like the Blue Tier I don't think it would be so useful, or attain the object we have in view. The diamond drill is all very well if you cannot get anything else.

1109. How would you suggest that any money given by the Government should be used? I would suggest that a practical man—a geologist who knows that country—should be sent up to fix upon a site, and a shaft should then be sunk, say 500 feet, and opened up perhaps 100 feet on each side. This would be the means of inducing capital to come in and develop that high mountain of ore which is there?

1110. Do you think that it would be advisable for the Government to test for lode tin experimentally? Yes, the Government could do this as well as other things. We all know we must be dependent upon the success of our mines, and I think £5000 spent that way would not be money lost. Supposing this experiment were tried upon leased land and good stuff were found, the company who were the original owners should have the power to work that mine, the Government being repaid, as a first charge, the money they expended, with four or five per cent. interest.

1111. *By Mr. Bradley.*—With regard to the enforcement of the labour covenants, do you think if the Government enforced them wholesale the evil would be just as great? Yes, it would be jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire.

1112. If a section is forfeited another person can take it up and let it lie idle for 12 months, and no one can touch him? Yes.

1113. And many sections that are now paying rent would be entirely forfeited? Yes. It would be a very unwise step to take at the present juncture.

1114. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think that the present system is the best one, or would you be in favour of land being forfeited *ipse facto*? I think if you liberalise the labour clauses by reducing the number of men that is necessary to employ then you might enforce the law, and if the clauses are not carried out, then forfeiture should follow as a matter of course.

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DONALD CAMPBELL URQUHART, *called and examined.*

1115. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Donald Campbell Urquhart.

1116. You are the Member of the House of Assembly for the District of Montagu? Yes.

1117. Do you know the object of this Committee? Yes.

1118. Are you able to make any suggestions which would be of value to the Committee? I have to interview the Minister of Lands almost immediately in regard to some urgent works which will be required.

1119. Of what character are those works? Making tracks beyond the Maestri's mine down the Stanley River.

1120. Is that all mineral country? Yes. I have been informed by several of the mineral lessees that unless they can get tracks they will forfeit their sections; they are paying rents, but it is impossible to work them.

1121. In what locality are those sections? On the Stanley River, and towards the Pieman.

1122. Are there not some very good reports from the Stanley River? Yes, so far as tin is concerned, but there are no means of getting the stuff in.

1123. Have you any reliable information about that particular field which would justify us in making any recommendation? A large area of land has been taken up, and rent is being paid upon it.

1124. Has any quantity of tin been got out? The surface indications are very favourable.

1125. But cutting tracks is not likely to give employment to a large number of men? No; but it will help to relieve the congested state of the Zeehan labour market and will open up the mineral fields, and, when the fields are opened up, men will be enabled to go and work them.

1126. Are there to your knowledge many mines, or any mines, at Zeehan now that are not being worked which would give employment to men if they were available? There are many companies who hold large areas of land who are keeping within the four corners of the Act, but who practically are not doing any work.

1127. These mines might find employment for a large number of men? Yes, and sections could be let on tribute if the companies would make reasonable terms. I can instance the Silver King and Silver Queen Companies, which own hundreds of acres each.

1128. Are these companies letting their ground on tribute? Yes; but they could let far more if they only asked reasonable terms.

1129. Do you know of any other mines where, by the enforcement of the labour clauses, men could be profitably employed? I was not aware I was to give evidence until yesterday afternoon, or I might have obtained fuller information; but I can tell you this—there is a feeling in the Zeehan District that there is a tremendous amount of land locked up by speculators. There are grievous complaints in that district about the non-compliance with the labour clauses.

1130. To remedy that, would you propose a general enforcement of the labour clauses? There are now facilities thrown in the way of men which did not exist when Zeehan was discovered, and I think

the labour clauses should be more rigidly enforced than they are. With that in view, I think the proceedings in regard to enforcement should be judicial and not departmental. As it is, in cases where the Commissioner may recommend forfeiture, backstairs influence, both political and social, is brought to bear on the Minister of Lands. When I was addressing the electors of Montagu I was asked, "What would you do if you were Minister of Lands?" and I said there was a strong probability, if my constituents were the persons pulling the strings, that I would do the same as the Minister of Lands did.

1131. Do you think these cases would be more fairly tried and a more just judgment given if they were dealt with by a judicial tribunal? There is no question about it.

1132. But the Act does not provide for that, does it? The Act simply says that the Minister of Lands shall do so and so. There is no provision in the Act for the Commissioner giving a recommendation; all he can do is to take the statements down, and forward them to the Minister of Lands for his consideration. I quite recognise that in some cases it would not be advisable to rigidly enforce the clauses, but a great deal depends on the field and the individual cases. In regard to the Mount Reid case I think it was a grave mistake. On the West Coast there is a great deal of gold-bearing country, and, as many thousands of acres are held under mineral leases, all prospecting has been stopped.

1133. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Do you think that making tracks would give farther employment? I have no hesitation in saying that if tracks are made to the Stanley River there will be an immediate increase in the amount of employment available. There is a very considerable area of virgin mineral land there, and a very small expenditure, say, £100, would open it up.

1134. *By Mr. Macdonald.*—Would you favour the adoption of the mining laws as suggested at the Derby Conference? Yes, the Boards would be useful to see what land it would be necessary to throw open, and to frame by-laws to regulate it, but whether I would put the whole judicial power into their hands is a matter that would require consideration, because the members of the Boards would be uninformed in regard to legal points. I know that the Zeehan people are in favour of Mining Boards, but I know they do not seek to acquire judicial power. In many of these cases a number of witnesses are brought forward, and if the Mining Boards held judicial powers, they might be sitting for two or three weeks at a time. I don't think any Mining Board would undertake those cases gratis.

1135. Do you think any miners on the West Coast are injured in any way by the water-rights being tied up by certain speculators? Up to the present there have been no complaints of anything of that sort.

1136. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—You are then of opinion that the decisions upon the labour clauses ought to be independent, and out of the hands of the Minister of Lands? Yes, and I have spoken most strongly upon that matter.

1137. And have you made up your mind as to who should have the power of decision? I think the Commissioners of Mines would be the proper functionaries to deal with the matter.

1138. Would you leave it entirely in their hands? Probably, yes.

1139. Would the present low price of tin hinder people from taking up alluvial tin on tribute? In our district the tin is comparatively a new industry, and has not reached that stage yet. I might point out that the West Cumberland mine was tied up for ten or twelve years and no person could deal with it; simply because they had in the past spent large sums of money, the Minister of Lands would not forfeit the lease. The lease was forfeited at last; and immediately it was taken up, and was producing a ton a week from the stuff that was cast aside. That is one instance of property being tied up.

1140. Are not leaseholders acting against their own interests in asking too much tribute? In my opinion they are; but the people are competing against themselves to get the employment. I object to the system on the ground that if the land is worth working on tribute it is worth working by the company.

1141. Would not the question of want of capital come in there? In that case the company should be re-formed.

1142. Would it not also depend on the price of the mineral? If it would pay men to work it with the tribute against them, it ought to pay the company.

1143. This is really a question of whether you shall hinder capital from coming in? We are simply asked to find work for the unemployed, and we say that owing to the way the mineral lands of the Colony are shut up, labour is shut out.

1144. It seems to me that there are two points to be considered. One is as to who should be entrusted with the power of enforcing the labour clauses, and the other is whether the labour clauses are sufficiently stringent? Speaking from memory, for every 80 acres of land, 3 men are to be employed for 9 months in the year. If you have three 80-acre sections you would be supposed to employ 9 men, but you can concentrate them on one section, leaving the rest untouched. Workings of this kind are confined to 4 or 5 acres; and the practice in this part of the world is, if the particular portion being worked is rich, to sell the rest upon the good report of the piece being worked.

1145. Have you any idea of how that could be met by regulations? In my address to the electors I advocated the plan of not allowing any company to hold more than 80 acres. That is quite sufficient for any one company. Plenty of companies hold 4 or 5 sections where they cannot work one for the want of capital.

1146. Supposing you had a company with a very large capital? It would take a very large capital indeed to thoroughly work one of these 80-acre sections. The Western Company, for instance, have spent 40 or 50 thousand pounds, and the whole of their working is confined to 2 acres. That is a very large company, and they have won a lot of ore, which has gone in machinery, and 80 acres is quite enough for them to work. If they had another 80 acres adjoining, they would not work it, but would float another company. Each 80-acre section ought to have a certain number of men employed upon it.

1147. *By Mr. Bradley.*—Would you recommend the Act being made to provide for men being employed upon each section? Yes, instead of allowing them to concentrate all their men upon one section.

1148. And in that way it would force companies who hold several sections to either let them on tribute or work them themselves? Yes.

1149. This applies more particularly to Zeehan? Yes.

1150. *By Mr. Woollnough.*—Would you allow more sections than one to be taken up by each company? I quite recognize that you cannot prevent companies from taking up several sections, as they are taken up in the names of the directors; but it should be compulsory that men should be employed on each section.

The Committee then adjourned.

## APPENDIX A.

*SUGGESTIONS by the Member for Brighton for the consideration of the Select Committee appointed by Parliament to report upon the best means of providing Work for the Unemployed.*

### *Metropolitan Drainage.*

It is stated that the cost of the Pan System is equal to a rate of about  $6\frac{1}{2}d.$  in the £, and that this rate levied upon the annual value of property in Hobart will produce a sum of over £5000 a year, which sum is sufficient to pay interest upon the total cost of carrying out the Underground Drainage System for the City. If this is so, ought not the work to be commenced at once, as it is reproductive in the strictest sense of the word? Mr. Mault can supply the exact data.

### *The Hobart Streets.*

It is quite clear that the Corporation is very short of funds, and that the rates are enormous, but if assisted by the Government might not they be expected to add to any funds which may be supplied by Parliament for the purpose of improving their own City. Quayle-street should be at once made, and several other streets in the suburbs could be constructed, and as these works are suggested to meet the unemployed difficulty, the Government might contribute £1 for every £1 contributed by the Corporation, or if the Government spend £1000 or £2000 on such works, and the Corporation could not raise a similar sum just now, Parliament might find the whole amount upon the Corporation undertaking to pay interest upon half the sum, and repay the capital, that is, their half, at their convenience.

### *Metal.*

A few men might be started breaking metal at each of the Corporation quarries, and Parliament might vote the money until the Corporation require to use the metal, and they should then repay the cost.

### *Exhibition.*

Can any men be employed preparing and beautifying the grounds surrounding the Exhibition at the expense of the Government, or would Parliament consider that their contribution of £6000 is sufficient assistance to render this important work?

### *Pleasure Grounds.*

It is absolutely certain that Tasmania has greatly neglected her natural advantages as a land for tourists. New Zealand has spent many thousands upon opening up and improving beauty spots, and the return on this outlay has been enormous. Some time ago the New South Wales Government employed a number of men out of work in constructing roads and other conveniences in the National Park at Sydney, and it is now admitted that such work was amply justified by the improvement made in the pleasure ground of the people. If, as seems certain, money has now to be spent upon works which are not directly reproductive, the following are suggested as a great improvement to Hobart and its surroundings, and which indirectly would yield some return.

Construct a carriage drive from the Huon Road to the beginning of the Ploughed Field, Mount Wellington, or take it at least as far as the Springs; this would most certainly lead to the erection of a hotel at the latter place, and it is believed that such a hotel managed in connection with a large hotel in Hobart, or with the hotel and lodging-houses at Fern Tree, would pay for a few months of the year, and could be shut up during the winter. The return for this work would be the enormous traffic to the livery stable, omnibus, and cab proprietors during the whole of the summer months, and if thought desirable, a fund could be obtained for keeping the road in repair by arranging with the hotel-keeper or the present Corporation caretaker to collect a small toll in respect of every vehicle and horse reaching the Springs. If it is thought undesirable to continue the road to the top of the mountain, it could at least be continued for about one and a half miles along the Falls Track, as far as the old watercourse is cut, and this road would be almost perfectly level, and it is sufficiently wide in a great many places and requires no

construction except forming and the watercourse filled up, for it is cut through gravel the whole distance, which will make an excellent driving road without either metal or blinding. This drive would be unrivalled for its beauty, and would be the admiration of every tourist, and prove the best possible means of advertising Tasmania. A track should then be cut from the end of this road to the track to St. Crispin's Well.

Hundreds of our people, as well as Tourists, would visit this lovely spot (St. Crispin's Well) if given slight encouragement. Could not a road be made there?—the ground for most of the way affording every facility; or, if found more suitable, could the Government place at the disposal of the Corporation, or sell to them at a very moderate cost, sufficient old railway rails to re-lay the tramway to St. Crispin's? A couple of trollies with easy springs could then be constructed, and the farmers in the neighbourhood could always be relied upon for supplying a horse and driver to take parties to the well. It is believed that the tramway could be re-laid for £1200, or, say, an annual cost for interest between £50 and £60. Half of this annual sum the Corporation can afford to pay for the facilities which the tramway would afford them in maintaining their waterworks, and the other half might be raised by a toll upon passengers, or by letting to a respectable lessee the exclusive right of taking passengers along the line. An admirable track has been cut from the Trolley House to Snake Plains, and this track might be continued to the Falls road before referred to. Other roads for the benefit of holiday makers and tourists have been suggested, such as continuing the Waterworks Road round to the west end of the upper Reservoir, and then along the Turnip Field, belonging to the Cascade Company, up to the Huon Road.

A Tea House or Arbour for Picnickers might be erected at the western end of the top Reservoir. The road from the Huon Road through Summerleas to Kingston should be kept in good repair. It is becoming a most fashionable drive; and for scenery, the all-round trip from Hobart to Kingston and back *via* Fern Tree is perhaps unrivalled in Australia. About a mile and a-half of Proctor's Road to Kingston requires constructing. It might be well to add this missing link, as this makes a charming bush-drive for those who have not time to visit Kingston by the Huon Road.

If the owners would consent, a drive could be formed with very little expense round the Long Beach, by forming a small causeway of stones at Captain Miles', and by asking Mr. Gellibrand to give a small piece of land at the southern end to enable vehicles to drive from the beach on to the Kingston Road.

#### *Derwent Park.*

The road from the Main Road to Derwent Park has been partly made by vote of £250 granted by Parliament. It might be continued, *via* Prince of Wales' Bay, to meet the Risdon Road,—thus making a most delightful drive; and one or two streets or roads might be laid out through Derwent Park, which would enhance the value of this property if ever the Government needed to sell or use it.

#### *Country Roads.*

If contracts to the extent of £800 a week are being entered into, might not this sum be slightly curtailed and some of the work in connection with these roads and the roads under the Waste Lands Act Fund be reserved for some of the Hobart and Launceston unemployed, who could construct some of these roads on the Bently gang system?

#### *Quarries.*

A few men might be kept going at quarries on the Huon road and other places in advance of present requirements, as the metal does not deteriorate, and the only loss would be the interest on the cost of breaking.

#### *Land Settlement.*

Would it do to form a labour colony near the terminus of any railway, where men could be sent to assist in dairying and growing potatoes and vegetables and rearing pigs and poultry? Pay them chiefly in rations in proportion to the value of their work as a co-operative concern. It would be found that the gross cost of their keep would be very small, and the net cost would be reduced to a very low minimum when the value of what they produced was deducted. This place would be suitable for old men, single men, and boys who could not get employment elsewhere, and who were in absolute need of shelter and food, and should be made a resting-place or stepping-stone to more lucrative employment.

#### *Village Settlement.*

Both the Union and Commercial Banks have offered to sell the Government properties at the valuation mentioned in the roll, or at such other price as may be agreed, and receive in payment Debentures bearing 3 per cent. with 5 years' currency. This would enable the Government to let a man land to the value of £100 at £3 a year for the first 5 years, and if the Government found it absolutely necessary to make an advance of, say £20, to help each settler through his first winter, he could be charged an extra £1, or £20 a year, in repayment of this advance, and yet his total rent would not exceed £5 per annum. I believe no village settlement will succeed unless backed up by Government contracts, or employment found outside the settlement for a short time during each year; as this seems unlikely to be obtained, I incline to the opinion that any scheme of land settlement will fail unless the Government are assisted by the landowner; the latter should express their willingness to take one or two families and settle them upon a small piece of fairly good land, where they could raise vegetables, pigs, and poultry, and run two or three cows, and at the same time undertake to find them work on their own farms for at least three or four months in each year; this employment would take the place of the cash advanced in the former scheme proposed by the Government, leaving the settler only £3 or £4 per annum to pay his landlord for from £50 to £80 worth of land. It would be better to settle 50 families in

this way under the protection and guidance of large landowners who could assist them by advice, the loan of tools, and in a score of ways, than establish three times the number of families in village settlements, two-thirds of whom would probably fail for lack of the very assistance just referred to.

#### *New Settlements.*

Mr. Frodsham the Surveyor, Mr. F. Evans, of Bronté, and others, strongly advise that the 12,000 acres of first-class and 6000 acres of second class land at the Florentine Valley be opened up for settlement by the formation of a road 17 miles in length from the end of the present road, which extends westerly twenty miles from the Glenora Railway Station past Russell's Falls, making the total distance from the Station to the Florentine 37 miles. Some persons say that the distance is too far, but Mr. Frodsham advises that it is not, and that the rich quality of the land will enable farmers to dairy and fatten cattle and pigs, and grow abundance of produce for their own use. It is possible that a village settlement could be formed here, if about 30 or 40 suitable settlers accustomed to the bush are selected with great care, and you give to them the job of making the road: they could then work, say five months on the road and seven months on their own holdings; and such a scheme would prevent the necessity of any cash advance by the Government to Village Settlement Committee. If each man could earn not less than £40 in wages on the road he could struggle through the first year by working hard on his own land, and taking care to rear pigs and poultry, and produce plenty of potatoes and vegetables. If £1200 was spent on the road the first year, this would allow thirty settlers to earn £40 each. £900 spent the second year would enable each of the thirty settlers to earn £30 each, and if £600 spent the third year, this would give each settler £20 in wages, and the total outlay on the road would then only be £2700. If land the value of £6000 was soon sold, the purchasers would then be entitled to have £3000 spent on roads in the locality, in addition to any special vote by Parliament. A considerable tract of good land exists at the source of the Scamander River, about 14 miles from the St. Helen's, and only a few miles distant from a good road; this river is formed by about six small streams, and in the vicinity of the streams the land is excellent.

Similar tracts of splendid land are to be found at Upper Castra and Nietta, between the Forth and the Wilmot, and at other places on the North West Coast not far from good roads; and the idea here suggested is to create one or more Village Settlements on a tract of really good land and keep them going by giving the settlers the benefit of expending all moneys voted by Parliament or due for roads from the Waste Land Act Fund.

## APPENDIX B.

DEAR SIR,

ON account of the adjournment of your Committee this morning it will be impossible for me to attend to give evidence, as I leave Hobart for New Zealand this afternoon. I therefore beg to offer the following suggestions, which, I trust, may be of some little use to your Committee, and help to settle the very serious question of the "unemployed" during the coming winter:—

That 30 or 40 men be sent to the West Coast to cut tracks to give access to the country north-east of Mount Reid and between Mount Reid and Mount Lyell, country known to contain both alluvial gold and tin in payable quantities, with plenty of room for a large number of men to make a living. If the men employed in cutting tracks are encouraged to start winning gold or tin as soon as they get used to the life, I feel satisfied that some hundreds of the "unemployed" could be drafted out of the towns during the present year. Of course, some discretion would require to be used in selecting men qualified for such a life. No doubt there would be some failures, but I venture to assert that if such a course is adopted, and relays of men sent down as the first lots gradually adopt an independent life, it would greatly reduce the number of the "unemployed," encouraging them to be not only self-supporting, but also add greatly to the prosperity of the Colony. The success of such a scheme will depend greatly on the ability of the person in charge of each party, therefore the greatest care should be taken in selecting suitable men. Its success would also be greatly assisted by the Government guaranteeing the storekeeper who might supply the rations, as he could then supply at the very lowest rates.

I would suggest that the wages given should not exceed 6s. per day, so that the men would prefer to take to an independent life at the earliest possible moment.

As these tracks must be cut sooner or later to enable the great mineral wealth of the district to be brought to market, it will only be anticipating the expenditure of the money required, while doing a great deal towards solving the very serious matter of finding work for the unemployed.

The total cost of such a scheme, with an average of 40 men constantly engaged cutting tracks for six months, including superintendence, would not exceed £2000, which, I take leave to think, would give a better return to the Colony than any £2000 it has ever expended.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES P. YOUNG.

E. MULCAHY, Esq., M.H.A., Chairman Select Committee.  
Hobart, 12th April, 1894.



## APPENDIX C.

Henty, April 12, 1894.

*To the Select Committee of the House of Assembly now in conclave to consider and report on a practicable (and humane) plan to shorten the designation "Un-employed" by its prefix.*

GENTLEMEN,

I wish to represent to your Honorable Committee that a petition\* is now in course of signature to present to His Excellency the Governor in Council, praying that he will be pleased to advise with his Responsible Ministers relative to the appropriation of a sum of £250 for the purpose of—“(a) Making a road about one mile long from Henty siding (Strahan and Zeehan line), including a bridge over the Tully Rivulet; (b) From its eastern end, clearing and making a pack-track about 9 or 10 miles.”

The road along J. Lloyd's sideline, and thence to the end of Lane and Askin (please refer to chart) was laid out and particularised by Mr. R. D. Lord, District Inspector of Works, in August-September, 1892. The limit suggested in the petition is the N.E. peg of J. Lloyd's 25-acre selection. Gold in alluvial deposit, estimated to be worth £3 per week per man, is at the end of the track on an unnamed creek flowing into the Henty River at an elevation of about 1800 feet, and in the terraces and flats raversed by it and numerous small tributaries.

Two or three of a party which left Old Strahan some years since (one section of the party discovered the “Iron Blow,” Mount Lyell) pushed over the divide between the Queen and Henty to this fall, and tried the creek, &c. referred to, with the above result, the appliances being pick, shovel, and dish. A report in the *Mercury* some twelve months since from a man named Boucher (I think it was) anent, evidently, the Mount Lyell country and formation, speaks of this spot also, as observed by himself and party in journeying from Macquarie Harbour to Hamilton side 36 or 38 years ago. He writes from Queensland, and particularly mentions tracking over the divide to the triple falls on this gold creek. He had a good time in the ever-wet pine forest, and was glad to retrace to the open country of the Linda Valley.

I have been three times to this creek during the past two years, and corroborate the report of the branch of the original Mount Lyell party which came on this watershed, and with this addition, viz., it is reefing country, and many reefs showing pyrites are exposed where cut down by the waters. My journeys were made by boat to the debouchment of the creek into the Henty, and thence self and friends travelled in the creek bed. The country generally is impracticable without laborious track-cutting. By river and creek bed, though only estimated as 18 or 20 miles to the three big waterfalls (about 240 feet top to bottom pool) the up-journeys occupied three days and the returns two, with every energy on strain and muscle doing duty.

Thus, even with the (non-possible here) certainty of fine weather, there would be only one working-day out of the week on the gold, or two men keep two packing. I there understood how £3 per week per man fell 66 per cent. short of being tempting. But it is seldom the river is sufficiently low for expeditioning, and it would be a fatal *contretemps* to be caught by copious rains. The only retreat would be through the tangle, a chain an hour in parts, if strength lasted. The Henty at top flood, where the creek joins it, rises over 35 feet above summer level, as evidenced by debris lodged at that elevation among tree limbs and bushes laid horizontal on rock shelves of the gorges. The river is a maze of fallen timber, snags, &c. along many miles, and has a current 10 miles above the railway, in summer, of six miles per hour. The flow in the creek, under the catchment of one night's rain, would preclude any travelling in its bed.

From the triple falls (a gloriously romantic scene) upward in stream for several miles the creek has but little fall except at odd cascades, and runs through a magnificent pine forest, both Macquarie and Red Pine. This appears to cover a vast extent of country. From the falls, which I estimate as at nine miles S.S.E. from the Henty (not as the crow flies, but in actual traversing), I pushed perhaps four or five miles through pine, and each affluent of the many observed intersected similarly timbered country. There are pines with fully 5000 super. feet of trunk timber in them. One celery-top pine close to the top fall stands quite 150 feet high from base to the first limb, and is all out an average 12 feet in girth, and fully 18 six feet from the ground.

I mention the pine to your Honorable Committee as a realisable asset, easily convertible into bread, butter, and clothing, &c., when pining as an industry ceases to be licensed and royaltied to death's door. The timber is there; the creeks and river are ready to bring it to the railway when facilities for loading come, and by the look of things I humbly think the piners deserve encouraging by bounty rather than that they should be so taxed, &c. when working that they find it more paying to idle, and let their axes, &c. rust.

Why a road is requisite for the first mile from Henty Siding is:—1. Some 60 chains of the land is of a swampy kind in spring, autumn, and winter, and the balance of the mile will give access to the timber of the first range. 2. As a bridge across the Tully is also of prime necessity, Mr. Lord's plan may as well be carried out so far, and form the first stage to the new goldfield, as well as to open a bit of country for splitters, &c.

The selectors on the east side of the railway have done nothing; but others will buy the land if the Honorable Minister declares it forfeited for non-performance of covenants. It was only selected on spec, most of the selectors having never seen it. But *ye* this, and the possible desirability of reserving a portion of this land for a feasible village settlement, later.

I may remark to your Honorable Committee, whilst on the subject of roads and bridges, that had that partially made road, and the bridges connecting it, between Strahan and the beach highway to Henty, &c. been made a few inches wider, drays could have used the route. This means, that for want of six inches in the cords, where corded, and bridges, where bridged, the road was made useless at public cost for the public use. The bridges are 5 feet wide between the fender logs, and drays usually are 5 feet 4 inches

\* Not required if the Committee take the matter in hand.



outside to outside of tyres. During the whole time of very heavy wheel traffic preceding the construction and completion of the Strahan and Zeehan Railway, both general and that of Messrs. T. A. Reynolds & Co., whose average was three three-horse drays each way daily, the old Strahan Road, a circuit of nearly five useless miles, had to be used.

Thus, in Messrs. Reynold's case, ten useless miles each return journey had to be traversed between points 13½ miles apart.

The same with the general public moving wheeled vehicles, only in their cases the single journey only was usually undertaken.

Oh, gentlemen, that weary extra five miles,—that lack of six inches in the hearts of the designer and constructor of those bridges! My horses are not profane, I hope, but when they have to visit Strahan with the dray they get very leg-weary at having to travel 34 miles instead of 24, and, like ourselves, are very heart-sunken at arriving home at 1 or 2 A.M. in lieu of 7 or 8 P.M.

How many hundreds have suffered in degree in like manner, and some now suffer besides us. You will pardon my being strong on roads being made full width where made at all, and bridges ditto. There is no appreciable increase of cost between a 5-foot bridge and one 5 ft. 6 in.

I need not enlarge on the general benefit likely to accrue to the gold-digger, reefing company, railway receipts, storekeeper, and Treasury from sales of town blocks, &c., if this road and track are made to facilitate access to and departure from this almost untraversed gold country, nor what may be unravelled out of the pine when wise regulations take the place of present embarrassing ones. The facility to reach with tools and stores will assist.

2. The diamond drill in five weeks would be very likely to strike coal on Geologist Creek, 40 chains from Mallanna, on the S. & Z. Railway, where Mr. Geologist Montgomery found the shales of the older coal measures and recommended boring. I have mislaid the Government Geologist's Report, his first on the Zeehan field, in which his remarks about the Henty coal are. The Mines Office will doubtless supply a copy. All leases are forfeited, hence if Government enterprise were rewarded by the finding of good coal seams, I assume the Mines Department would have no difficulty in fixing terms by royalty or otherwise for working the mines, and the 1280 acres of forfeited leases would cut up into a good many profitable blocks. The coal found on Jones and Bethune's No. 1 lease at 117 feet, by hand bore, was highly bituminous, and made true coke. It was technically a *coal pipe*, i.e., a thin layer of a couple of inches in *grey post*, an almost infallible sign of large seams of equal quality lower. Here, again, is a township, Mallanna, already surveyed. In this case it might be prudent for the Honorable Minister to resume selections where conditions have not been complied with. The drill would employ some labour, and if successful, lead up to much employment and money for the Treasury.

3. The rates of freight on the Strahan and Zeehan Railway Line are very much beyond fair business payments for services rendered. It may be said I have an axe to grind in this item; but it is all in the way of your Honorable Committee's inquest. I have at this writing some 1000 tons of good dry gum and blackwood firewood, the debris laying after a clearing burn, and would gladly send it to Zeehan for householders' or miners' use per train if the freights were the same as on other Tasmanian lines, or, more plainly, if after paying freight and cartage there was any margin. This means I would have several months' work for a couple of good men, buy several tons of hay, &c. for the horses, give the Strahan horse-shoer an odd shoeing job, and perhaps a dray breakdown to repair, besides indirectly finding work for those who would handle the fuel at Zeehan. Railway rates are 25s. per 5-ton truck, = 5s. per ton. Firewood won't stand that, though it might stand 15s. per truck. If the Committee can make any recommendation *re* this matter with effect they will pave the way for two or three men finding several months' work. If not, I must just pile the wood up and send it up in smoke, to profit no one, not even the Railway Department, whose empty trains on non-steamer days rattle past possible freight. It may be said such work would only in effect transfer so many men to Henty, otherwise employed at fuel-getting at Zeehan. The answer is, that the fuel margin at Zeehan is radiating fast away from the centre, and as cartage gets more costly as the winter approaches, people perforce will be driven, much against their desires, to economise. This will, it *must*, result in fewer axes being at work. Then if freights are reduced, there is no reason why wood-cutters under license may not cut a few thousand tons near the siding, and enter the lists against me. I will be glad to see them.

If this 1000 or more tons of fuel can be utilised I can see possible permanent work for four to six men; but freights must be brought to the common level of the colony. Why, even a bag of cabbages, 18 to 20, costs two shillings to send to Strahan or Zeehan, or a bag of flour 2s. 6d. to bring to Henty from Strahan, 11 miles. Bridgewater to Constitution Hill, per wagon, a bag of flour used to cost me 1s., and the man was good enough to carry it out of the mill to his wagon, and from his wagon into the house. I can send half a ton of cabbages for a few shillings, but people don't always want half a ton, nor have I half a ton always ready to cut, so the 2s. kills the operation, and I feed them to the cows, (i.e., the cabbages, not the people), and let Melbourne do the supplying.

I must say no more, gentlemen, (we are in Tasmania) beyond respectfully asking your Honorable Committee's consideration of—

1. The road and track to employ—six or eight men on the road, and two to four on the track. The land beyond the Tully, say 500 acres, might be resumed and set apart for 20 to 50-acre holdings. It might be scrubbed now, burnt off in January or February next, sown with grass and picked up, and have debris disposed of as firewood. Further, were two acres per holding cleared of all but big stumps, and bush homes erected, the Government would get tenants on clearing leases, and work up a good asset.

An alternative to the road is a tramway. If the Government prefer to put in a tramway 1 mile, and equip it at a total cost of £200, and resume the land to parcel off to men desirous of making homes under the terms of the new Act, I will offer to rent the tram at a 10 per cent. rent, and keep it good, setting eight or ten men to work splitting and logging right-away. The ground thus will be getting clear of timber. There is demand for laths at Zeehan, also for general mine timber; but here again the necessity for reasonable railway freights crops up. Though silver is down the field is not dead. Tributes and a strict

enforcement of the labour covenants of mineral leases, leading to co-operative mining, will keep the field going and tend to double its output. The land referred to is good, undulating, and transversed by numerous creeks.

As to the gold and pine at the creek described, men will want no inviting to the gold when a track is open for travel and supplies. Personally it does not concern me a penny's worth. I shall not go gold-hunting except in a way not to entail rheumatism, but I am confident there is a gold-field going a-begging up there. We know what a gold-field does. Pines depends on the Legislature to free it to bare nominal licence fees just for control purposes.

The coal matter does not require recommending.

Concluding, I have submitted some information to your Honorable Committee which, if acted on, will tend to find employment for a small number at once, and many at an early date, in a way that will in any case recoup the State for its outlay.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

THEO. P. H. JONES.

## APPENDIX D.

*Town Hall, Launceston, Tasmania, 15th May, 1894.*

DEAR SIR,

IN reply to your enquiries, I beg to submit the following works which might fairly be taken in hand by the Government in order to provide work for the unemployed:

1. Inveresk Embankment.—That the same be made safe by the deposit of the silt now being dredged by the Marine Board. The work to be carried out by arrangement with the Marine Board, the Municipal Council, and the Government. The cost of the same is estimated at from £1500 to £2000.

2. New Bridge over the Tamar.—This work was provided for by Parliament, the amount voted (£12,000) to be available upon the floating of the Government Loan. The work has not, however, been put in hand, although arrangements were made by the Municipal Council with the present Minister of Lands to make over a piece of land on the Esplanade to the Government in consideration that the bridge should be put in hand. Much skilled and unskilled labour would be required in the undertaking.

Should the Government still decline to proceed with the work, I would suggest that a sum of, say, £300 be laid out on the present structure, which might possibly give four years' additional life to the same. At present it is not safe for the traffic passing over it.

3. Ravenswood Road, from Racecourse to Hobler's Bridge.—This was partly formed some time back, and I believe there is an unexpended balance of £250 available towards its completion. If this amount be supplemented by, say £350, the work could be completed. This is a work exactly suited for the unemployed.

4. Stone-street, Cataract Hill.—The Government might be very fairly asked to expend £1000 thereon, as some years since the land in the vicinity was cut up and sold by the Government, but no provision was made to form the street. It is still in its natural state.

Yours obediently,

ROBERT H. PRICE, *Mayor.*

A. MACDONALD, *Esq., M.H.A.*

P.S.—I also understand that there is an unexpended balance available for work on the Eastern Embankment between the Railway Bridge and One-mile Bridge. This work should be carried out.—R.H.P.