

(No. 100.)



1891.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

ZEEHAN TRAMWAY (PRIVATE) BILL :

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

Brought up by Mr. Lewis, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed,
August 19, 1891.



SELECT COMMITTEE appointed, on the 24th July, to consider and report upon Zeehan Tramway (Private) Bill.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. CONWAY.
MR. CRISP.
MR. DAVIES.
MR. HAMILTON.

MR. MACKENZIE.
MR. SIDEBOTTOM.
MR. LEWIS. (*Mover.*)

DAYS OF MEETING.

29th July, 1891; 7th August, 1891; 13th August, 1891; 19th August, 1891.

WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Mr. H. Nickolls, Legal Manager; Mr. W. S. Targett, Auctioneer; Mr. A. P. Miller; Mr. W. C. Grubb; Mr. Richard Provis; The Hon. N. J. Brown.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 1891.

The Committee met at 3 P.M.

Present.—Mr. Lewis (*Mover*), Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Sidebottom, Mr. Crisp, and Mr. Davies.

Mr. Lewis was unanimously voted to the Chair.

The Chairman laid upon the Table the following plans and documents:—

1. Petition for Bill. (*Appendix A.*)
2. Plan of Settlements at Zeehan, showing proposed line of Tram.
3. Plan showing *route* of proposed Zeehan Tramway; scale 10 chains to an inch.
4. Draft Bill referred to the Committee.

Resolved, That the Petitioners be heard by Counsel.

The Committee adjourned at 3.45 P.M. till a date to be determined by the Chairman.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 1891.

The Committee met at 10 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Conway, Mr. Sidebottom, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Crisp.

The Minutes of last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Counsel was admitted, and heard in support of the Bill.

Mr. H. Nickolls was called in and examined.

Mr. Nickolls withdrew.

Mr. W. S. Targett was called in and examined.

Mr. Targett withdrew.

Mr. A. P. Miller was called in and examined.

Mr. Miller withdrew.

Mr. W. C. Grubb was called in and examined.

Mr. Grubb withdrew.

At 12:54 P.M. the Committee adjourned to a period to be hereafter decided by the Chairman.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 1891.

The Committee met at 2:20 P.M.

Present.—Mr. Conway, Mr. Crisp, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Lewis.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Richard Provis, of the Tasmanian Silver Mining Company, was called in and examined.

Mr. Richard Provis withdrew.

Mr. Conway laid a telegram from Mr. G. P. Sinclair, of Zeehan, on the Table, containing an expression of approval of the Bill on the part of the inhabitants of Zeehan—(Appendix B).

The Hon. the Speaker attended and gave evidence.

The Hon. the Speaker withdrew.

Resolved, that the Committee, at its next meeting, do take evidence received into consideration.

At 4 P.M. the Committee adjourned until a date to be hereafter determined on by the Chairman.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1891.

The Committee met at 2:15 P.M.

Present.—Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Conway, and Mr. Lewis (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Conway read a letter from Mr. G. P. Sinclair, of Zeehan, confirming his telegram tabled on the 13th inst.

The Preamble was considered, proved, and agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 7 read and agreed to.

Clause 8 read, amended in line 21 by striking out the words "all or any of"; in line 22 by striking out the word "may" and inserting "shall" in lieu thereof; by striking out the words "or double" and "at the option of the promoters," and agreed to (Mr. Conway).

Clauses 9 and 10 read and agreed to.

Clause 11 read, amended by adding the following proviso—"Provided that the rights conferred by this Section shall not extend beyond a radius of Five miles from the Zeehan terminus of the Strahan-Zeehan Railway (Mr. Conway) to the end of the clause, and agreed to. (Mr. Conway.)"

Clauses 12 to 64 read and agreed to.

Clause 65 read, amended in line 47 by striking out the words "the Governor in Council" and inserting "Parliament" in lieu thereof, and agreed to. (Mr. Conway.)

First Schedule read, amended by striking out the words "along the road from Reminé to Dundas," in the second line of the said Schedule, and by inserting the words "within a radius of five miles from the terminus of the Strahan-Zeehan Railway" after the word "District" in the eighth line of the said Schedule, and agreed to. (Mr. Conway.)

Schedule, as amended, agreed to. Remaining Schedules agreed to.

The Chairman was requested to present the Report to the House.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.

APPENDIX A.

To the Honorable the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly of Tasmania, in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of Edward James Burgess, William Colman Grubb, Andrew Paton Miller, Thomas Augustus Reynolds, and Howard Edward Wright, all of Hobart, in the Colony of Tasmania,

SHOWETH :

1. That within three months previously to the presentation hereof notice of the intention of your Petitioners to apply for a Private Bill was published, as is by the Standing Rules and Orders of your Honorable House prescribed, as follows ; that is to say—

In the *Hobart Gazette*, on the nineteenth and twenty-sixth days of May, and the second and ninth days of June now last past ;

In the *Mercury*, being a public newspaper published in Hobart on the nineteenth and twenty-sixth days of May, and the second and ninth days of June now last past ;

In the *Zeehan and Dundas Herald*, being a public newspaper published in or nearest to the district affected by the Bill, on the twenty-fifth day of May, and the first, eighth, and fifteenth days of June now last past ;

which said Notice contained a true statement of the general objects of the Bill, as hereinafter set forth.

2. That the general objects of the said Bill are,—

To enable your Petitioners to construct a Tramway from the Zeehan Terminus of the Strahan and Zeehan Railway, along the road from Dundas to Reminé, to the mineral sections held at Zeehan by the Silver Queen Prospecting Association ; and also a Tramway from the said Zeehan Terminus of the said Strahan and Zeehan Railway to and through the Town of Zeehan and along the streets of the said Town of Zeehan ; and also such extensions and branches of and to such Tramways as may be authorised by the Parliament of Tasmania.

To construct, maintain, and repair the said Tramways, together with all proper rails, crossings, bridges, culverts, junctions, sidings, stations, buildings, and other works and conveniences connected therewith or convenient for the purposes thereof.

To work the said Tramways by steam-power, or by the use of electricity, or by horse-power, or in any other manner.

To purchase or lease any land for the purposes of the said Tramways and the works and appurtenances thereof, and to exercise all the powers, authorities, and privileges given to Promoters of undertakings by the Lands Clauses Act, 21 Victoria, No. 11.

To construct and work the said Tramways over public roads and streets.

To demand and take tolls and charges for passengers and goods carried by the said Tramways.

To provide for the due working and management of the said Tramways, and to make by-laws and rules for the regulation of the said Tramways and the traffic and business thereof, and to provide for the infliction of penalties upon persons infringing the provisions of the said Bill, by-laws, or rules.

To borrow money for the purposes of the said undertaking upon security of the assets of your Petitioners or otherwise.

To sell or lease the said Tramways, or the lands and works connected therewith, or any of them, or any part thereof, as shall be deemed expedient.

The said Bill will also contain all clauses usual in Bills of such a nature for enabling your Petitioners to carry out the objects of the undertaking.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray for leave to introduce the said Bill.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Dated this tenth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-one.

EDWD. J. BURGESS.
W. C. GRUBB.
ANDREW P. MILLER.
T. A. REYNOLDS.
HOWARD E. WRIGHT.

APPENDIX B.

[TELEGRAM.]

Zeehan, August 10, 1891.

CONSULTED most of people here *re* Tramway. All in favour, provided the ordinary safeguards of public rights are inserted.

G. P. SINCLAIR.

To H. CONWAY, Parliament House.

R E P O R T.

YOUR Committee, having taken evidence in support of the allegations contained in the Preamble of the Bill, have the honor to report that the said Preamble has been proved to their satisfaction.

Your Committee having agreed that the Preamble should stand part of the Bill, then entered upon the consideration of the several Clauses.

Your Committee recommend the following amendments:—

In Clause 8, line 21, by striking out the words “all or any of”; line 22, by striking out the word “may”, and inserting “shall” in lieu thereof; and by striking out the words “or double” and “at the option of the Promoters.”

In Clause 11, by adding the following Proviso—“Provided that the rights conferred by this Section shall not extend beyond a radius of Five miles from the Zeehan terminus of the Strahan-Zeehan Railway.

In Clause 65, by striking out the words “the Governor in Council,” and inserting “Parliament” in lieu thereof.

In the First Schedule by striking out the words “along the road from Reminé to Dundas” in the second line, and by inserting the words “within a radius of Five miles of the Zeehan terminus of the Strahan-Zeehan Railway” after the word “District” in the eighth line.

In all other respects your Committee would recommend the Bill, as amended, to the favourable consideration of your Honorable House.

N. E. LEWIS, *Chairman.*

Committee Room, 19th August, 1891.

EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 1891.

HARRY NICKOLLS, *called and examined.*

1. *By Mr. Butler.*—You are Secretary of the Zeehan Tramway Company? Yes.
2. Do you know the names of the gentlemen applying for this Bill? Yes. They are Messrs. Edward James Burgess, William Coleman Grubb, Andrew Paton Miller, Thomas Augustus Reynolds, and Howard Edward Wright.
3. On whose behalf do they apply for this Bill? On behalf of a company.
4. What are those gentlemen you mentioned? They are the Directors.
5. What is the capital of the Company? £50,000, in 10,000 shares at £5 each.
6. Are they all applied for? Yes.
7. Where are the majority of these shares held? In Hobart; there is a large number also held in Zeehan.
8. Will you explain the reason why the Company has not been registered? The Directors wished to have the Bill passed through Parliament before registering. If the Company was registered and the Bill did not pass through Parliament, the shareholders would lose money. Everything is ready to pay the registration fees the moment the Bill passes.
9. How much is it proposed to call up if the Bill passes? £1 per share, or £10,000. That would be sufficient to proceed with the tramway from the present township to the Government township or the terminus of the railway.
10. Do you think this tramway would be of advantage to the mines? Yes; as soon as the Zeehan-Dundas Railway is finished we can carry our goods along to the different mines—the Queen, Queen Extended, Comstock, and all the mines down that way.
11. In what way would the proposed suburban tramways be an advantage? They would be an immense advantage in enabling companies to get their goods in and send out their ore. It would be a very great expense to these companies to have to put down tramways for themselves, and they would be only too glad to be able to get in their goods upon paying a little freight.
12. The Queen Extended did make a tramway? Yes, a branch from the Argent Tramway.
13. That was an expensive work? Yes, it cost a lot of money.
14. If there had been a company of this kind at the time, do you think that company would have made their own tramway? I feel sure they would not. At the time the Queen Extended put down that tramway they had to make four heavy calls to pay for it. They would have been only too glad had there been a company like the one under consideration.
15. Speaking from your knowledge of the district, you think these suburban tramways will be of great advantage? I am quite sure they will.
16. Do you know the width of the main road at Zeehan? I think it is $1\frac{1}{2}$ chains.
17. If it was a one chain road, and considered too narrow for a double line of rails, would the Company be satisfied with a single line with proper passing-places? That has not been discussed by the directors.
18. In your opinion are the tolls proposed fair, from what you know of the expense of transit at Zeehan? Yes; they are very fair. They would form bare interest on the cost of the Queen Extended Tramway, but our line may not cost quite so much.
19. They will bring a fair profit to the Company, as well as advantage to the general public? Yes.
20. *By the Chairman.*—What is the cost of registering a company? To register this Company would cost £212.
21. And the promoters are applying for this Bill on behalf of a Company? Yes.
22. And they get no benefit from this Bill except as shareholders? That is all they get.
23. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—What is the length of the first and second lines indicated on the map? The first is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and the second to join with it is about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
24. The first line is from the Silver Queen mine to the station? Yes.
25. Do you intend to wait until the Zeehan-Strahan Railway is made before commencing operations? I cannot tell you definitely, because I have not asked the Directors. Clause 12 of the Bill provides that the tramway numbered One in the first schedule shall be commenced in a *bonâ fide* manner within three months after the passing of the Act, and shall be completed, fit for passenger traffic, within twelve months after the passing of the Act, or in such time as the Governor in Council may see fit to allow.
26. With the exception of a slight deviation near the railway station, the route is all on the main road? Yes; so far as we have ascertained, it is the only route at present.

27. Is it the intention of the Company to make a macadamized road along the tramway? Yes.
28. Are the local authorities to be consulted as to which side it is to be placed on? I think that is provided for. The Directors would meet the local authority in any way they possibly could, and wish to work with them. Some provision to this effect might be added to Clause 7, but I don't think it makes any difference to the Directors on which side of the tramway they make the road.
29. Is there any constructed road on this route? I don't think that any of the road is constructed.
30. *By Mr. Butler.*—The Company cannot go from the centre of the road without the consent of the Road Trust? No.
31. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—The branch lines are not indicated on this map? No, they have not been definitely decided yet. They will go to any of the claims that may require the services of this Company.
32. Is there any limit of distance beyond which you cannot extend these lines, or can you go to any length you like? We can only go in the immediate vicinity of Zeehan. We cannot go out of our own district.
33. *By Mr. Butler.*—You cannot construct those branch lines without the consent of the Governor in Council? No. The only line we are asking for now is the trunk line.

ANDREW PATON MILLER, *called and examined.*

34. *By Mr. Butler.*—You are a Chemist at Hobart? Yes.
35. You are one of the applicants for this Bill? Yes.
36. Will you tell the Committee the reason you took shares in this Company? I think it is a thing that is very much needed, and that being so, would be a paying concern. From my acquaintance with Zeehan I think that tramways will have to be made all over the district, as the absence of good road metal will prevent roads from being made, and tramways will be the only means of communication.
37. You are a Director of this Company? Yes.
38. And you were elected by the shareholders? Yes.
39. Has the Company been actually formed? Yes; but I do not think it has yet been registered.
40. It is not a syndicate formed to obtain a concession? No; the money has been received, and the shares have been allotted.
41. You are a property holder at Zeehan, and have a branch business there? Yes.
42. As a property holder do you think the No. 1 tramway will be an advantage? Yes; I think it will benefit all the residents there.
43. Why do you think so? I feel satisfied in my own case it will bring me business I would not get otherwise.
44. The township is a very straggling one? Yes, it is all on the main road. The tramway will form a means of communication irrespective of the state of the roads.
45. Do you think the suburban tramways will prove of benefit? Yes. In block 1 Silver Queen we laid down a tramway, but if this Company had been formed we would have been only too glad to have got it to lay down the line for us. These lines would soon be extended to mines to enable them to get out their ore and get in supplies, which would facilitate their business a great deal.
46. What is your opinion of the rates and charges proposed in the Bill? They are fair. I believe they are based on some other measure that was believed to be fair and just.
47. What basis did the Directors have? I cannot say. A sub-committee was appointed to deal with them.
48. These charges would give a fair remuneration to the shareholders, and would also be fair to the public? Yes.
49. Have the Directors endeavoured to protect the public in every way in this Bill? Yes; they were careful that the measure should not be endangered by any want of liberality on the part of the company.
50. Is the company prepared to start work as soon as this Bill is passed? Yes they are.
51. Are the promoters to get anything in the way of a concession? Not that I know of. I am one of them, and have had to pay for my shares the same as anyone else.
52. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—Are they all contributing shares? Yes.
53. *By Mr. Conway.*—And there is no intention that this should be a syndicate? Not the slightest. All the shares are taken. I came in as a shareholder, and was elected by the others as a Director. This line, which will be so convenient for the mines and the people about the township, we thought would be a good speculation.
54. *By Mr. Hamilton.*—Do you know the width of the main road? It is a perfect quagmire. I think it is about a chain wide. It is all corduroy in the centre, and if a vehicle goes off that it gets bogged.
55. If the road is only a chain wide, don't you think a double line will hamper traffic? No, I think there will be lots of room for a double tram line as well as for general traffic.
56. *By the Chairman.*—You are not particular about having a double line all the way? No, proper passing-places would be all that is required. A single tram line on one side of the road, with proper passing-places, would be all that is required.

57. *By Mr. Crisp.*—For how long is this Bill to be in force? For 21 years, but provision is made for purchasing powers.

58. Is there full power for the local authorities to purchase by arbitration? I think there is a purchasing clause, so that the concern may be taken over at the end of 21 years, but we can sell before that by consent. The directors cannot be compelled to sell it before the 21 years.

59. *By Mr. Conway.*—Have you any objection to a purchasing clause being put in? No, if the price increased in a ratio as the time the line is held by the Company is reduced. The profit will not commence until the other lines are constructed, and there will be no return for the next two years. It would be hard on the Company to make them sell within that time, because the valuation would be on the receipts at the time of sale, although we expect a rosy time in the future.

WILLIAM COLEMAN GRUBB, *called and examined.*

60. *By Mr. Butler.*—You are one of the Promoters of this Company? Yes.

61. Are you a Director in the Company? Yes.

62. You are connected with Grubb's Silver Mining Company? Yes, legal manager.

63. Has that company spent a lot of money in constructing a tramway from that mine? Yes, about £10,000.

64. You would not have incurred that expenditure if there had been such a company as this in existence? In my opinion the Directors in the Grubb Silver Mining Company would not have incurred this large expense had there been such a company as this in existence at the time.

65. You know Zeehan? Yes.

66. Do you think these proposed trams would be of any benefit? Yes. I think, from what I saw of Zeehan, that the cheapest means of transit is by means of trams. It is impossible to make macadamised roads, and things can always be moved cheaper on a tram-line than on a road. It would cost a great deal if all the companies there were to make tramways, but one company making them would save a lot of cost. It will be a great benefit to the inhabitants of the town, who will be glad of some means to get about. Tram-roads are the cheapest roads that can be made. Macadamised roads at Zeehan would entail an enormous expenditure, on account of the swampy nature of the ground and the absence of material for the work. I have had a lot to do with road-making, and my experience is that tram-roads in a district of that kind are much cheaper than other roads. There is some granite rock near Reminé, but it would cost a lot to make roads of that. The Government are getting metal on our tram-line, and they have tried lots of other places without getting any good material.

67. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—Is timber for sleepers found easily? No, the stuff there is not good enough. The timber about Zeehan is very inferior, unless you can get myrtle, and there is not much of that. The timber along the railway is also bad. The cheapest way would be to get it from the Huon District.

68. *By Mr. Butler.*—There is not much gum? No. There are no places where it would answer to put up a large saw-mill.

69. Speaking generally, you are of opinion that this Company will prove of great benefit to the district, as well as being a paying transaction? Yes, I am. I think it will be a benefit all round.

70. *By the Chairman.*—What sized rails did you use in Grubb's tramway? 18lb. steel rails.

71. You think one shilling per ton per mile is little enough? Yes, as a maximum.

72. There is a difference in the rates and charges according to the length of the tramway? Yes. If the line was longer we could charge a less rate per mile.

WALTER SCOTT TARGETT, *called and examined.*

73. *By Mr. Butler.*—You are a resident of Zeehan? Yes.

74. And well acquainted with the district? Yes.

75. Have you read the Bill under consideration? Yes.

76. As a resident of Zeehan, what is your opinion? I think it will be of great advantage to the town and district. In the first place it will act as a feeder for the railway from the mines, and it will save the roads from being cut to pieces by heavy traffic. All the ores that have to be smelted on the Henty or at Strahan, or have to be sent to Hobart or other places, will have to go to the terminus, and it will be a great source of expenditure getting them there without this tramway.

76A. Do you think it will have any effect on the value of property? It won't matter much one way or the other. It most decidedly will not have any deterrent effect.

77. It will be of advantage to the inhabitants as a means of transit? Yes, undoubtedly.

78. It is a very straggling township? Yes; it is all on the main road.

79. What do you think of the tolls proposed? I don't think they are excessive. The chief thing is, of course, in regard to cheap transit for minerals, and I don't see any provision made in the Bill for special arrangements in regard to large quantities of ore. One shilling per ton for each mile and for each fraction over the mile would be pretty expensive. People would expect the tram to be a little cheaper than carting. With this single exception I think the rates are fair and reasonable.

80. Do you know where it is proposed to place the station? Yes; the passenger station is about five or six chains from where the Strahan and Zeehan Railway intersects the main road. The goods station is some six or seven chains further on, about opposite where the Dundas Tramway will come in.

81. Could there be any better route than the one proposed? Oh, yes, much better. If the line was carried down Brickyards Road it would be led right towards the station, and Belstead-street, five chains further along, would lead it direct to the goods sheds. Fowell-street would also lead to the station. I would choose Belstead-street, as it would take you at once to the junction of the Dundas and Strahan Railway.

82. Do you think branch lines would benefit the mines? Yes; cockspur lines would be wanted by the mines so that the railway trucks could be taken up to them and the ore loaded and taken away without re-handling. It would save the more distant mines a great deal of expense. I see the Bill says that the rails used would have to be at least 20 lbs. to the yard; but such a size as that would be quite inefficient for carrying mineral traffic. 40 lbs. rails should be the smallest size used. Both horse and steam power can be used, as there are no heavy grades; but while horses might be used for passenger traffic, they would never do for mineral traffic.

83. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—You would prefer the tramway to a macadamized road? Yes.

84. Is there any material at Zeehan suitable for making macadamized roads? Not at present; but the Progress Committee have had a specimen of serpentine presented to them which will make good metal. That is the first we have found in the district.

85. What is the nature of the reserved road? It is very swampy; in fact, it has to be corduroyed before the metal can be put on it.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13TH, 1891.

RICHARD PROVIS, *called and examined.*

86. *By Mr. Butler.*—What is your name? Richard Provis.

87. You are manager of the Tasmania Silver Mining Company at Zeehan? Yes.

88. Have you been there some time? I have been there for some time; I have been there since 19th January last.

89. Are you well acquainted with the West Coast and Zeehan? Yes.

90. Have you read this Tramway Bill? Yes, I have perused it.

91. What is your opinion as to this Bill? I am more particularly interested in the extension of the tramway to the Comstock.

92. In the event of this Bill passing, do you think that mines will avail themselves of the services of this tramway company? I am sure they will. It will be the making of us, and not only of the Tasmania Silver Mining Company but others as well. As things are now it would cost us 12s. per ton for cartage, and I see the maximum charge these people have asked for is 1s. per ton.

93. You think this tramway would be highly advantageous? Yes, I think it is a necessity.

94. Would it also be of advantage to places adjoining Zeehan? Of course it would. It would be a very great advantage to all the south-west part of the field. Without it we will have to cart our stuff over the roads, and how that is to be done I don't know. I have two big boilers coming out from home, and I will be very nervous about taking them over the Government roads and bridges. We must have either the tramway or a great improvement in the roads.

95. Have you looked at the tolls? Yes; I see they are the maximum that can be charged, and it is possible for distances of more than a mile that the charges will be reduced. It is a wonderful reduction even as it is upon what we have had to pay for cartage. With these tolls we can carry stuff that we would otherwise have to leave in the mine. I do not think they are excessive as maximum tolls, because if there is heavy machinery to be taken there must be heavy gear for moving it.

96. *By the Chairman.*—When did you leave Zeehan? Last Wednesday.

97. Did you hear any comments made either for or against the Bill? No, I have not heard it discussed. Of course there is a general feeling there, generated by would-be leaders of the people, against syndicates generally; but I see when a thing is explained to them thoroughly they alter their views. The sewage question is a case in point.

98. *By Mr. Butler.*—The feeling is against concessionaires? Yes; but in this case the concessionaire has gone on the field and explained what he wants, and has carried the field with him.

99. Do you consider that the public interests are fairly protected in this Bill? Yes.

100. What do you think about a double line? A double line would leave little room for horse traffic, as I understand the road is only 66 feet wide.

101. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—How far is the Comstock from the Silver Queen? About 3 miles. The Comstock is at the extreme west of the silver finds. There is nothing that will enhance the value of that part of the field like a tramway to connect it with the railway.

102. *By Mr. Butler.*—Will it be cheaper to send your goods by tramway than to do your own cartage? Yes. Cartage from the Comstock to the railway will cost about 12s. per ton, while the tramway will only charge about 4s.

103. You expect to have considerable traffic with your mine? Yes. If this tramway is not made, I will have to make one for myself to join on to Grubb's.

104. But it would pay you better to enter into negotiations with the company of this sort? Yes, it would be too heavy a thing for a mining company to undertake. It has cost us £1600 or £1700 for one we have already made.

105. *By Mr. Conway.*—Would this be better than to join on to Grubb's tramway? Yes, this would not cost us anything for making the tramway, while if we joined Grubb's we would have to make nearly a mile of line.

106. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—Do you think that this tramway is located in the best place for usefulness? Yes, it will act as a sort of centre for the mines to join on to. I could name a large number of companies that are in the locality this line would be of immense use to, such as our own mine, Lamb's Section, the Boss, Silver Stream, Sylvester, South Comstock, and others.

107. *By Mr. Crisp.*—Are you a shareholder in this tramway company? I have no interest in it whatever, and I do not know any one in it, with the exception of the secretary. I want to see the thing constructed for the sake of my own company, and on those grounds am very anxious for the Bill to pass.

108. You have read the Bill, and consider it is fairly drawn, and that the interests of the public are properly conserved? Yes, I think so.

NICHOLAS JOHN BROWN, *called and examined.*

109. *By Mr. Butler.*—You are Speaker of the House of Assembly, and Member for the District of Cumberland? Yes.

110. You have been to the West Coast and Zeehan? Yes.

111. And you know it pretty well? Yes.

112. Have you read this Bill? Yes, sufficiently to make myself acquainted with its general provisions.

113. What is your opinion as to the effect this line will have on the District of Zeehan? The construction of a work such as contemplated by the provisions of this Bill, provided the public rights are duly conserved, would be highly beneficial to the community at Zeehan and the public generally. The population has increased enormously during the last 12 months, and is increasing now to such an extent that no ordinary roadway will be adequate for the traffic.

114. What was the state of the main street down which it is proposed to run this tramway when you saw it? It was simply a narrow track, hardly wide enough for two carts to pass at a time. The road was corduroyed and covered with metal, but wet weather and traffic had cut it up terribly. After a day's rain it is extremely inconvenient to walk upon it. The road will either have to be reconstructed, or some such scheme as this will have to be carried out.

115. Do you think it will be a saving and a convenience to passengers? As to its being a saving, that depends upon the rates charged, about which I have not informed myself. As to its being a great convenience there can be no question at all. The traffic to the terminus of the Zeehan-Strahan railway will be very great, and unless some better means of communication is provided the public inconvenience felt in the near future will be very great.

116. From your knowledge of the district, do you think there is suitable material there to construct roads which will bear the traffic of a large mining district? I cannot express an opinion about that, because I have not examined the country. I assume, however, that those who have tried to keep the roads in repair have got the best material that was to be had. The material on the road is very bad, as it grinds into powder. I am not aware of any deposit of good road metal in the neighbourhood.

117. From your knowledge of the ability of the men there, do you think they would get good metal if they could? I am bound to assume that the Public Works Department would take every means to secure the best material, and the material they have got is very bad.

118. Do you think the Bill will be acceptable to the people of Zeehan if the public rights are properly conserved? I have spoken with a number of my constituents, residents of Zeehan, on the subject, and I gather that the general opinion at Zeehan is strongly in favour of the construction of such a tramway, always with the reservation as to the charges made and the conservation of the public rights.

119. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know Mr. Sinclair? Yes.

120. Would you take him as an authority on the opinions of the Zeehan people if he were asked to inform the Committee on the subject? I could certainly rely upon his reply being straightforward and honest. In regard to the rates it seems rather high to charge full rates for any portion of a ton of goods. With that exception the tolls seem to be very fair.

121. *By Mr. Butler.*—What is your opinion in regard to the proposal to make branch tramways to the suburbs and different mines? I think they would be extremely useful. If they would not be beneficial to the mines, I presume the mine-owners would not ask for them.

122. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—Do you think there should be any limits to these branch lines? I think their construction should be subject to the approval of the Governor in Council; with that proviso, I see no evil that could possibly result.

123. *By the Chairman.*—What is your opinion in regard to a single or a double line in the main street? I am decidedly in favour of a single line, with passing-places at convenient distances. If a greater width had been reserved for the road, I should be in favour of a double line.

124. *By Mr. Crisp.*—If this Bill passes as it is the Company will have control of this tramway for twenty-one years: do you think that time is too long? Yes, I think twenty-one years is too long. In the certain rapid growth of the place, fourteen years is long enough to give the promoters ample time, on the Schedule charges, to recoup themselves.

125. *By Mr. Butler.*—Do you think fourteen years is a sufficient time to recoup them really for the risk they run? I think so.

126. *By Mr. Mackenzie.*—Would you recommend that the Company should have the option of renewal? Yes, of course on terms to be specified.

127. *By Mr. Crisp.*—Do you think that a time should be fixed for the commencement of No. 2 Tramway, as well as for No. 1? Yes, it ought to be fixed, though a more liberal allowance of time ought to be given.