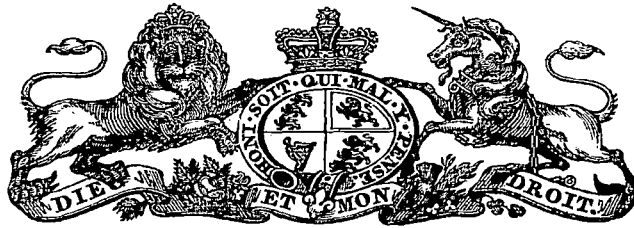


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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

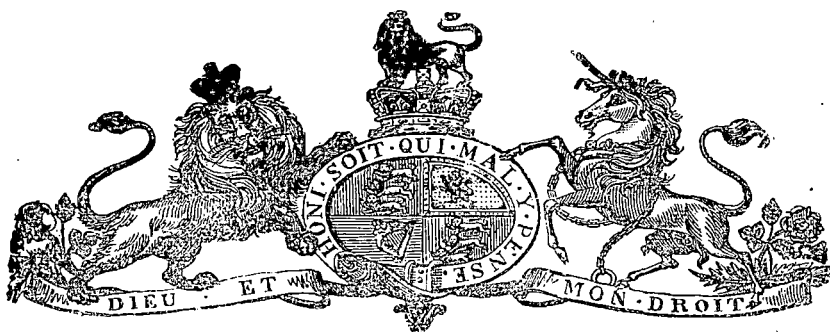
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WEST COAST TELEGRAPHS:

REPORT BY SUPERINTENDENT OF TELEGRAPHS.

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



*Telegraph Department, Hobart, 28th June, 1890.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to draw attention to the large and increasing telegraphic business that is now being transacted on the West Coast.

During the five months ending the 31st May the receipts for messages to and from Reminé, Strahan, and Mount Zeehan has amounted to £552 8s. 6d., with 10,286 messages. This is exclusive of intercolonial business, of which there is a fair amount. Such a large number of messages coming on to the North-West Coast wires occupies them very fully, and owing to the number of stations thereon (all of which are more or less busy), and the interference caused to the good working of the line in consequence of the nature of the country through which portions of it pass, delays are naturally frequent and vexatious.

Authority has been given to run another wire from Launceston to Burnie to relieve this pressure; but this has not yet been commenced owing to a difficulty in obtaining the wire.

On the 27th August, 1886, when the question of communication with West Coast was under consideration, I reported upon two routes—viz., the one now carried out *via* Waratah, and another *via* the Ouse, Marlborough, and Mount Lyell. I was then of opinion that the latter was not suitable from the uncertainty of the route, combined with the extra expense of construction and maintenance. Now, however, I understand the conditions have somewhat changed, as, I understand, more permanent tracks have been surveyed and laid out, and the traffic in this direction is likely to increase.

The distance from Hobart to Strahan, *via* the Ouse, is 180 miles, while from Strahan to Launceston it is 247 miles, and to Hobart 370, and messages have to be repeated at Launceston for Hobart, and often, when the line is working indifferently, at other stations also.

The advantage, therefore, of direct communication between Hobart and the West Coast is very apparent, and it becomes more so as the business increases.

I would therefore submit, for the consideration of the Government, the advisableness of delaying the construction of the proposed third wire from Launceston to Burnie, and as soon as possible commencing the erection of a telegraph line from the Ouse to Strahan, with, if possible, a continuation of the said line from the Ouse into Hobart, in order to reserve such line for the especial accommodation of the West Coast traffic, which bids fair from present prospects to become very important.

The route, as recommended to me by Mr. T. B. Moore, is—Ouse to Marlborough, 34 miles; Marlborough to Iron Store, 27 miles; Iron Store to Mount Lyell, 40 miles; Mount Lyell to Strahan *via* Honeysuckle Plains, 26 miles. The latter section he recommends in preference to going *via* Lynchford, which is four miles longer and a very bad track.

The estimated cost is—from the Ouse to Strahan, £3500, and from the Ouse to Hobart £500. The latter might stand over for a while, but at the same time I would strongly advise its erection, in order to give complete and speedy transit of business.

I feel sure if this direct line to the West Coast were constructed it would give the greatest satisfaction to the public interested in the development of that district, while at the same time, if the anticipations as to the future of the silver mines are at all realised, it will become a necessity.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

ROBT. HENRY, *Superintendent of Telegraphs.*

*The Hon. the Treasurer.*

ADDENDUM.—Another and very great advantage of the direct line is that, should business require it, its capacity can be doubled or quadrupled by means of instruments only.

R. H.