

(No. 95.)



1863.

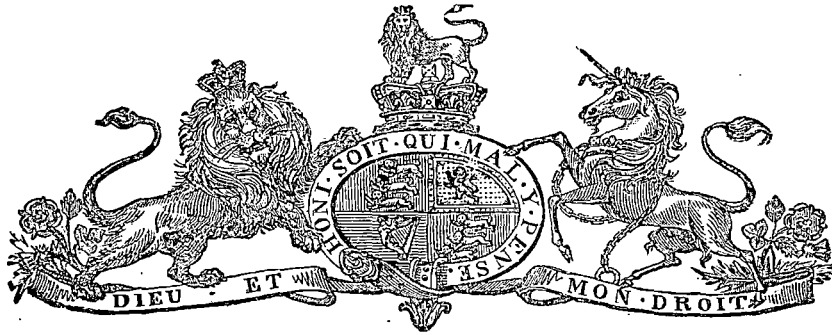
[SECOND SESSION.]

T A S M A N I A.

R A I L W A Y.

PROGRESS REPORT.

Brought up by Mr. Horne, and ordered by the House to be printed,
9 September, 1863.



SELECT Committee appointed to enquire into the Practicability of constructing a Main Line of Railway from Hobart Town to Launceston.

THURSDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER, 1863.

A MOTION was made, and the Question was proposed.—That a Select Committee be appointed to enquire into the practicability of constructing a Main Line of Railway between Hobart Town and Launceston, with a view of opening up the country throughout, and establishing a direct line of communication with Australia and New Zealand across Tasmania; and also with a view of ensuring the proposed line of Railway between Deloraine and Launceston. (*Mr. Allison.*)

And the Question being put;

It was resolved in the Affirmative.

FRIDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER, 1863.

Mr. Allison nominated the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the practicability of constructing a Main Line of Railway between Hobart Town and Launceston:—

Mr. Horne.
Mr. Walker.
Mr. Davies.
Mr. Murray.
Mr. Rose.
Mr. Haggitt.
Mr. Allison.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

No. 1. 8 September, 1863. *Present.*—Mr. Allison, Mr. Rose, Mr. Davies, Mr. Horne, and Mr. Haggitt.
Mr. Horne elected Chairman.

No. 2. 9 September, 1863. *Present.*—Mr. Horne, Mr. Walker, Mr. Allison, and Mr. Haggitt.

WITNESSES in attendance.

The Honorable John H. Wedge, M.L.C. No expenses charged.
Jas. Erskine Calder, Esq., Surveyor-General. No expenses charged.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to enquire into the Practicability of constructing a Main Line of Railway between Hobart Town and Launceston have agreed to the following

PROGRESS REPORT.

YOUR Committee have been favoured with the *vivâ voce* evidence of the Honorable Mr. Wedge, M.L.C., formerly a Surveyor on the staff of this Colony, and intimately acquainted with the Country through which it is proposed that the Line should pass; and they have examined the Surveyor-General of Tasmania upon the subject which your Committee were directed to enquire into.

The information which they have been enabled to obtain from these Witnesses, from an inspection of a series of maps laid before them, and from a general knowledge of the country possessed by some of the Members of your Committee, they are warranted in reporting that a Main Trunk Line of Railway is practicable between Hobart Town and Launceston, and that its course through the country is not confined to one direction.

That such a Main Trunk Line would give facilities of transport of Agricultural and other produce to the Markets at the two principal Ports from extensive country lands at present but imperfectly possessing such facilities.

That Branch Lines, either of Tramways or Railways, could easily be constructed in connexion with the Main Trunk, commanding the extensive agricultural Districts of Westbury and Deloraine, and the pastoral County of Cumberland, on the west; and the Dairy Plains and Coal and Gold Fields of Fingal and Mount Nicholas, and the valley of the South Esk, on the east.

That the Main Trunk Line can be constructed so as to pass either through or immediately contiguous to most of the larger settled Towns and Townships on the Main Line of Road as far as the head waters of the Macquarie River, and passing near Ross, Campbell Town, and Cleveland, and thence to Longford, and thence on an already surveyed Line through Perth to a terminus at Launceston.

That, previous to any further action on the part of Parliament, an inspection of the best Line should be made. The Honourable Mr. Wedge and the Surveyor-General have expressed to your Committee their willingness to proceed to make such inspection as early as possible, aided by the local knowledge of the Surveyors through whose Districts the Line will be supposed to pass.

That, as it is of the utmost importance that the gentlemen who have thus zealously offered their services to inspect the Line should be in constant communication with your Committee, it is the unanimous opinion of your Committee that it would be desirable that they should have power to sit during the recess; or, in the event of a prorogation of your Honourable House, that the Members of your Committee, or such of them as the Governor in Council may see fit to nominate, should be formed into a Railway Commission with all the powers usually allotted to such a body.

Committee Room, 9th September, 1863.

THOS. HORNE, *Chairman.*

EVIDENCE.

9 SEPTEMBER, 1863.

J. E. CALDER, Esq., *Surveyor-General, called in and examined.*

I am of opinion that a cursory survey to determine the Line would take a fortnight, and it may take six weeks. Four hundred pounds would cover the expense. It might cost less than that sum.

In the examination of the Line of road the traffic would have to be considered, and the extent of cultivated and occupied land through which it runs; and such a Line would give facilities of transport of agricultural produce from valuable country not at present possessing those facilities. It would greatly enhance the value of the country, and contribute to the general value of the Colony.

I scarcely know any part of the present line of Main Road that does not run through good land.

The Honorable Mr. Wedge agreed to the above Evidence.

JAMES BARNARD,
GOVERNMENT PRINTER, TASMANIA.