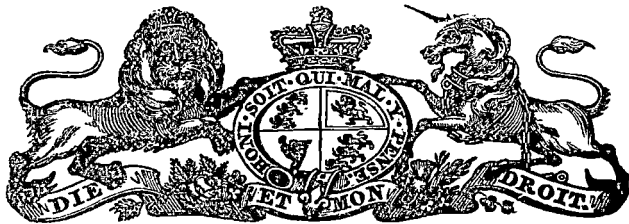


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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

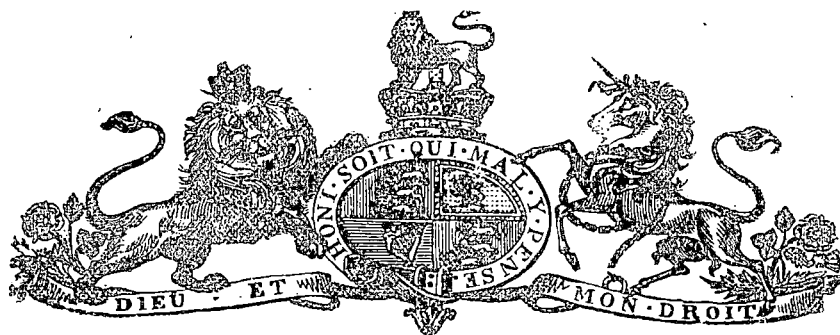
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**GOVERNMENT AND TASMANIAN MAIN LINE  
RAILWAYS:**

**REPORT OF ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF.**

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



Public Works Office, Hobart, 31st July, 1885.

SIR,

IN obedience to the Order of the House of Assembly, dated 11th September, 1884, I have the honor to submit the following Report :—

#### MAIN LINE RAILWAY.

*Permanent Way.*—The Permanent Way is generally in good condition on the Southern sections of the Line; on portions of the Northern section it is not in such good order, owing to the non-renewal of the worn out rails and the decay of sleepers. The original contract (40 lb.) rail is being replaced with a 45 lb. rail where renewals have taken place. The original contract sleepers are being renewed with sleepers containing about 25 per cent. more timber, *i.e.* equal to some 2½ million superficial feet on the whole line.

*Rolling Stock.*—The Rolling Stock is generally in fair order; the requirements of the Line with regard to quantity is, I respectfully submit, a question for a Railway Manager rather than for an Engineer; but, in any case, I have not the requisite data to guide me. With regard to ease and steadiness of running, it is a question whether more could not be secured by the adoption of the double buffer system, as on the Government narrow gauge, when greater facilities would be afforded for the interchange of all classes of traffic.

*Stations.*—The original deficiencies in this respect have now all been made good, but chiefly out of working expenses instead of being made a charge against “capital account.” More extended yard accommodation is required at Hobart. Engine turntables, or other means of turning engines, are required at New Norfolk Road and Oatlands, but the difficulty in the former case can be, perhaps, met by the use of the Government turntable for the Derwent Valley Line. Foot-bridges are required at all stations (as New Norfolk Road, Ross, Oatlands,) where trains pass. The platforms are of varying heights and distances from rails: these and other matters in connection with goods sheds should be made uniform to suit the Government stock, and this can be done at small expense.

*Charges against “Construction” or “Maintenance.”*—The items chargeable to construction are:—All departures in excess of the contract provisions on Main Line Railway; all additional works of any kind now or hereafter erected; all additional rolling stock. Other items are chargeable to maintenance.

#### LAUNCESTON AND DELORAINÉ RAILWAY.

*Permanent Way.*—The Permanent Way as a whole is in fair condition, but certain portions contain many bad rails or bad joints,—the latter, I think, due to the decay and non-renewal of the joint sleepers in good time. Extensive renewals of broad gauge (72 lb.) rails will be required in another four or five years if broad gauge traffic is continued; but I think it will be in every way to advantage of the Government and the public to abandon the working of the broad gauge. If this is done there will be an ample supply of old 72 lb. rails to last for renewals for some time; but whether the line continues a mixed gauge or not, I strongly recommend that the rails ordered in future do not exceed 60 lbs. per yard in weight; this will have to continue to be the standard weight for the narrow gauge of this line (though more than is actually required), but it is forced upon the Department by the existing conditions. The heavy rail saves to some extent a portion of sleepers that would otherwise be required.

*Rolling Stock.*—The Rolling Stock is in good condition. I think it would be desirable that all new stock made should be narrow gauge, and of the “Mersey” type. I am unable to state what further quantity is required, that being a question that the Railway Manager is more competent to decide.

*Stations.*—The recent improvements and additions made at Launceston should serve for all requirements for some time ; but I should recommend a siding to, and wharf at, deep water below the bar. Several of the minor stations present a very dilapidated appearance, and are little better than huts: I refer to those at Breadalbane, Wilmore's Lane, Bishopsbourne, Oaks, Glenore, and Hagley. The temporary foundations of Perth and Westbury stations and platforms are rotten, and require renewal in a more permanent manner. A carriage entrance is required from the main road at Evandale Junction.

DELORAINÉ AND MERSEY LINE.

This line, although being worked with a partial service, is not yet out of contractors' hands, and will be dealt with in my next report under this order.

PARATTAH AND OATLANDS LINE.

This line is only just completed, and is still in the hands of the contractors, and will be dealt with in my next report under this order.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS GENERALLY.

All expenditure in additions to works or stock of any kind should be charged to construction. All other expenditure should be charged to maintenance and working expenses.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES FINCHAM, *Engineer-in-Chief.*

*The Hon. the Minister.*