

(No. 138.)



1886.

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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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## HUON RAILWAY:

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

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Brought up by Mr. Lucas, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed,  
October 20, 1886.



*SELECT COMMITTEE*, appointed on the 9th September, to enquire into and report upon the practicability and expediency of extending Railway Communication from Hobart to the West Coast, *viâ* the Huon; with power to call for persons, papers, and records.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. BIRD.	MR. BARRETT.
MR. PILLINGER.	MR. CROWTHER.
MR. FITZGERALD.	MR. LUCAS ( <i>Mover</i> ).
MR. SUTTON.	

DAYS OF MEETING.

Wednesday, 15th September; Wednesday, 22nd September; Friday, 24th September; Wednesday, 29th September; Friday, 1st October; Wednesday, 6th October; Wednesday, 13th October; Thursday, 14th October; Wednesday, 20th October.

WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Mr. H. Judd. Mr. O. Geeves. Mr. T. B. Moore. Mr. G. Innes. Mr. C. Glover. Mr. J. Skinner. Mr. J. Helmer.  
Mr. F. M. Trappes. Mr. J. W. Syme. Mr. M. Fitzpatrick. Mr. W. J. Brown. M. W. Philp.  
Mr. R. J. Lucas, M.H.A.

EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
H. Judd .....	2	4	0	F. Trappes.....	1	13	9
G. Innes .....	5	7	0	M. Fitzpatrick .....	1	18	0
C. Glover .....	2	4	0	T. B. Moore.....	3	9	6
J. Skinner .....	2	2	0	W. J. Brown.....	2	2	0
O. Geeves .....	2	4	0	W. Philp .....	2	4	0
E. G. Innes .....	0	14	0				

## M I N U T E S.

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1886.

The Committee met at 3 P.M.

*Present.*—Mr. Lucas, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Pillinger.

Mr. Lucas was voted to the Chair.

Resolved, That Messrs. Osborne Geeves, Geeveston; Henry Judd, Franklin; William H. Glover, Franklin; Thomas B. Moore, New Norfolk; D. Jones; George Innes, Franklin, be summoned to attend and give evidence before the Committee, at 11 A.M. on Wednesday, the 22nd September; and Messrs. G. Lovett, Surveyor, and Mr. Perrin, Conservator of Forests, on a date to be hereafter determined.

The Committee adjourned till Wednesday, the 22nd instant, at 11 A.M.

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1886.

Committee met at 11 A.M.

*Present.*—Messrs. Lucas (Chairman), Bird, Pillinger, Barrett, Crowther, and Sutton.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed.

Messrs. H. Judd, O. Geeves, and T. B. Moore were called and examined.

It was decided to recall Mr. Judd and summon Mr. G. Innes, to give evidence in the afternoon.

At 1 P.M. the Committee adjourned till 2.30 P.M.

The Committee resumed at 2.30 P.M.

*Present.*—Messrs. Lucas (Chairman), Bird, and Barrett.

Messrs. H. Judd and G. Innes were called and examined.

Resolved, That Messrs. J. Skinner and C. Glover be summoned for Friday, the 24th instant, at 11 A.M.

The Committee adjourned at 4 P.M. till 11 A.M. on Friday, the 24th instant.

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1886.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

*Present.*—Mr. Pillinger, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Lucas (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Committee adjourned at 11.20 A.M. till 2.30 P.M.

The Committee met at 2.30 P.M.

*Present.*—Mr. Bird, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Lucas (Chairman).

The Chairman tabled a letter from Mr. C. Glover giving a description of his explorations on the Weld River.

Mr. C. Glover was called in, and, having been examined, withdrew.

Mr. J. Skinner was called in, and, having been examined, withdrew.

The Committee adjourned until 11 A.M. on Wednesday, the 29th instant.

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1886.

The Committee met at 2.30 P.M.

*Present.*—Mr. Pillinger, Mr. Sutton, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Crowther, Mr. Bird, Mr. Lucas (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman laid upon the Table additional written evidence from Mr. G. Innes.

The Chairman having stated that he had requested the attendance of Mr. E. G. Innes, it was resolved that that gentleman be called in and examined.

Mr. Innes having been examined, withdrew.

Mr. John Helmer was called in and examined.

Mr. Helmer withdrew.

Resolved, That the following witnesses be summoned for Friday next, at 11 A.M.:—Mr. M. Fitzpatrick, Port Cygnet; Mr. F. Trappes, Oyster Cove; Mr. J. W. Symes, Hobart.

The Committee adjourned till Friday, the 1st October, at 11 A.M.

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1886.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

*Present*—Messrs. Lucas (Chairman), Bird, Sutton, Pillinger, and Fitzgerald.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. F. M. Trappes was called and examined.

Mr. Trappes withdrew.

Mr. J. W. Syme was called and examined.

Mr. Syme withdrew.

Mr. M. Fitzpatrick was called and examined.

Mr. Fitzpatrick withdrew.

It was resolved to obtain, if possible, the attendance of Mr. James M'Partland to give evidence on Wednesday, 6th instant.

It was decided that the Chairman, Mr. R. J. Lucas, be invited to give evidence on Wednesday.

At 1:10 P.M. the Committee adjourned till 11 A.M. on Wednesday, 6th instant.

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1886.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

*Present*—Messrs. Lucas (Chairman), Bird, and Pillinger.

Minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Lucas explained that he had not been able to prepare the report promised, and the Committee then adjourned till 3 P.M. on Thursday, 7th instant.

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1886.

The Committee met at 2:30 P.M.

*Present*—Messrs. Lucas (Chairman), Bird, and Pillinger.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. W. J. Brown was called and examined.

Mr. Brown withdrew.

The Committee adjourned at 4 P.M. till 10:30 A.M. on Thursday, October 14.

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1886.

The Committee met at 10:30 A.M.

*Present*—Messrs. Lucas (Chairman), Bird, Pillinger, Fitzgerald, and Dr. Crowther.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. William Philp was called and examined.

Mr. Philp withdrew.

Mr. Lucas then gave evidence, Mr. Bird occupying the Chair.

At 11:20 the Committee adjourned till 3 P.M.

The Committee resumed at 3 P.M.

*Present*—Messrs. Bird (Chairman), Fitzgerald, and Dr. Crowther.

Mr. Lucas was also present, and gave evidence.

The Committee adjourned at 4 P.M. till 11 A.M. on Wednesday, 20th instant.

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1886.

The Committee met at 10:35 A.M.

*Present*—Mr. Bird, Mr. Pillinger, Dr. Crowther, Mr. Sutton, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Lucas (Chairman).

The Minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Lucas laid Mr. Fincham's report on the proposed line on the table, (see Appendix A.)

The draft report was read, amended, and agreed to.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.

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## R E P O R T.

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YOUR Committee, in the pursuit of their enquiry as to the practicability and expediency of connecting Hobart with the West Coast by railway, have endeavoured to obtain evidence of the topographical features of the country lying between Victoria and the West Coast. The evidence of the witnesses who were examined with the view of eliciting information thereon, tends to prove that a large tract of country lying between Victoria and Mount Ann, extending along the valley of the Huon to the Russell River, thence along that river some distance to the Weld River, and following up that river and on to Mount Ann, is likely to become a profitable and productive field for settlement; the land being for the most part fertile, and the timber beds extensive and various, including King William and celery-top pine, myrtle, blackwood, eucalypti, box, and other woods. No evidence of a satisfactory character as to the country beyond Mount Ann was obtainable; but up to the point indicated, a distance of about 40 miles from Victoria, there appears to be no difficulty in extending railway communication.

Your Committee would recommend that the attention of the Government should be directed to obtaining reliable and specific information as to the character of the country between the Russell River and Mount Ann, and from thence to the West Coast. The evidence annexed to this Report proves the existence of vast quantities of very valuable timber of great variety in this part of the Colony.—(See evidence of Charles A. Glover, question 134.)

The evidence as to the country lying between Hobart and Geeveston *viâ* Kingston, North West Bay, the Sandfly, Victoria, and Franklin, indicates no insuperable difficulty in the construction of a railway, and the evidence obtained from reliable sources points to the great importance of such a work being carried out, passing as near to the Sandfly as may be practicable with a view of developing the extensive and valuable coal measures which the evidence shows to exist in the Sandfly Ranges. The prospecting done in that locality, the analysis of the coal, and the opinion of experts as to its quality, indicate the probability that in these coal measures the Colony possesses a source of immense wealth. Your Committee estimate that the present traffic from Geeveston to Hobart, including the intermediate localities through which the railway if constructed would pass, would be amply sufficient to pay the working expenses of the line, which will be about 44 miles in length.

Your Committee are also of opinion that taking into consideration the present large traffic in passengers, timber, fruit, farm and dairy produce, the opening up for settlement of a considerable tract of first-class agricultural land, and the increased traffic thereby induced, will, in all probability, make this one of the best paying lines in Victoria.

With reference to the ultimate extension of the line, your Committee are of opinion that a considerable tract of land extends beyond Geeveston, which, as settlement progresses, will furnish considerable additional traffic.

After consideration of the various facts collated in evidence, your Committee strongly recommend a Parliamentary Survey of a line of railway from Hobart to Geeveston; but, not having such professional evidence as would enable them to determine the best route to be adopted, suggest alternative surveys of lines *viâ* the Sandfly Ranges and *viâ* Port Cygnet to decide the question.

R. J. LUCAS, *Chairman.*

*Committee Room, House of Assembly,*  
20th October, 1886.

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## EVIDENCE.

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1886.

HENRY JUDD, *called and examined.*

1. *By the Chairman.*—Where do you reside? Franklin.
2. Have you been for some time engaged in prospecting in the Huon District? I have been out prospecting at intervals for years; I was out five months for the Franklin Prospecting Association. I have been all through the Huon Valley, and through to Adam's Cap.
3. What was your experience of the district? I went out in 1871, going to Lake Pedder; in 1872 I went to the Arthur ranges; and then in 1875-6-7 I went up the Huon River in boats, owing to the track being blocked by fallen timber. In 1881 I was out prospecting for an Association, and also in part of 1882.
4. What was the nature of the country between Victoria and the point reached by you? A railway could run as far as Mount Ann; beyond that there is open country with button-grass plains. The primitive formation of that country is very good; gold can be found up the river.
5. Is it well timbered? There is a great quantity of blackwood and a little Huon pine. I saw drift wood of pine coming down the creeks, and there may be large forests of it; no one has ever gone back to see. There are large forests of celery-top and King William pine along the Arthur ranges.
6. Would that be good market timber? The King William pine is good, but soft; it is not so good as Huon pine.
7. *By Mr. Barrett.*—Would it do for floors or architectural purposes? I think it is rather soft for floors.
8. *By the Chairman.*—Have you been beyond Mount Ann? Yes, I have been to Lake Pedder; round the south side it is barren button-grass plains.
9. Did you see any indications of gold, tin, or other minerals? Yes, I found zinc in the Arthur Ranges in 1871, also quartz reefs with indications of minerals and containing specular iron. The country corresponds with what I have read of the country about King River.
10. Have you been along towards Macquarie Harbour? No, but I have viewed the country from Mount Ann. The watershed appears to run in all directions, and I take Mount Ann to be the highest part of the country.
11. You cannot speak of anything beyond Lake Pedder? I can only speak definitely of the country to Mount Ann.
12. From what you saw, is there any difficulty in running a macadamised road or railway from Victoria to Mount Ann? There would be no difficulty.
13. Would there be any difficulty at Mount Ann? I found an opening where you can go along a level plain inside Mount Ann, thus removing the difficulty which was supposed to exist. Owing to its being thought impossible to pass Mount Ann, no one had ever believed a route could be got in that direction.
14. When you get beyond that, is there any difficulty in sight from Mount Ann? None that cannot be avoided. An available road can be got; you can see sometimes for two miles along an open plain.
15. Then you think a road can be got through Mount Ann without difficulty? Yes.
16. Would you want a tunnel? I do not think so.
17. Can you give an idea of the distance from Victoria to Mount Ann by the road marked on the map? It is about 40 miles by the road marked.
18. Are there any matters connected with this enquiry, as to whether communication can be opened up with the West Coast, on which you can give information as to land available or minerals? By only passing through a country once a very clear knowledge of it cannot be obtained, but finding gold and tin in the river leads me to believe that there must be valuable deposits in the ranges. I found tin 10 miles from the Weld River; and gold was found 5 miles from the mouth of the Weld. Tin was found about a mile from Mount Weld; and we also found gold not far away. There is every indication of gold—waterworn gold being also found. It was winter, and there was no chance of bottoming, but gold was found in the drift.
19. Were there indications of its being reef-gold? There is every indication of reef-gold existing, so far as the primitive rocks are concerned. From Mount Weld to Mount Ann there are indications of gold; and crystallised limestone is obtained.
20. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—What is the elevation? The country rises up to the foot of the mountain; a chart showed it to be 5000 feet high.
21. What was the height of the flat country? I do not know.
22. Is it 2000 feet high? I should think it did rise to about that. From Franklin to the Craycroft there are over 100 falls and rapids which would average about 5 feet each.

Huon Railway.

23. *By Mr. Sutton.*—Was it very wet when you were there? I was out in May and June, and it was wet then.

24. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—What is the nature of the scrub? Musk, myrtle, sassafras, pear-tree, wattle, blackwood, stringybark, and other gums tribe.

25. *By Mr. Barrett.*—What is the nature of the country round Lake Pedder? Open and barren. The land is not much good.

26. Did you find any indications of gold or tin round Lake Pedder? No; there is a change of country before reaching it. It is separated by a narrow belt of what looks like cinders from a blacksmith's forge.

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OSBORNE GEEVES, *called and examined.*

28. *By the Chairman.*—Where do you reside? At Geeveston.

28. Are you acquainted with the country between Franklin and the West Coast? Yes, partly.

29. What part have you been over? I have been through the Picton Valley from Geeveston. I went from Geeveston in a south-westerly direction to the River Arve, and up to the Hartz Mountains. I then struck the Picton, and followed the Picton Valley southwards for about 20 miles, then struck west by north down to the Old River near Bathurst Harbour.

30. What is the nature of that country? From Geeveston to half way up the Hartz Mountains it is heavily timbered country; the top of the mountain is barren rock.

31. Would there be any difficulty in laying a road or railway? A road could be got by that route, but not a railway. The railway route would go from Geeveston west and north west till it got to the Arve, which would be followed down nearly to its junction with the Huon, and until it got round the Hartz Mountains; it would then go west and south down the Picton Valley, keeping in that direction for about 30 miles, then go on west till striking the Old River at Bathurst. It must keep south of the Arthur Ranges.

32. What is the nature of the country? Heavily timbered.

33. What is the land like? Some is fair and some rocky; the timber is mostly myrtle and stringy-bark beyond the Hartz Mountains, and then going west you get into the King William pine.

34. Did you see any minerals? I had not time to look, but that country will be thoroughly prospected this year.

35. Can you give any information that will assist the Committee in framing their Report? I should never regard that route as the means of opening up the West Coast. It would only take in country south of Macquarie. The route to open up the West Coast must go through the Derwent Valley.

36. What is the distance from Geeveston to Bathurst Harbour? About 60 miles.

37. What would be the probable traffic returns of a railway from Hobart to Geeveston? One of the leading features would be that it would supply the sleepers for the whole system of railway construction in the Colony. I reckon the Colony would save something like £2600 per year on sleepers alone if you had direct communication between the Huon and the railway trunk line. The life of a sleeper is eight years, and it will take 100,000 sleepers a year to maintain 400 miles of railway; that gives 2,500,000 feet of timber, equalling 6250 tons freight. It will take 1000 tons of timber per month to construct and maintain the railway works.

38. That would be with regard to a railway to Geeveston? Yes; we regard it more important to get hold of the timber up the Huon and Picton than to get through to the West Coast. Those forests are more than equal to anything we have yet cut.

39. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Would not the present railways open up timber for themselves? I do not know that they will, but there will be a great traffic outside that in fruit and general timber. The timber would be sent direct to port of shipment; and all over the Huon the fruit industry is being pushed ahead.

40. Do you grow potatoes? We do not grow many now. We used to grow them in very great quantities, but we turned our attention to fruit, timber, and grass, finding it paid better.

41. *By Mr. Sutton.*—Is that the reason why the potato trade has declined? Yes. We could still grow them as well as ever, but we get greater value from the fruit.

42. The land is not worn out? No, but it pays us better to grow other things, and we do so.

43. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—How long does the fruit trade last? The large fruit lasts about half a year; then there is a great deal of small fruit from December to March. The fruit traffic may be said to last over eight months.

44. What would be the probable traffic in apples? I cannot say. There were about 300,000 cases this year from the valley of the Huon, but some of that would probably come by water. I do not include all the Huon,—only the Huon valley that would be tapped by the railway.

45. *By the Chairman.*—What quantity was there from the valley running from Victoria to Geeveston? About 300,000 bushels, and all this would be tapped by the railway. This would include Upper Huon, Victoria, Franklin, and Geeveston. This quantity is rapidly increasing, young orchards being laid out in all directions. At Victoria alone this year there will be 100,000 bushels of apples; and all these would come by railway to Hobart.

46. *By Mr. Bird.*—Can you form an estimate of what the other produce would be? Not easily. There would be a lot of short traffic to deep water for export to the other colonies, but this could not be closely estimated.

47. *By the Chairman.*—Would it have the effect of bringing general produce, especially vegetables, to the Hobart market? I should certainly think so; but that kind of produce does not largely increase railway traffic.

48. *By Mr. Bird.*—What timber would be forwarded, not including railway sleepers? If a railway were made to Geeveston there would be about 300 tons of timber per week, exclusive of sleepers, sent to Hospital Bay for the intercolonial trade, and for Launceston.

49. How much would come through to Hobart? All timber intended for Hobart and up country would go by railway to Hobart, and all that for export would be shipped from Hospital Bay. It would be cheaper to send the timber for Hobart direct by rail. It costs us 10½*d.* per cwt. by 100 feet by contract to get it from the mill to the water's edge, and it would come to Hobart for that, thus saving the 1*s.* freight paid to the barges. With a railway we could get it to Hobart cheaper than at present we can get it to the water.

50. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Do you consider your timber supply inexhaustible? Reckoning it at 20,000 feet per acre—which is a very low estimate—you can imagine how long it will last. That average will include every acre westwards until reaching the West Coast. There is a certain supply of timber for the next century; and I would point out that it cannot be conserved, for when timber gets a certain age it perishes, and had better be used, thus making way for young timber in its place.

51. *By Mr. Bird.*—What prospects of traffic would there be between the Huon and Hobart? I cannot calculate the amount, but there will be a great deal of traffic. Taking from Victoria upwards, Margate, Kingston, Sandfly, and all along that road, would be tapped. The fruit trade from Hobart along to Kingston would also be very considerable, perhaps 100,000 bushels altogether. It would be foolish to make the line round by Port Cygnet, increasing the railway 22 miles for all time. A branch line to Port Cygnet could be made, and would be much better.

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THOMAS B. MOORE, *called and examined.*

52. *By the Chairman.*—Have you been engaged prospecting for some time on the West Coast? Yes, for a great number of years. I suppose I know the West Coast better than any man in the Colony.

53. Have you made a trip from Macquarie Harbour to the Huon? I have been from Birch's Inlet, Macquarie, through a gap in the Junction range, and then followed the coast line down to the west side of the De Witt range to Port Davey.

54. Have you travelled between Macquarie and Victoria? Yes: that same trip I went round the heads of the Spring, North, Old, and New rivers, to the west side of the Arthur range, and across on the only gap in the range, between the Arthur and Franklin ranges, to Victoria.

55. *By Mr. Bird.*—Where did you strike the Huon? I went down the Arthur Plains as far as the Craycroft, and then followed the valley of the Huon to Victoria. I then went on behalf of the Government to report on the country from Russell's Falls and by Mount Wedge to Lake Pedder. I then went along Jones' Track.

56. *By the Chairman.*—Where did you come out at Victoria? There is an old track which I followed as far as the Craycroft.

57. What is the nature of the country between Victoria and Macquarie along Jones' Track? A railway might be got to Port Davey, but it would be impossible to get along the northern route.

58. *By Mr. Bird.*—Suppose you went nearly to Port Davey, and skirted the coast, going through the gap between the Franklin and Arthur ranges, would it be practicable for a railway to go any distance inland? No; you would have to go to Port Davey.

59. You think Macquarie Harbour could not be reached from the Huon without first going to Port Davey, and then going along the coast? No; you would have to go to Port Davey, then proceed to Macquarie, getting inland perhaps 15 or 20 miles.

60. How far inland would it average? Starting from three miles at Port Davey it would reach about 15 miles inland along the route.

61. *By Mr. Sutton.*—Would you have to cross many rivers?—would they prove difficult? They would not be difficult to cross near the heads.

62. *By the Chairman.*—Are you prepared to say a practicable route could be got that way? It is practicable, but the Rocky River would be difficult to cross. Its banks are low, and the neighbouring country floods.

63. *By Mr. Sutton.*—Would you not have to cross the Mainwaring River? It would not be difficult to cross where the route would go.

64. *By the Chairman.*—Have you gone to the West Coast from Glenora? I have been from Glenora to Lake Pedder.

65. Did you find indications of minerals? There is a copper country, and a little gold to the south of Macquarie, but no tin; it is mostly copper country.

66. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Is it promising country? I should think the neighbourhoods of Mount Picton and near the New River are the most promising for minerals.



67. What sort of country is it between Victoria and Mount Ann? It is heavily timbered land to the Craycroft, and there might be some good patches of land, but the rest is worthless. I condemned the land at the Serpentine River and east of the Franklin Range; it is barren. There are patches of good land on the Florentine, but not to any great extent.

68. How do you think the West Coast can be most practically reached by railway? I think by the St. Clair country. I consider the only route is up the Derwent Valley. Last year I laid out a road by Mount Arrowsmith through the Collingwood Valley to the coast. The only difficulty is at Mount Arrowsmith.

69. *By Mr. Bird.*—What is the nature of the country in Collingwood Valley? I should not call it first-class agricultural land. There is a good deal of button-grass.

70. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Have you been down the Gordon River? No.

71. Can a railway be got through there? I am confident it cannot.

72. *By Mr. Bird.*—Can the West Coast be reached from a northern railway? There are only three routes to the coast—by the Arthur Range to Port Davey, up the Derwent and Collingwood Vallies, and from Mount Bischoff to Corinna by the north end of the Meredith Range.

73. Which route would serve the country best? I have no doubt of it—the Derwent Valley. That route goes through a central part of the Island, and crosses a very large extent of mineral land. There is also very good agricultural land all through the New Country.

MR. JUDD, *recalled and examined.*

74. *By Mr. Bird.*—Where did you find gold between the Huon and Macquarie Harbour? I found gold on both sides of Mount Weld, and between Mount Weld and the Huon River, but it was not in payable quantities. We found it in crevices of rocks in the river. It must have come down the creeks. All along on the north side of the Arthur Range there are quartz reefs well defined containing iron pyrites. On the north-west portion and along the top of the Arthur Range I found hematite iron and quartz containing specular iron. On the south side of Mount Picton I found a large cave of crystallised limestone, and I believe silver will be found in that locality. On the south end of Franklin Range and near Mount Picton I found large reefs of quartz similar to quartz I have seen containing tin. This country has never been prospected. Gold has been found at Port Esperance, Port Cygnet, and from Mount Ann to Mount Weld, thus showing a continuous belt of gold on to Mount Lyell.

MR. GEORGE INNES, *called and examined.*

75. *By the Chairman.*—What position do you occupy? District Surveyor, residing at Franklin.

76. We want information to enable us to make a report to Parliament on the practicability or otherwise of a railway from Hobart to the West Coast *via* the Huon. Are you acquainted with the country in question? Yes.

77. How much of the country do you know? I have been through as far as the Picton, and I know the whole country well from the reports of others.

78. What would be the quantity of good land and timber tapped? Beyond the Picton I can only speak from the reports of others. There is said to be a large extent of good land along the Weld River. There is some very good land up the Arve, and also in the Valley of the Picton. I know that from my own knowledge. The general character of the land on the banks of the Huon is not good; but on the northern side of the Huon there is some good land.

79. Do you know the character of the country south of Geeveston? Yes, very well.

80. What is the nature of the land and timber? It varies a good deal. There is a large extent of good land and splendid timber beyond Geeveston and Port Esperance.

81. With respect to the probable traffic on the railway from Hobart to the Huon, what would be its extent? There would be a large traffic in fruit; there is also a very large trade in timber, but it would be a question whether a good deal of the timber traffic would not be by water. I anticipate that the timber for export would go by water, and that for Tasmania would all go by railway, thus saving the expense of handling.

82. Would the local consumption of timber for railways be large? Very large, I should think, especially in regard to extensive railway extension.

83. Would the passenger traffic be large? I think so, decidedly; passenger traffic always increases with railways, and there is now a considerable passenger traffic by steamer and coach. Of course very much would depend on the rates charged and the route taken. If the line detours, and the rates were chargeable on distance it would of course increase the cost of travelling. The question is obvious. If the railway fares were anything like those now paid by steamer the railway will take almost all the traffic.

84. Would the lesser time have much effect on the traffic? I think it would have a wonderful effect. The distance from Franklin to Hobart is about the same as from Deloraine to Launceston; but you can travel from Deloraine to Launceston and back in one day, whilst it takes three days to come from Franklin to Hobart, do an hour's business and return.

85. What would be the traffic in fruit and passengers between Hobart and this side of the Huon? I think it would be very large indeed.

86. What tonnage could we reckon on per year? I can hardly say without preparation.

87. What is the traffic now from Franklin? I will furnish it in writing.

88. Do you know the Sandfly? Yes.

89. What is the prospect of timber traffic from there? I think there would be a very large output of marketable timber from there. There is a large extent of both sawing and splitting timber.

90. Is there good timber between North-west Bay and the Sandfly saddle? Yes, there is a good deal of stringy-bark.

91. Is there a probability of sawmilling being established there if the railway went through the district? I should think so. Up Allen's Rivulet there is plenty of good sawing timber.

92. *By Mr. Bird.*—Would that be near the surveyed route? Yes, it would be near it.

93. Would this timber lie closer to the Snug route? No, it is much closer to the proposed line. The proposed line would be below the timber, which spreads away up the slope of the hills, and it could therefore be easily taken to the railway.

94. Would the proposed line pass near the Sandfly coal deposits? Yes, very near; it must pass within three or four miles at the very outside—that is, the line surveyed by Mr. Mault.

95. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think the coal deposits extend in the direction of the proposed railway? I cannot say; I know they extend nearly down to the Huon River on the other side.

96. Do you recollect how the seams dip? North-west, I believe, speaking from memory; they dip towards the Sandfly River and Huon. A seam of coal has been cut within two and a half miles of the Huon.

97. What is the character of the coal? As far as I know, it is anthracite coal.

98. Do you know Kellaway's seam? I have not seen it.

99. *By Mr. Bird.*—Has much coal been taken from the Sandfly seam? Only for specimens; none for market.

100. How thick are the seams? About 4 feet, speaking from memory; it is some years since I saw them.

101. Was a company formed to work the coal? Yes, two companies were formed in Melbourne.

102. Are either of them doing any work? I have not heard anything of them lately.

103. Is the property regarded as valuable by the shareholders? I should imagine so.

104. Do they contemplate working shortly? I have not heard.

105. Do you know whether a line of railway could be got nearer to the coal than that surveyed by Mr. Mault, and going through from there to Victoria? I would not undertake to say distinctly that it could, but it would be well worth a trial.

106. *By the Chairman.*—You made a survey, did you not, from North-west Bay up to the saddle of the Sandfly? Yes.

107. Did you find a practical route? Yes, but it would require a tunnel.

108. Looking at the map, do you think from your knowledge of the country that the line through Margate, then through the coal deposits of the Sandfly to Victoria, being practicable, would be longer or shorter than the route surveyed by Mr. Mault? I am inclined to think it would be longer; there would be a difficulty in getting down the saddle; but there would not be much difference between the two routes.

109. Is there any range between the Sandfly range and the Huon on the route of the line going on to Victoria? No; after getting on the top of the Sandfly saddle you can go on towards Victoria. I decidedly think it would be worth a trial to make another survey.

110. *By Mr. Bird.*—Do you know if any of the coal seams are being worked now on the Sandfly, not including those you have mentioned? There are men working attempting to develop the coal; but the only mine in the district being worked is at Port Cygnet.

111. Do you know any coal seams on the Franklin side of the river? I have heard that coal has been found, but I have never seen the seam. There is coal on the Arve River.

112. Have you heard of coal being found at Scott's rivulet? I know boring was carried out there, but I never heard the result.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1886.

CHARLES A. GLOVER, *called and examined.*

113. *By the Chairman.*—I believe you have had considerable experience on the West Coast? I have.

114. How long have you been prospecting there? It is about 30 years since I went out first; I then went to the Frenchman's Cap.

115. What route would you suggest as the best to be taken? The route marked on the map produced is the one I should take. My route would be, taking as a starting point Russell's Fall's, about eight miles

from Victoria up the Huon, then taking a south-west course or more west for about seven or eight miles. You then drop on the Weld River, follow it up, then striking for a break in the mountains between Mount Wedge and Mount Ann. That would be a very good route, and from a bird's eye view I could see a good practicable route might be got between these mountains. The break is rather between the spur of Mount Wellington and Mount Ann; it would be some seven or eight miles between the two, and I believe that would be the watershed. I think there must be a large lake somewhere between there and Lake Pedder, which is the source of the Weld. I proceeded up the Serpentine and followed down the Gordon.

116. *By Mr. Bird.*—What about the country between the head of the Weld River and the Serpentine? I think it is open plains, and practicable for a railway.

117. What is it like from the Serpentine on down the Gordon? I do not know, but I believe the Gordon is navigable for small vessels to the Serpentine. I never was along there, but speak from bird's eye views from the mountains. I have heard the Gordon is navigable for 50 miles for crafts, which have gone up there for pine. That would mean, I suppose, 50 miles from the mouth of Macquarie Harbour. Generally down the rivers you could get good grades.

118. What is the character of the country between Victoria and the Serpentine? It is very fertile in places. Up the Weld River for about eight or ten miles it is flanked in places by very nice bottoms, clothed with Old-man ferns and timber which grows on very rich bottom land. Then between the Weld and Russell there is about seven miles of good arable land from five to six miles in width. A little of it has been taken up on the Victoria side, but from Wallace's upwards I am sure there is about 30 square miles of good arable land.

119. *By the Chairman.*—What sort of timber is there? Beautiful splitting timber and blackwood growing to an amazing size. I make a practice of measuring such timber and noting the size; I can therefore speak confidently. In this locality I measured blackwoods which were ten feet at the girth.

120. *By Mr. Bird.*—Is there good land extending up the Weld? Independent of the 30 square miles of good land between Wallace's and the Weld, there is further up the river equally good land, and I am only speaking of one side of the river. On the other side the land is equally good; there is a block of 1000 acres of good agricultural land. It is undulating, and beautiful arable land. It is very heavily timbered.

121. Beyond that, further up the Weld, what is it? It comes down in spurs from the Mount Wellington range, and between these spurs wherever there is a bottom it is always good land, with generally a spring running through it.

122. Are there any indications of minerals between Victoria and the source of the Weld? Yes, gold.

123. Where? About five miles from the mouth of the Weld. It was from five to six miles up the river, and in the neighbourhood of good land. There is a spot of Silurian country about a mile square, that is button-grass, and exactly opposite the 1000 acres of good land which are on the west side; whilst the auriferous country is on the east side.

124. Are there any other indications? I found nothing further so far as gold is concerned, but I found a white felspar which I sent to Mr. Cosmo Newbery, who pronounced it very good and important, it being mixed in the composition of the finest porcelain. I sent 20lbs. weight to Dr. Krantz, of Germany, in December last, but I have not yet heard from him. Mr. Newbery wanted me to send him 50lbs., but I could not get it at the time.

125. *By the Chairman.*—You have not been to Mount Ann? Not more than 12 miles up the valley of the Weld.

126. Did you find indications of tin or coal? No.

127. *By Mr. Bird.*—Was the gold waterworn? Yes. I found a reef and thought I had made my fortune, but I did not find gold in it. It has, however, not yet been properly prospected.

128. *By the Chairman.*—You were on the West Coast prospecting? Yes, at Port Davey; but I saw nothing there in the shape of minerals. I then went as far as Rocky Point, and found copper lodes there.

129. You did not prospect up Macquarie Harbour? No.

130. Do you know the nature of the country there? Only as far as the Frenchman's Cap. I drove a cart and team of bullocks from the Ouse to King William Plains, to Fatigue Hill, about 15 miles from Marlborough.

131. Did you see anything of minerals? The quartz was pretty good, but not to the extent we expected to find. Quartz reefs were not then much looked after, and we spent most of our time sinking for alluvial. I believe gold will be found there.

132. Do you know the country between the Ouse and the West Coast? Not after passing the Frenchman's Cap.

133. *By Mr. Fitzgerald.*—Is the land at the Gordon heavily timbered? It is a good deal cut up with button-grass plains.

134. *By Mr. Bird.*—What is, speaking briefly, the description of the country between Victoria and Mount Ann? There are large areas of splendid agricultural land bordering on this River Weld,—I may say thousands of acres,—extensive rich bottoms, clothed with the tree-fern, musk, peartree, and huge blackwoods, three feet through the butt. The country, for the most part, is of trap-rock formation, affording a rich red soil, and watered by several nice never-failing streams of beautiful water. I may say that the whole country from the Russell to many miles up the Weld, a distance of 12 or 13 miles, comprises land of excellent quality. The timber is not to be surpassed, as I said before, the blackwood measuring 10 feet in girth, and of immense height; myrtle, sassafras, box, celery-top pine, horizontal scrub-tree, and all the smaller variety of timber trees growing to an unusual size, proclaiming the richness of the soil. The

River Weld is one of the prettiest streams south, geologically of great interest. Its watershed is a huge basin-like country, formed by Mount Ann on the west, Mount Weld on the east, and Mount Wellington Range on the north. I have reasons for believing that a large lake exists at the head of this stream. It flows rapidly, but subsides extremely slow. I calculated its fall to be about 1 in 100. The Huon, I think, is about 1 in 200, and yet this river (Weld),—with the greater fall, takes longer to subside, and in the dry season carries as much water as the Huon with all her tributaries put together,—is truly a noble stream. The uniform width would be about a chain and a quarter; level bed; general bearing, N.N.W. A road or track, if found necessary to be made to the West Coast, would naturally suggest itself through this described country, commencing from the newly-erected bridge over the Russell; no serious impediments to laying trams, and would be found the shortest and most direct route to Macquarie Harbour and West Coast generally. You have the description of a land hitherto totally unknown, possessing metals, splendid land, fine timber, magnificent river, and a door opened to a country rich in minerals.

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JOHN SKINNER, *called and examined.*

135. *By the Chairman.*—Are you acquainted with the country between Victoria and the West Coast? Yes, up the Huon Valley. I have been through the saddle between the Arthur Range and Mount Giblin.

136. Is there any difficulty in getting through there with a road? I do not think there would be the slightest difficulty in getting up to the saddle I mention. I know the south side, but not the north.

137. What is the nature of the country? Open sheoak hills; as far as the Arve River it is grazing land, but timbered very fairly. I have been up the Arve seven or eight miles, and the greater part of the country is good agricultural land. None of the land immediately alongside the track and Huon River is available as agricultural land, but I bore away to the left, and there it is heavily timbered, and the greater part good land. I have not been up the Russell or Weld.

138. Have you found minerals? I have found good indications of gold. Very nice reefs were found above the Picton, but they did not contain gold. On Ti-tree Hill, above Blake's Opening, are several nice reefs, but we could not get any gold in them.

139. Have you been down the West Coast way? No.

140. Do you know if there is any engineering difficulty in constructing a road or railway as far as you went? I do not believe there is any engineering difficulty. The river above Victoria is full of rapids like the Upper Derwent. There are no very great falls. I do not think there is a fall greater than one in a hundred the whole distance I have been.

141. Would the opening up of communication between Victoria and that part of the country promote settlement to any extent? Yes, I believe it would. There is a great quantity of good agricultural land up the Weld River, well timbered, generally with stringy-bark. It is the same between the Picton and Craycroft. Some of the land there is very good, but the greater part is second-class land. I have been up the Picton 16 miles. The land is second-class generally along the river; what it is further back no one knows, but there is a splendid bed of Huon and King William pine.

142. What area is there of pine? I cannot say personally, but from information gathered from Mr. George Voss, who was pining there for some years, I learn there are miles and miles of pine up Pine Creek. I have never been upon the western fall. I have not been further than the saddle between the Arthur Range and Mount Giblin.

143. What produce would there be from Victoria? I will supply that information in writing. I made a rough calculation, and believe that from Victoria and Upper Huon next season there will be about 100,000 cases of apples.

144. Would railway communication develop a small-fruit trade? There is not the slightest doubt of it. At present we cannot get them into market. This applies also to vegetables and dairy produce. In the Huon vegetables continue very late; I have seen green peas in March. On the settled parts between the Russell and Mountain River there is a great quantity of good splitting timber that is now being utilised. Victoria and the Upper Huon last year supplied great quantities of box palings.

145. *By Mr. Bird.*—Did you penetrate back from the Picton? No, we kept close to the river. The pine is generally up the creeks; up Pine Creek it is miles and miles in extent; this is four miles back from the Picton. Some years ago we applied for a right to lay down a tramway and secure the land at Pine Creek, but we could not get the land.

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1886.

MR. EDWARD G. INNES, *called and examined.*

146. *By the Chairman.*—What is your profession and place of residence? Surveyor, residing at Port Esperance.

147. Are you acquainted with the country between the Huon River and the West Coast? Not much. I have not been far up the Huon, but I was sent by the Government at the end of 1881 and in 1882 to cut a track from Southport to Port Davey. I did not get right through, but I got to the foot of the Arthur Range.

148. What was the nature of the country between Hythe and the Arthur Range? For about the first nine miles it is worthless land; then you fall into the valley of the Picton. About nine miles farther you reach the range between Adamson's Peak and Mount Perouse. The land there is very little good, with little timber until you reach the head of the New River. There the country has altered altogether; you get into good land, which extends as far as I went. It is bottom land, limestone country, and chocolate soil. I cannot say how far it extends beyond where I went.

149. Do you know anything about the country further west? No.

150. How far up the valley of the Huon have you been? As far as the Arve. It is good land on the Arve River.

151. Do you know anything of the country between Victoria and North-West Bay? Very little, except where the projected coal mine tramway went.

152. Can you give any information as to whether a railway is practicable to tap the Sandfly Range and then on to Victoria? So far as I know, that is the best route.

153. Do you know Mr. Mault's route up Cook's Rivulet? No, I have never been along it.

154. Would the Sandfly route be as advantageous as Mr. Mault's? I should think so, but I cannot speak confidently.

155. Would there be any difficulty in getting through Spicer's Saddle? No, I do not think so.

156. Would there be any difficulty in getting down from there to Victoria? I cannot say; I do not know that side of the range.

157. Would there be a necessity for a tunnel? I do not see how you could escape it.

158. What is the nature of the country on the saddle? Sandstone, I believe; it is rough country.

159. Have you been round Proctor's route? Yes, many years ago, but I cannot give an opinion on it.

160. *By Dr. Crowther.*—Have you ever been over on the high plateau behind Big Oyster Cove? No.

This railway, in the first 12 to 14 miles from Hobart, will take the traffic from the agricultural and fruit-growing localities of Kingston and North-West Bay. I cannot undertake to give an estimate of the probable amount of this traffic, but, from the general knowledge I have of this portion of the district, have not the slightest doubt it will be a large one, and quite equal to that of any other line of like distance in the Colony. Leaving North-West Bay (Margate), the Sandfly coal fields will be reached at (approximately) 20 to 25 miles from Hobart. The construction of a railway should enable this coal to be placed in the Hobart market at such a price as will enable it to be retailed at from 12s. to 15s. per ton,—the coal having been found in many different places at a considerable distance from one another, and thus proved to extend over a large area of country. This will necessarily excite competition, and as the seams are of considerable thickness (upwards of three feet) and easily worked, the result will be, as I have indicated, "cheapness," particularly if conveyed by rail at anything near the rates proposed for the Fingal coal. This will, I anticipate, create a very large demand, as for domestic use its price will shut out Newcastle coal, and I think also all other Tasmanian coals, it being, in my opinion, equal in quality to any I have yet seen, and superior to most. At the price I have named it would also be cheaper than firewood. It would also be used to some extent on the Main Line Railway, and, with (if required) special adaptation of the furnace bars, by the local steam vessels. With regard to the question of its probable use by the Intercolonial and London steamships, I cannot offer any opinion, as it is a matter that can only be settled by actual test; but without this, I should estimate its consumption in Hobart alone for the purposes I have named at from 400 to 500 tons per week. I also think there would be a considerable shipment of coal from North-West Bay, as the price at which it could be placed in Melbourne would enable it to compete successfully also there with the Newcastle coal.

From about the same locality a very considerable traffic may be expected in timber in various forms, commencing very shortly after leaving Margate—the timber being found in the valleys of the North-West Bay River and of Allen's Rivulet. The Hobart saw-mills will, I apprehend, obtain their supplies of timber in the log almost entirely from this locality, as the cost of transit will be less than from other places by water. Portable mills will no doubt be brought along the line, and used for the cutting of railway sleepers and other marketable timber; post and rails, firewood, &c. will be conveyed for Hobart and suburban requirements; while further on, the country situate at the head of Allen's Rivulet, and between that and Sandfly, will supply quantities of palings, shingles, &c.

I would strongly advise the thorough and exhaustive examination of a route *viâ* Allen's Rivulet as alternative to that which has been surveyed *viâ* what is known as "Vince's Saddle." Having taken the levels some years ago along this line for a tramway to the coal (some plans are still in existence in the Public Works Office), I anticipate there would be no difficulty in attaining the necessary height with a grade of 1 in 40, and a moderate length of tunnel, which should be laid out if possible with the object in view of facilitating the working of the coal. The only possible difficulty to my mind is the descending the hill on the opposite side and reaching Victoria without too great a detour.

I have ascertained that the estimated annual produce at the present time of Victoria and its surroundings is as follows:—

	<i>Tons.</i>
Apples and Pears, 60,000 bushels, say .....	1500
Plums .....	15
Gooseberries .....	6
Raspberries .....	50
Currants .....	5
Other things, viz., Potatoes, Grain, Chaff, Dairy Produce, &c. ....	250

The present charge by water per case for Apples is 3*d.*, which is equal to about 10*s.* per ton on estimated distance at 30 miles, 4*d.* per ton per mile, so that I presume the Railway could compete successfully with the water carriage.

I also estimate that the whole of the timber cut by the mills would for the same reason be conveyed by rail; it may safely be put down at 50,000 feet per week, or per annum ..... 6500

TOTAL ..... 8326 tons ;

or, about 160 tons a week, as the estimated traffic from Victoria alone,—in which I consider that I am under rather than over the mark,—and which traffic would rapidly increase.

#### MR. JOHN HELMER, *called and examined.*

161. *By the Chairman.*—What position do you occupy? Inspector of Roads, under the Public Works Department.

162. *By Mr. Barrett.*—You have been asked to collect information relative to route of the proposed Huon railway: what is the result of your enquiry? I took the height of the ridge on Proctor's Road, where you would have to go, and found it to be 520 feet above the level of Sandy Bay bridge. To get up to that height would require four miles of a 1-in-40 grade. It is two miles in a straight, but, allowing for contingencies, the railway would have to go from four to four and a half miles. I took the height of the waterworks, and found it to be 275 feet above the level of the Sandy Bay bridge. You would then have to cross on the waterworks, and return on a line above Dynnyrne House, and then back again into Proctor's Road. You might run through Sandy Bay and back again, but you must go from four to four and a half miles to get the required length, unless you tunnel. You could then run down Vincent's Rivulet to Brown's River.

163. *By Mr. Fitzgerald.*—Would the extra distance make the route nearly as long as if you went by the river all the way? No, not by about four miles.

164. What would be the difference in length in favour of Proctor's route? Proctor's route would be between three and four miles shorter. I have not made a survey, but it is about seven miles by road, and would be about two and a half miles further by railway. By taking in Sandy Bay you work up all the way and then return by the hill. I took my starting point from the Sandy Bay bridge, for from there you can go in any direction, and could always connect with the main line.

165. *By Dr. Crowther.*—You make Sandy Bay bridge the starting point? Yes.

166. And, although you make a circuitous route to Proctor's Road, the distance would be the same in the end? It would be shorter than by going round by the river, and it would be less expensive, as there would not be so many property frontages to take and compensate. The only thing against that route is losing the Sandy Bay traffic.

167. Is there any possibility of getting a grade from the Main Line Station to the Sandy Bay route? There is no difficulty so far as I know, but you would have to go round by the river.

168. Do you see any difficulty in connecting with the Main Line Station? There is no engineering difficulty.

169. Would your plan involve going round by the river? There is no other plan, except you tunnel St. George's Hill.

170. What would be the difference in the cost? I cannot say.

171. How much tunnelling would it take? About half a mile.

172. Could you connect with the Main Line by a tram with much less cost than with a railway? Yes, I believe you could.

173. *By Dr. Crowther.*—Have you attempted to run out that line on the Bonnet? No, I have only taken the heights of the two points mentioned.

174. You can get down your suggested route without tunnelling? Yes, if from four to four and a half miles can be got.

175. *By Mr. Fitzgerald.*—Would the water route present less engineering difficulty? There are some very heavy cliffs near the Shot Tower. If you went into the road you would have to tunnel through Bonnet Hill. The tunnel would be about 25 chains; but I have not gone into the matter, and it might be less.

176. Would you still start from the Sandy Bay bridge? Yes, that is one of the lowest points, and from there you could get to any point you desire.

177. *By Mr. Bird.*—Suppose you start higher up the Sandy Bay Rivulet than the bridge, and so avoid the frontages through Sandy Bay, could a fair grade be got? If you made the station at Garden Crescent you would, but then you would have to run up the Waterworks.

178. But suppose you kept down the river, about a quarter of a mile from the road, could a grade be got there? Yes, you could work it round without much difficulty. There would be a few gullies to cross, but you could then keep away from valuable frontages.

179. Do you know the country through the Snug from Brown's River to Kingston? Yes.

180. What sort of country is it? You would have to go from the Snug up to the Saddle before dropping into Big Oyster Cove, then you could strike away to the right and work your grade up till you

come to the back of Peppermint Bay, and then work into Nicholl's rivulet. You would get, I think, an elevation of 1000 feet, and then a fair run right into Port Cygnet. There is good land on the way, but it is very heavily timbered, and there would be some stiff cutting.

181. Would a railway through there open up much crown land not opened now? Yes, 4000 or 5000 acres between the Snug and Oyster Cove, which cannot be got at from the road. There is a good quantity of land through there, not including that which can now be reached. It would be at the back of Oyster Cove.

182. Have you ever been through from North-West Bay, *via* the Sandfly, to the Huon? I have been through the Sandfly. There was a tramway surveyed some twenty years ago from the top of the Sandfly to North-West Bay. It was tendered for, but never carried out. It was in the scheme introduced by the Whyte-Meredith Ministry in 1866.

183. What is the elevation? About 1000 feet in nine miles. It was surveyed, marked out, and partly cleared. I was going to tender for it. It started at the top end of the Sandfly at a high elevation, and then went down to North-West Bay.

184. From that highest elevation to Victoria what is the country like? You could not get through from there to Victoria; there is a range in the way.

185. Could you get down to the Huon at Kellaway's? Yes, you could go down the Sandfly.

186. From what you know of the route from North-West Bay to Victoria *via* Vince's, and what you know of the road from the Sandfly to Kellaway's, which do you think would give the easier grade? I think *via* Vince's; you would there have a longer range to get the grade. You could run down by Allen's rivulet and then down by Vince's. That would not touch the North-West Bay township, but would keep on the highest elevation.

187. Do you know much of the country up the Upper Huon? I have been up to the Russell River at the Hermitage.

188. Do you know anything of the country lying to the west of Geeveston towards the Arve and Picton? I have been as far as the Arve; there was a track cut about seven years ago to the Hartz Mountains.

189. Do you think there is a practicable route possible from Geeveston to the back of the Hartz Mountains? I am not prepared to say. The track went through scrub, and went in a straight line. No doubt a road could be got, but I am not sufficiently acquainted with the country to say whether a railway route can be got, but undoubtedly a road can be got.

190. Do you know the elevation? No.

191. Do you know anything of the country between Southport and Port Davey? No, I have never been beyond Southport.

192. Is there an extensive country lying west and south of Geeveston? Yes; I noticed some very fair beds of timber there.

193. Would those beds be easily reached from Geeveston by railway? Yes, there is a tramway now running back six miles.

194. What sort of country is it eastwards? I have never been round towards Tongataboo.

195. Do you think a large amount of traffic likely to come by railway from Geeveston to Hobart—would it be encouraging or remunerative? I think so. They can now keep seven or eight barges and two or three steamers running. Suppose the barges make a trip a week, they averaging 40 tons each, would be 320 tons per week. That would be chiefly timber and fruit, but there would be other produce. I am only alluding to the traffic from the Victoria side, not including the Port Cygnet side.

196. *By Mr. Fitzgerald.*—Would there be a large amount of dairy produce brought by the railway that now does not reach Hobart? Yes; and you would get all the inland traffic.

197. Would a large proportion of that traffic now coming by barge come by railway? Yes, they could bring it cheaper by railway from Victoria. The charges now are 8s. or 10s. per ton by barge. All on this side of the river would be closer to the railway. They now have to cart their produce five or six miles to the river.

198. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Do you think the railroad would take the whole of that traffic? It would take all on this side of the river. The settlers first have to cart five or six miles, and then pay freight by barge.

199. *By Mr. Bird.*—Do you think those who are living on the Port Cygnet side of the Huon would send their produce by railway, punting it first across the river? I think they would send it straight away by barge, and thus save a second handling.

200. Do you think a branch line could be laid from Victoria to Port Cygnet? There are no difficulties in the way except Balfe's Hill. I think a grade could be got there; the elevation would be about 500 or 600 feet, and it would be three miles to Port Cygnet, giving plenty room to get down.

201. Would that divert most of the traffic that now comes by river? I cannot say; the lower you get down the river the less the freight is to Hobart.

202. What would be the distance from Victoria to Port Cygnet? About 11 or 12 miles.

203. Would the freight be less by railway from Port Cygnet than by water? No doubt the railway would pick up the traffic and produce of people living up towards Balfe's Hill, and between there and Port Cygnet. It would save them carting to Port Cygnet.

204. Do you know the coal seams at Sandfly? Yes, I know them.

205. Over what extent do they spread? They extend over seven or eight miles.

206. Have there been outcrops seen over any extent? I have seen seven or eight different outcrops.
207. Has much land been taken up? No, I think only small quantities.
208. What has prevented the seams being worked? There are no means of exit.
209. Which would be the better outlet—towards the Huon or North-West Bay? The Huon would be the nearer.
210. *By Mr. Fitzgerald.*—Which is the better shipping-place? For deep water, North-West Bay, only it is a greater distance.
211. *By Mr. Bird.*—How near can the railway be taken to the coal seams? If you go through Vince's Saddle and down Fourteen-turn Creek, the railway can be taken within two and a half miles of the coal.
212. What distance would they have to travel to get to deep water at North-West Bay? To get an easy grade, the line would be about 12 miles.
213. *By Mr. Barrett.*—What is the character of the range in which the coal is found—is it likely to be settled country or full of faults? It is heavily timbered country, and there are some deep gullies.
214. Is the country broken? Yes. There are a good many outcrops of coal, which is in different layers, one above another. The highest seams appear to be the best.
215. *By Mr. Bird.*—If a railway were constructed within, say two and a half miles of the coal, could the coal be brought to Hobart more advantageously than shipped by water? Certainly it could.
216. Will the Sandfly coal compare favourably with the other coal found in the Colony? It is the best coal I have seen in the Colony.
217. Has coal been found near Vince's? I have not heard; but it is the same country.
218. Does the country there correspond with that where the coal is found? The range runs towards Vince's, but the country is lower.
219. In tunnelling through the hill there, might not the coal be cut? It might. The coal dips that way.
220. Do you think much firewood would come into Hobart by the Railway? There is any amount of firewood along the line, and the people there would be glad to get a market for it.
221. What distance do they bring firewood on the Main Line now? From this side of the tunnel, about 45 miles.
222. How far would you have to go along the proposed line before getting into firewood country? You get it three miles away on Proctor's Road and then all the way to Kingston. Then you lose it for a little while, then get it again, and after that all the way to North-West Bay is timber country.
223. Would the Hobart market be supplied thoroughly both with coal and firewood by this line? I should think so.
224. What is the distance from Hobart to the Sandfly coal seams? I believe about 20 or 22 miles would reach them.
225. What could coal be landed at Hobart for per ton, were the railway opened? Reckoning about 4s. for putting and getting, and 1d. per ton per mile for freight, say 2s. 6d. at the outside, that would be 6s. 6d. It could be delivered at Hobart wholesale for 10s. per ton.
226. Has it been tried for steam purposes? I have not heard of its being so tried.  
(A box of coal samples was produced labelled as follows:—"Taken from a 4ft. 6in. seam at the Sandfly last week from a drive 35 feet from the face of the mountain. This seam extends for over 1½ miles. Other deposits are visible, of equal quality and thickness, above and below this seam. Signed WILLIAM CUNDY." Some coke from the same coal was exhibited labelled as follows:—"This coke was burned in a small plumbago crucible with ¾in. pipe attached to lid, this being the result after discharging gas very strongly for 5½ hours. Signed WILLIAM CUNDY.")

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1886.

MR. FRANCIS M. TRAPPES, *called and examined.*

227. *By the Chairman.*—Where do you reside? At Oyster Cove.
228. You are well acquainted with the country between Oyster Cove and Port Cygnet? I have been through it all, and have seen the country from the hills. At the time when the road was made by Mr. C. O'Reilly, then Minister of Lands, I went up on a hill to see the route the road should take.
229. *By Mr. Bird.*—What road was that? From Port Cygnet to the Snug. We went to the top of a high hill, and got a knowledge of the contour of the country.
230. *By the Chairman.*—Is the route from the Snug an easy grade? It would be a matter for engineers to decide whether they would go down into Oyster Cove, as the country is rather rough; but you could get a railway from the divide between Great Oyster Cove and the Snug and the divide at Port Cygnet; but by going down into Oyster Cove, some people think they know a better route.
231. *By Mr. Bird.*—What is your opinion as to the route *via* North-West Bay to the Snug? You cannot get that way at all; there are mountains 1500 feet high in the way. You would have to cross the range at Smith's land.



232. *By the Chairman.*—From the Snug to the top of the Oyster Cove divide overlooking Lovett, is a route practicable without engineering difficulties? I think so.

233. Is there not difficulty in getting through the divide down into Lovett? I believe not.

234. Is there much Government land *en route*? Yes, a great deal of Government land; from my son's land to the head of Irish Town it is all Government land of good description; that is six miles from the water. The land in that neighbourhood is good; I have grass over a foot high.

235. What would be the extent of that land? About six miles long and between two and three miles wide.

236. *By Mr. Bird.*—All fairly good land? All good land. Some of it, I believe, is level; it is heavily timbered with stringy-bark and blue gum.

237. *By the Chairman.*—Has that timber been tapped? It is mostly virgin forest, and has not been tapped, unless a little has been worked from Port Cygnet.

238. What would be the distance of the route from Margate *via* the Snug to Lovett? From Margate to Snug river the route would be nearly straight, and the railway would be no longer than the road,—that would be under three miles; Oyster Cove would be about four miles. I could not say the exact distance, but from Margate to Oyster Cove would be about eight miles.

239. What would be the distance from the Oyster Cove divide to the Port Cygnet divide? I should say it would be seven miles further, perhaps eight.

240. Would the proposed railway develop much traffic? It will develop not only traffic in produce and timber, but also open up gold and coal country. We have got gold in the stone at Oyster Cove, and every day I expect we will cut the reef, and coal is known to exist all throughout the range.

241. What kind of coal? I cannot say—I am not a geologist.

242. Do you know where the coal was found by Torpey and Company? Yes, I know the range.

243. Do you know whether the country at Oyster Cove is the same geologically as at Woodbridge? I would not give an opinion.

244. Do you know if coal has been found? Yes, I believe coal has been found on the land my son bought from Mr. Atkinson.

245. Do you know the country between Brown's River and Sandfly? I have been through there years ago.

246. Do you know the road from there to the Huon? Yes, I was through there before the road was made.

247. Can you form an opinion as to the practicability of a railway in that direction from Brown's River to Victoria? I do not know anything about it.

MR. JOHN WEYMSS SYME, *called and examined.*

248. *By the Chairman.*—Are you interested in the Sandfly coal? I am.

249. Are you acquainted with the country? No.

250. Are you developing the Sandfly coal? Yes, in conjunction with myself there is a rather wealthy syndicate in Melbourne who are prepared to develop the mine, if we can get the coal to Hobart. At present there are no means of getting it out.

251. Is that the only difficulty? Yes. I am aware that a tramway has been surveyed to North-West Bay, and at one time it was contemplated to ship direct to Melbourne, but it was found useless, as vessels would not come into two ports. In coming to Hobart for coal there would be always more or less cargo, and to work economically they must take out and put in cargo at the same time. It would not pay to come from Melbourne to Hobart, then take in ballast for North-West Bay.

252. Are you satisfied with the coal measures? Perfectly. We have tested them, and are satisfied with both quantity and quality so far. We have now men testing the measures to ascertain their extent.

253. Are you prepared to go on with the coal? Yes.

254. Has the Melbourne Gas Company expressed an opinion on the coal? I believe the Melbourne Gas Company analysed the coal, and are prepared to take it if the coal is developed.

255. Have they made any offer? Some time ago they made an offer to Mr. George Elliott to take a large quantity after having tested it. Some gentlemen in Melbourne, Mr. E. J. Blyth and others, were prepared to go into the matter. Mr. Blyth wrote to me stating that he meant to go into it, and asking me to take an interest, so as to look after it in Hobart and to give him information on the subject. I wrote to Mr. Blyth saying although I could give no personal information, I knew the seams were in broken country, and, as a matter of prudence, it would be advisable to ascertain the permanency of the seams before expending a large sum in tramways. I said if the syndicate would guarantee £2000 I would guarantee £250 of the amount. Some difficulty occurred and the thing fell through. I was not prepared to put the prospectus on the market in the crude state it was then in. I wanted to be able to say to the public that we had gone in some distance, and that there was a sufficient quantity of coal to pay for the money expended on it. That fell through, and it is only lately that the matter was taken up. The present syndicate are men of considerable capital, and will go on with it.

256. Have you a report as to the number of seams? I have Mr. Thureau's report. We are now working two seams. The one now being tested is said to be 4ft. 6in. thick, without a band. I have been

connected with steamships and coal during the last portion of my life, and I am confident it is a coal that will meet not only local requirements, but all the other colonies as well. Mr. Thureau says, and I agree with him, that the Sandfly is the only coal in the Colony that will compare with that of Newcastle.

257. Have you Mr. Cosmo Newbery's report on the coal, made in 1877? No, but I will get it for the Committee. Mr. Wm. Cundy says the seam now being tested is 4ft. 6in. thick, and he has several men now opening up another seam the same size, and the expert in charge says it is quite equal in quality to the other seam.

258. *By Mr. Bird.*—Is the sample produced from the 4ft. 6in. seam? Yes. I would like to point out that the working of such a seam would do a very great deal of good for the southern portion of the island, Hobart especially. The coal would give employment to a large number of men, and the railway would meet the requirements of a large number of settlers in the country traversed.

259. Are you satisfied that it is steam coal? Yes, perfectly.

260. *By the Chairman.*—Have you caused any enquiry to be made into Hurst's seam and the one below it? No; I have seen reports on them, but not then being particularly interested, do not remember them sufficiently well to repeat them.

261. Are you aware that Mr. Allison was sent from Victoria by a company to examine those seams? Yes, I have his report.

262. Do you know the extent of prospecting done under Mr. Allison? No; I had no interest in it then.

263. Has your expert now in charge of the work furnished any report as to the number of seams? Yes, but I have not got the report; it was sent to Melbourne without my knowledge. The two seams I have spoken of being equal to the sample, I consider quite good enough to start a company on. About a year or a year and a half ago some friends of mine were here from the other colonies; among them was Mr. Turnbull, Manager of the A.A. Company in New South Wales. This was a very unfortunate mine when he started it, but now it is the largest and one of the best in the colony. He is a man of vast experience both in the home country and colonies, and is looked upon as the best authority in New South Wales. He said the Sandfly coal was as good as anything he had seen in the colonies, and so much was he taken with the samples that he started to look at the mines in company with Mr. Lucas, but in consequence of a heavy snowstorm they had to return to Hobart, and next day Mr. Turnbull was compelled to go back to New South Wales. I have been satisfied for a long time that this coal only wants capital, and the assistance that such a mine is justly entitled to from the country, to render it a great success. It is stated by Mr. Thureau, and although his opinion may not be very valuable on coal, it is something—"That this is the only bituminous coal in the island."

264. Do you know of your own knowledge if I have any interest in these mines? I know you have not, beyond the fact that in developing these mines must be benefiting everyone in the colony. It is a truism that a coal mine is better than any gold mine.

265. Are we to understand that the syndicate in which you are interested would not think of landing their coal in any other port than Hobart? It would not pay.

266. Do you think there is sufficient coal there to hold out a prospect of a large traffic if the railway were constructed in that locality? I am thoroughly satisfied of that now.

267. Were you interested in the passage of a Tramway Bill through Parliament a year or so ago? I was.

268. Did you contemplate laying a tramway from a point in Hobart to Sandy Bay? Yes.

269. From what point did you intend to start? Our starting place would have been the Main Line Railway, thence up Macquarie-street on to Sandy Bay, and crossing our other branch at the intersection of Elizabeth and Macquarie-streets.

270. What way did you expect to get from Battery Point to Sandy Bay? By the Harrington-street deviation which the Corporation are now making.

271. Did you obtain any survey as to grade? Yes; but I think the survey was mostly up the Macquarie-street line.

272. You are satisfied there would be no difficulty in getting a tramway to Sandy Bay? Perfectly satisfied. There are no grades there that would prove difficult.

273. You contemplate running the tram along the road? Yes.

274. In the event of the railway being constructed to the Huon, which course would you suggest as the best to connect with Hobart in the matter of terminus? I have not thought out the matter sufficiently to be able to give a very valuable opinion on it; but there is the Old Wharf available, which only wants extending, and a railway might be carried to one of the piers at the New Wharf. You have the whole frontage there to choose from, and it would remain for the Marine Board to say where the coal should be put.

275. Speaking of the general traffic, do you think it should be connected with the Main Line? Yes, certainly.

276. How could that be best accomplished—by bringing the railway right through, or by connecting the Huon Line and Main Line by a tram from Sandy Bay along which passengers and freight might be brought? I do not think a tram would answer. They never do answer very well in such cases.

277. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—What was the gauge of your tram to be? 3ft. 6in.; it would answer as far as gauge is concerned.

278. There would be heavy compensation charges in getting the necessary land from Hobart to Sandy

Bay, and the question arises whether the passengers and freight could be brought along by tram without bringing the railway right through? I certainly think it would be the most judicious at the start. If the traffic got very large afterwards you might alter it; but I certainly think the wisest plan at first would be to connect with a tram.

279. If the railway were to be constructed do you think the tram would be constructed at once? That is a question of money entirely. If either the Corporation or Government would guarantee the money at a fixed rate we would have it down in a short time.

280. In the interests of the country do you think it desirable that if a tram connected the railways it should be in the hands of the Government? Yes; that is always desirable. I think private enterprise in roads or railways is never desirable, except where the Government cannot or will not carry out the work.

281. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think if a practicable route could be obtained by Proctor's road such route would save expense? It is entirely a question of expense; you want to get into Hobart by the cheapest manner possible.

282. *By Mr. Bird.*—Would not the Sandy Bay traffic be a source of considerable profit? Undoubtedly.

283. If that could be worked by a tramway, would the expense be much less than if the railway were made right through? Yes.

284. *By the Chairman.*—Could a tram take the railway traffic? That portion of the tram would be constructed so that it would take it. I do not think there are any engineering difficulties that cannot be got over. The tram would be right enough; it is merely a question of heavy construction.

285. Would it be judicious to make the terminus at St. George's burying-ground? No, that would involve another handling. You will have to connect with the Main Line and must also connect with the wharves.

286. *By Mr. Bird.*—If there was a large traffic in coal would a strongly constructed tram from Sandy Bay prove sufficient? I think so. As a matter of fact, railways are run through streets in many places. I am not competent to give an opinion on the question of grades. It was a most unwise thing for the Government not to purchase the frontage land at Sandy Bay long ago.

287. *By Mr. Pillinger.*—Could you get along by the slip? Yes; a draw-bridge could be put up there. The entrance to the slip is not wanted much more than about once a month.

288. *By Mr. Bird.*—Would it be practicable to make a causeway round the shore which would prove less expensive than buying the frontages? It is perfectly practicable, and there is no sea there to break in, but that is a question of expense on which I could not give an opinion.

289. *By the Chairman.*—You think if the railway is to prove of any benefit to the coal mines it must communicate with the water? Yes; it would be perfectly useless without it.

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MR. MATTHEW FITZPATRICK, *called and examined.*

290. *By the Chairman.*—Where do you reside? At Port Cygnet.

291. Are you acquainted with the country between there and the Snug? So far as taking a bird's eye view from the hills; but I have never travelled through the bush.

292. Do you know the range between Cygnet and the range at Oyster Cove? I have been along at the head of Nicholl's rivulet, and on the west side of the divide, and have also travelled by road.

293. Do you know the country between Lovett and the eastern ridge? Yes.

294. What is the nature of the country between Lovett and the dividing range at Oyster Cove?—is a route practicable through there? The route I would suggest would be to the Snug. From what I know myself and from reliable information obtained from Mrs. (Fanny) Smith, who knows the bush and has travelled over the country in her young days, I think an easy grade can be got from Irish Town to the Snug. The only difficulty is the rise about four miles from the Snug, but that would not necessitate a tunnel.

295. Would that route go through Oyster Cove? No, it would leave it to the left about two or three miles.

296. Do you know the ridge behind Trappes'? Yes, the route I suggest would leave that on the left. A route could be got through Trappes' Valley, but you would lose two or three miles in getting down.

297. Do you know the country between the Snug and the divide? It is really good land; hundreds of acres have been applied for, but have been thrown up on account of there being no road or means of access. There are thousands of acres of good land up the valley that the railway would pass through.

298. How much good land would the line pass through? About four miles there. I would say that from the head of Irish Town to the Snug would be seven miles, and about four miles of it is unselected land. It is a beautiful valley, about three or four miles broad. It extends away to the left, and there would be 15 or 16 square miles of good land that the railway would run through. The timber is generally blue gum and stringy-bark, but there is a good deal of myrtle.

299. Where would you come out? Above Irish Town.

300. What would be the height? About 500 or 600 feet above the water.

301. Is there any difficulty in getting from the dividing range down to Lovett? None whatever.

302. What distance would it be from the Snug, keeping a good grade? I would reckon that a good line can be got from the Snug to Pollard's farm, at the head of Irish Town, in seven miles, and five miles by railway grade would take you to Port Cygnet,—making the distance from the Snug to Cygnet 12 miles.

303. How would you propose to carry that line onward? I would take it on to Victoria. This would save a large bridge over the Huon at Egg Island. The line could be taken over to Franklin at the ferry, but that would leave Victoria out, which would be undesirable. I think the line should go to the old ferry at Victoria.

304. Are there any engineering difficulties from Cygnet to Victoria? None at all. Balfé's Hill is the only difficulty, but the road there now is not very steep, and the grade could be made very much easier by keeping closer to the river.

305. You would suggest going from Lovett up Balfé's Hill, coming out to the left of Mount Huon, crossing by the burnt bridge six miles from Cygnet, and by keeping closer to the river get a better route? Yes. The present road could have been made much easier as to grade, but the engineer said his instructions were to keep as close as possible to the old road. A much easier grade could be obtained by keeping closer to the river.

306. What would be the length of the line from Cygnet to Victoria? It would be about  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

307. *By Mr. Bird.*—Looking at the question from a national standpoint, do you think it would be better to reach Cygnet by way of Victoria, or Victoria by way of Cygnet? I think in the interests of the country it would be better to take the route suggested through the Snug and Irish Town. In the first instance you would take up a lot of traffic and open up a large extent of agricultural land, and take up a large population in Port Cygnet, which is the most thickly peopled part of country the line would pass through. This would save keeping a standing station staff at great cost, and easy grades compensating for the extra distance. I think the longer route is the better one for the country generally.

308. How much would it be longer? About 10 or 11 miles.

309. In the event of a branch line, would it be more or less *viâ* Cygnet to Victoria, or *viâ* Victoria to Cygnet? It would be just the same.

310. You say from the Snug to Lovett is about 12 miles? Yes.

311. How far is it from the Snug to the head of North-West Bay? I cannot say; I do not know the country sufficiently.

312. What is the distance from Margate to Snug? Three or four miles.

313. That will make the distance from Margate to Cygnet some 15 or 16 miles? Yes, about that.

314. The branch from Margate to Cygnet would be only four or five miles more than the branch from Victoria? My idea is, if we are to have a branch line it should be from Cygnet to Margate. You would open up the same country, and we would be nearer Hobart by some miles. We cannot now open up the country more than three or four miles, for we cannot get a road. Good land has had to be thrown up within three miles of Port Cygnet.

315. Would a railway between Cygnet and Snug meet the requirements of the bulk of settlers better than a branch between Cygnet and Victoria? Certainly, it would be more convenient. If you take the line from Cygnet to Victoria you have the river alongside it all the way, of which the people can avail themselves, but if you go inland you will open up a large tract of land that settlers cannot look at now. It would not improve the position of settlers on this land to take the line to Victoria. By going the inland route you would give the Cygnet people the benefit of the railway, and of passing through coal country and orchards, besides opening up grand agricultural country.

316. Would there be any coal mines opened up by the railway between Cygnet and Snug? I have no doubt of it. I know at the head of Irish Town there is sandstone country with all the indications of coal that are obtained at Mount Cygnet, which is only two or three miles away.

317. Is the Mount Cygnet coal mine now being worked? Yes, to considerable advantage; I believe a large profit is being made out of it.

318. Would that coal be sent by railway if the line were made *viâ* the Snug? It would be cheaper to bring it by water, as there is a tram connecting the mine with the water; but the line would pass through coal country.

319. *By Mr. Fitzgerald.*—What would be the total length of the line from Cygnet to Hobart? About 32 or 33 miles.

320. *By the Chairman.*—Can you give an idea of the traffic that might be expected from Cygnet, and what is the present traffic? I cannot say at present, but I will ascertain. I have learned from competent authority that from £50 to £75 per week in freight can be obtained, but I will furnish a return in writing.

321. *By Mr. Bird.*—Do you know anything of the Sandfly district? No, I only went there once to examine a coal mine. I know the lie of the country.

322. Do you know the neighbourhood of the coal seams? I do.

323. If the mine were worked, could it be worked more easily from the line through Cygnet to Margate, or by the line *viâ* Victoria? My idea would be to get a tram from the mine to Kellaway's; that is the route by road, and naturally would be the most practical for the coal traffic, but the distance would militate against that route.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1886.

MR. W. JEFFERY BROWN, *called and examined.*

324. *By the Chairman.*—Where do you reside ? At Victoria ; I am a storekeeper there.

325. We want to get information of the traffic of the proposed Huon railway : have you made any calculations of the probable freight of traffic ? For some time past I have been making minute enquiries with reference to this subject, believing it would be required at some time or other. My enquiries with reference to apples were confined to Victoria and Upper Huon, reaching to Lower Longley. I did not include Woodstock. I reckon there are 100,000 bushels of apples and pears in that radius grown yearly at the present time, and something like 15 tons of plums ; that calculation is considerably within the margin, for something like 10 tons of plums pass through my hands, not reckoning those which go to the Franklin and Hobart market. Gooseberries about 6 tons, and raspberries 150 tons. I have made particular enquiries about the latter item. I have been making enquiries from the largest growers, and 150 tons will be the very least quantity to be reckoned. Currants will be about 5 tons, and then there will be butter, potatoes, dairy produce, wheat, &c., something like 350 tons. I could not get these latter figures very closely. There are now only two saw-mills working in the Victoria district, but usually there are three, and being in full swing, cut from 50,000 feet to 60,000 feet weekly. The mills of Wise and Lucas are working, but Oates' has been stopped owing to some of the tram being burned, but they will commence again in a few days. There are something like 500,000 shipped from Victoria yearly, 200,000 5-feet and 6-feet palings, including jam-case palings, and 200,000 staves. I may say we do not think these figures have been reached in consequence of the great depression in the timber market, but that is the quantity of timber usually supplied in the district. The bark freight I reckon from 15 tons to 20 tons weekly. For the past three months my bark freight has been from 7 tons to 8 tons, but a great quantity of manure and bone-dust is coming down now. I am sure I am considerably under the actual figures in my calculations. With reference to the output of apples, I reckon there will be an increase of 25,000 bushels in six or seven years, in consequence of the enormous increase in the number of trees set out during the last two or three years.

326. *By Mr. Bird.*—Is the cultivation of apples on the increase, and the fruit industry a growing one ? Yes, without doubt. I fully believe there will shortly be an increase of 25,000 or 30,000 bushels of apples.

327. Do you think the production of timber will be greater than it has been of late if the railway were constructed ? I do not know if there would be a great increase.

328. Do you think there would be an increase in splitting and sawn timber ? Whilst the railway was being laid down there would be sleepers to be cut ; that would increase it for a time, but I do not know if it would increase the permanent output.

329. Do you think that the whole or most of the produce in the districts you speak of would be likely to be sent by rail, in the event of the railway being made ? Yes, I think so.

330. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know what the freights are now ? We pay 3*d.* per case for apples, or 10*s.* per ton ; the back freight is lower, being 6*s.* per ton. We now pay 1*s.* for a single bag of anything, and 1*s.* per tub for butter.

331. Is the present passenger traffic considerable by steamer and coach ? The passenger traffic is greater than it was from New Norfolk when I was there.

332. Do many go by steamer ? Not from Victoria. They go by steamer generally from Franklin and southwards.

333. Would the railway much increase the passenger traffic ? Undoubtedly ; where there are facilities for rapid travelling the people will always embrace it.

334. *By Mr. Bird.*—Is it long since you left New Norfolk ? Nearly seven years.

335. Is the passenger and freight traffic from Victoria now anything like what it was from New Norfolk then ? There is more freight from Victoria than from New Norfolk, taking it all round. One steamer carried all the freight from New Norfolk, but until very recently we had three barges and one steamer running from Victoria. The temporary stoppage of one mill has caused the *Sarah Ann* to be taken off, but she will shortly be running again.

336. Do you know anything of the amount of goods and passenger traffic that would likely arise from Franklin ? No. I can speak certainly of my own part of the district.

337. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know anything of the land up the Huon River ? I have not been further than She-oak Hills.

338. *By Mr. Bird.*—Do you know anything of the practicability of the route for a railway between Hobart and Victoria ? No, I do not know anything about that.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1886.

MR. WM. PHILP, *called and examined.*

339. *By the Chairman.*—Where do you reside? I am a storekeeper at Franklin.

340. How long have you resided there? 26 years.

341. What is the weekly traffic from Franklin to Hobart? During the present year things are very depressed, timber being very low, and the price of produce low also. Take a barge trip 2 weeks, or 26 trips per year: we have two barges averaging 50 tons, equalling 2600 tons, at 10s. per ton, £1300. One steamer making two trips per week, or 104 per year—say, 10 tons each trip—1040 tons per year, freight, £520; passengers ditto, 5 per trip equals 520, at 7s. each, £182. Back freight from Hobart—two barges, 25 tons each, at 5s. per ton, £325; steamer, two trips per week, 5 tons per trip, equals 520 tons, at 5s., £130; passengers, 520, or 5 per trip, at 7s., £182. Mails for coach contract, £450 per year; coach passengers, 5 each way daily, less Sabbath, equals 3180, at 7s. each, £1095 10s.—making a total of £4184 10s.

342. *By Mr. Bird.*—Does that include all kinds of produce? Yes. Timber has been very dull this season. We had three or four barges in the trade, but there are only two running now, in consequence of want of roads.

343. What is the annual produce of apples and pears in the Franklin neighbourhood? We produce over a fourth—about a third—of 200,000 bushels grown in the district, in round numbers about 60,000. In the statistics perhaps not more than half the actual produce is given. This is caused by two reasons—the returns are obtained at the wrong time of the year, and some of the settlers think if they show they produce so many apples their rates will be increased. A great many more apples are sent out of the district than the statistics show to be grown. I believe from Victoria to Geeveston there would be 200,000 bushels.

344. Is that quantity yearly increasing? Yes, rapidly increasing, especially apples and pears, also other fruit. Mr. Peacock last year bought 300 tons of small fruit, including plums, from December 15 to the end of March. In addition to this, Mr. Burgess buys for his factory, and some comes into Hobart.

345. *By Dr. Crowther.*—What is the total quantity of small fruit? From 200 to 300 tons, besides that purchased by Mr. Peacock—say 500 tons in all at least.

346. Does that include plums? No, there are not many plums.

347. *By Mr. Bird.*—Do you think the greater part of this produce from Victoria to Geeveston would come by rail? Even if freight by rail was a little higher, it would come by rail. Even if it was a quarter higher than by water, it would come by rail. I believe if freight were 15s. per ton by rail and 10s. by water, the produce would come by rail, as the farmers would come up with their produce instead of sending it by craft, and having to wait days in Hobart for it to arrive.

348. *By the Chairman.*—You have seen the agricultural statistics for the Huon? Yes.

349. Are they approximately correct? No, not by one-half.

350. Will you explain why? It is difficult for the people to give an estimate when the statistics are taken, and they are apprehensive that their rates will be increased, therefore they give incorrect returns.

351. With respect to timber, is there any probability of the railway increasing the output? Yes, with the extension of roads.

352. What description of timber? Splitting timber at Franklin, and there is opening for several mills between Hobart and Victoria—4 or 5 I should think.

353. In the annual output of produce from Franklin, do you include that from the jam factories? I have.

354. Have you any knowledge of the total output from the Geeveston end of the district? Mr. Howard, Harbour Master, says the Huon district represents 60,000 tons of timber per annum.

355. What portion of that would come from Victoria and Geeveston? I might put it down at a third, because the whole amount includes the Channel. The Huon barges make 2000 trips per year, with an average of 40 tons per trip. I think there would be an opening for at least 4 or 5 mills on the line of railway between Hobart and Victoria.

356. Do you know anything of the country between Port Cygnet and North West Bay? I do not. I have been up the Huon many miles from Victoria.

357. What is the nature of the country from Victoria upwards? On the whole poor, except some bottom land. That is the south side; on the north side it is very good.

358. Have you been on the north side beyond the Hermitage? No; but I have heard of a very large flat of good land lying on the Weld River.

359. Would the railway develop a large passenger traffic? It would.

360. Would it develop any traffic in the way of small goods, such as poultry, eggs, vegetables, &c.? It would; and the late season for vegetables in the district would prove a great advantage.

Mr. R. J. LUCAS, *M.H.A.*, examined.

361. *By Mr. Bird.*—Have you any knowledge of the Sandfly coal seams? Yes, I have been engaged trying to form a company since May, 1877, and have spent a lot of money prospecting.

362. Have you any interest in them now? None whatever; unfortunately I signed my interest away.

363. Do you consider the seams there are very extensive? I have no doubt of it; for miles there is a perfect network of seams.

364. Is its quality a good marketable coal? I believe there is no coal equal to it in the colony. I base my statement on the opinions of three experts—Messrs R. Evans, S. Peall, of Melbourne, and Cosmo Newbery.

365. Have you any of their reports that you can hand in? Yes, I can hand in the report signed by Mr. Newbery; it is as follows:—"Technological Museum, Melbourne, October 9, 1877. Report on a sample of coal from the Sandfly Ranges, Tasmania. The coal belongs to the variety known as anthracite. It is of a bright black colour, divided by thin bands of shale. An average of the whole sample gave upon analysis in 100·00 parts—water 1·85, volatile matter 2·75, fixed carbon 81·40, ash 14—total 100·00. The high percentage of ash is due to the shale lands and infiltrations of earthy matter, and will probably be much less when the seam has been opened beyond the influence of surface action. The coal is well adapted for steam and domestic purposes, and, weight for weight, will be found more economical than ordinary bituminous coal.—Signed J. COSMO NEWBERY."

366. Have you any of the reports of other experts? There is another analysis made by Mr. Newbery in 1884, when he analysed samples from eight seams and reported as follows:—"The coal 11 is an excellent steam coal; 01 and 02 are practically anthracite, and will be good steam and furnace coal; A1 has a slight tendency to cake, and though the ash is rather high it is a good steam or furnace coal; X1 is a good coal; seems to be a mixture of anthracite with a slight caking of bituminous coal.—Signed J. COSMO NEWBERY." There is also a report from Mr. Evans, who, in 1877, took charge of a prospecting party there, and tested the seam known as Hurst's. He took 18 cwt. or 20 cwt. to Melbourne, and there got an analysis from Mr. Newbery. From that seam he analysed a sample and gave the No. 1 report. I went over with it to see that the coal tested was the genuine coal. After testing it he pronounced it the best anthracite coal he had seen in the colonies. I also obtained, in 1883, an analysis from Mr. Newbery, which is No. 2 report. I also put in the following report of Mr. R. Allison, who was sent over in 1883 to prospect the land:—

*Sandfly Road, Huon Track, Tasmania, 24th December, 1883.*

J. B. M'QUIRE, *Esq.*, 22, Collins Street, West, Melbourne, Victoria.

DEAR SIR,

I duly received yours of the 10th and 17th inst., and note the contents; and in answer to your request I will take the places in rotation where the men have been at work, and the rough plans accompanying this letter will help you to make out what you desire to know. No. 1 + is a 4-foot seam of anthracite coal, driven on about 80 feet. I took about 10 tons of coal out. No. 2 + is two anthracite seams, 6 inches each, with a foot of bond between, 12 feet open cutting, 10 feet drive, 6 feet high, in hard slate. No. 3 + is also anthracite, 1 foot seam, driven in 18 feet, 5 feet high, and 4 wide; about 3 tons of coal out. No. 4 + is a six-inch seam, driven on about 30 feet. I then sunk up in the drive and cut a seam of 3 feet 6 inches, bituminous; got out 4 tons of coal; it looks well and clean. No. 5 is an open cutting 15 feet, and a drive about 30 feet on a 4-foot seam of bituminous coal; a good roof and floor; this is the best coal. I have got out about 20 or 25 tons of this coal. No. 6 + is about 50 feet of open cutting in the coal, 16 feet driven on the coal—4-foot seam; got about 20 tons of coal out, some of which looks well. No. 7 + is a drive put in on a 6-inch seam of bituminous coal about 50 feet. I am sinking up to see if I can find any other seam. No. 8 +, 15 feet of open face to a seam of anthracite, 4 feet south of a drive put in some years ago; an open cutting in the coal, north 25 feet. I have got about 4 tons of coal out, which looks well.

Since I wrote my last, on the 4th inst., I found a 12-inch seam of coal on the 100 acres—anthracite; and a 2-foot seam in the No. 7 drive, of clean coal, in the rise up. I then went 100 yards to the east, had a hole put down, and got the 2-foot seam; it looks like the coal in No. 4 drive. The No. 8 drive is in 15 feet from the open cutting, well timbered, and about 15 tons of coal out—anthracite—and looks well.

I remain, dear Sir, yours respectfully,

R. ALLISON.

He gave another report, but I never saw it. He told me there were 5 seams workable, the smallest being 3 feet 6 inches, and the largest 5 feet 6 inches. One was a pure anthracite, one showing bituminous and the other three pure steam bituminous coal.

367. Are these all the reports of experts you have? Yes, except a letter from Mr. Lewis in 1877.

368. Was the company ever floated? No; the promoter's company was floated, all except 4 shares, but unfortunately Mr. Gill died very suddenly, and it fell through.

369. Would there have been much difficulty in getting the coal to a shipping-place? No. We had two surveys made; one by Mr. G. Innes, who pronounced the route practicable, and one by Mr. J. Climie, in 1878. I produce Mr. Climie's report, which, after describing the route, says, "The summit level of the Sandfly Range is 1386 feet above sea level, and this elevation is attained mostly within two miles of the summit. I found it absolutely necessary to give increased length to the line that a gradient may be got suitable for working locomotives. At first sight it may be suggested that a line constructed direct to the foot of the range, and then worked by a self-acting incline to the coal workings, would be less costly. I have considered this question, and although the first cost would be less and the distance reduced three miles, I strongly recommend the route I have taken, as your mineral sections are extensive, and a most valuable property; the traffic to be carried over the line will be important, and can be worked at a much less cost and risk than can be expected to be done on a self-acting incline. You will observe that there are no gradients greater than 1 in 30, and I have no hesitation in saying that without increasing the cost or distance that the gradient can be greatly improved. By tunnelling in the saddle you can get a much better grade, and it would take you right through the middle of the coal."

370. If the railway were constructed from Kingston to Victoria, how near would it approach to the mines? By Mr. Mault's present line, it is as near as possible  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

371. Would there be any engineering difficulty between the mines and the projected line of railway? If the line were carried through Vince's saddle I think there would be, but not if it went through the Sandfly; the latter route would go right through the mines.

372. How far would it be from the mines to the head of North-West Bay, where the line is almost certain to go from Kingston to Victoria? You could strike it at Female End, about 2 or 3 miles further up than the line diverges.

373. What would be the distance from the Sandfly to the nearest possible junction with the Kingston-Victoria line? By means of a tunnel in the saddle it could be joined within 3 miles, or less; but if they had to go over the top of the saddle, it would be from 5 to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

374. If you started from Mr. Climie's survey how far would it be? 5 or 6 miles; but I have no hesitation in saying the tunnel would be the proper course, for you would then get under the whole seams. I mean a tunnel at the coal mine, which would be done by the company. They would have three alternatives for getting down—to Vince's, down to Female End, or put in a tunnel through the saddle, which would be the shortest line, being about 3 miles or a little less.

375. You think if the line were constructed from Hobart to Victoria, *via* Kingston, it would tend to open up this coal mine? I have not the slightest doubt of it. I do not see any difficulty in getting down, and without lengthening the route more than one or two miles. A route could be got through the Sandfly saddle; a short tunnel, a third of a mile at the outside, would enable the railway to go through the Sandfly rather than through Vince's.

376. Would you not be on the wrong side of the range, which would cut you off from the Victoria Valley? No; the land dips down there between Brown Mountain and the Sandfly, there is a break in the range leading to Oates' coal mine, and a practical route has been got from there to Victoria. I know from the top of the saddle, or near it, down to Oates' there is not a great incline so far as I could see.

377. From your knowledge of the country would you propose that an alternative survey be made through the Sandfly? Most certainly, with a view of utilising the coal. I would have no hesitation in saying that it would pay the Government to put a short branch line to the coal mine, connecting with them the line, for it would not be more than 3 miles long at the outside. There can be no doubt of the quantity and quality of the coal. The effect of taking the line through the Sandfly would open up magnificent timber, some of the finest I have seen in the colony, and experts say it is the finest splitting timber in the colony, and is practically inexhaustible for very many years. Mr. Oates would immediately put up a saw-mill at Maudsley's; and I know for a fact that Mr. Chesterman has inspected the district, and the only obstacle to mill establishment there is the difficulty of getting the timber out.

378. *By Dr. Crowther.*—What is the land like? Some of the finest land in the colony. I have seen currant trees so tall that by stooping a little you could stand under the branches, the trees being about 12 feet high; and I have seen dandelion stalks 5 feet high.

379. Would there be much good crown land served by this line? Yes, a lot; and the land is, in many instances, excellent. We took up 1200 acres of land at the Sandfly, and some of it was really splendid.

380. Are the coal seams extensive? You can go for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles and find coal anywhere you like; there are known to be 10 or 12 seams there.



## APPENDIX A.

## HOBART TO VICTORIA.

THIS survey was limited to testing the practicability of a line of railway between points given. A prospect of the country was made by Mr. J. M. McCormick in May, 1885, who advised that the practicability could be determined by a trial survey of the ground between North-West Bay River and the bridge over the Fourteen Turn Creek on Huon Road, near Parsons'. The position from Hobart to Kingston is practicable, though costly, with probably a tunnel near Kingston, and no difficulty would exist between Parsons' and Victoria. The trial survey was made by Mr. A. Mault in November, 1885, and extended over  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles, the plans showing that a practicable, though very costly line would be obtainable by the adoption of sharp curves and heavy grades, probably 1 in 35 to 1 in 40. The survey commenced at North-West Bay River (Lot 33), followed the river and then Cook's Rivulet to the State school; thence more or less near old Huon track, and up Coombes' Rivulet to Chesterman's; thence over Vince's Saddle, down Fourteen Turn Creek to the junction with Heronback Rivulet, up this for half a mile, and down opposite side for same distance, thence to Huxley's land on Huon Track, and to Black Fish Creek to Parsons'. From Kingston to starting-point of survey it is not anticipated that difficulties will occur—length about five miles, and average grade probably 1 in 88. The rise from starting-point of survey at North-West Bay River to summit at west end of tunnel at Vince's is 570ft. in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and the fall about the same in 4 miles to Parsons', from whence an average grade of about 1 in 60 for 4 miles would reach Victoria. The tunnel at Vince's is some 400ft. below surface of ground at deepest point, about 1550 yards in length, and probably through sandstone rock. The total length of line is estimated at something like 30 miles. The cost cannot be given, but it would be high, owing to the probable necessity for two tunnels, heavy earthworks generally, and the cost of suburban land and terminal accommodation at Hobart. As an approximation, I do not think the cost should be put down at less than £8000 (eight thousand pounds) per mile.

J. FINCHAM, *Engineer-in-Chief.*

2nd July, 1886.

## CORRIGENDUM.

Remarks following Question 160 were made by Mr. G. Innes, not Mr. E. G. Innes.