

(No. 38.)

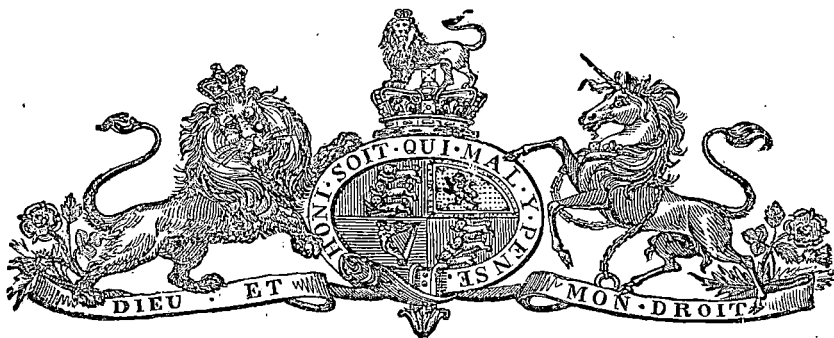


1865.

T A S M A N I A.

DR. CROWTHER'S PETITION.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, 4 August, 1865, and ordered by
the House to be printed.



28th July, 1865.

To His Excellency Colonel GORE BROWNE, Governor in Council.

SIR,

The humble Petition of the undersigned,

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT in the year 1853 your Petitioner, in conjunction with Mr. Henry Harrison Pybus, selected and located upon Lot 255, 500 acres in the Parish of Cunningham, under the Pre-emptive Right Regulations of 1851.

And that your Petitioner did also, in the year 1857, purchase from W. G. Harris 270 acres being part of Lot 254, and also purchased from Mr. W. F. Piquenit 500 acres being Lot 232, all adjoining, for the purpose of constructing a Tramroad and erecting machinery for the manufacture and carriage of timber.

That your Petitioner at his own cost constructed four miles of Tramway, and placed upon Lot 255 machinery of the best description, with substantial buildings, &c.

That in 1853 a good six-roomed house, with stables and out-offices, were erected upon Lot 255, and an acre and a half of orchard planted, and ten acres securely fenced with posts and rails, and the same cleared at the expense of £70 per acre.

That through the other lots the Tramway has been carried, tenements built, and a considerable area cleared and sown with grass.

That within a week after the completion of the said Tramroad the District of Little Oyster Cove was visited by one of the most disastrous bush fires on record, by which the whole of the bridges and viaducts were totally destroyed, involving a further outlay of capital little short of that first incurred in the construction of the Tramroad.

The whole from the first has been most costly, arising from the density of the forest, the number of creeks to be crossed, and the earth cuttings to bring up the required levels.

That, from inability to find a market for the timber produce at a remunerative price, your Petitioner has been compelled to close the works from the 31st of January last, and will now not only be obliged to submit to the loss of the interest upon the capital absorbed, amounting to not less than £1000 per annum, but, should the scheme of Reproductive Works be carried to completion, a serious diminution in the value of the plant and material.

That from 1853 to January 31st, 1865, a period of eleven years, your Petitioner has been one of the largest employers of labour on this side of the Island, the average number of adults daily employed upon the establishment during that time not having been less than sixty (60), and if children were taken into account, at least one-third more.

That your Petitioner believes, by the continuous employment of so large a body of people, he has, through the medium of the General Revenue, paid a sum far in excess of the value of the lands selected under the Regulations of 1851, and now held by him, independently of a large amount paid annually to the Government in the shape of rentals upon the various lots, and which in the aggregate form a considerable item.

From the altered condition of the Colony with regard to its timber produce and the closure of the principal markets hitherto open to supply, your Petitioner finds himself unable to complete his purchase, the first instalments upon which are now due.

Your Petitioner believes that his case is without a parallel; and having fulfilled the conditions of settlement during the period of the eleven years referred to, supported an industrious population, and opened up an extensive tract of country now in the hands of the Government, prays that Your Excellency will, with the advice of his Ministers, be pleased to take such steps as may be necessary in order to relieve your Petitioner from any further payments, and that the Fee Simple of the land amounting to about 1040 acres may be surrendered to him.

And your Petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

I remain,

Your Excellency's most obedient Servant,

WILLIAM LODCK. CROWTHER.