

(No. 19.)



1864.

T A S M A N I A.

C R O W N L A N D S.

REPORTS.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, 29 June, 1864.



AGRICULTURAL AREAS IN DEVON.

Forth, 7th December, 1863.

SIR,

IN compliance with your letter dated 27th ultimo, I beg to offer my opinion as to the suitability of my District for the application of the Agricultural Area Clauses of the Waste Lands Act, 1863.

I believe the clauses in question were wisely devised, and are well adapted to extend settlement through the length and breadth of our impenetrable wilds.

Assuming that none, or but very few, of the Pre-emptive Right Lots have been relinquished since December, 1861, then none of the roads opened by the Northern Board of Works are sufficiently advanced inland to meet the requirements of the Agricultural Area Clauses in question.

At the time I received your letter there was one of these roads which would have answered the purpose; but subsequently four lots, amounting to an area of 540 acres, have been selected, and more inquired after, which are also likely to be applied for immediately. I refer to the road from Sheffield, crossing the Don through Barrington, recrossing the Don to Tarleton. This road has been let by the Northern Board of Works. From Sheffield to the recrossing of the Don the works are progressing slowly, though sufficiently advanced to induce parties to take up land along the route. It passes through an area of about 3000 acres of superior forest land, most of which has been already surveyed. The recent applications, and other inquiries, indicate that this locality will be settled under the 18th and 19th Sections of *The Waste Lands Act*, without the aid of the Agricultural Area Clauses, which may be put in motion elsewhere; and in the event of the projected tram or railroad from the Mersey to Deloraine, *via* Kimberly's Ford, being carried into effect, all the Agricultural Lands in the following Parishes would be quickly selected,—viz., Dulverton, Stoodley, Barrington, Kentisbury, Doland, Loxbere, and Belstone,—so that the application of the Agricultural Area Clauses within these Parishes, pending the issue of the tramroad, in my opinion, might better be deferred.

The first eligible place, in my opinion, is Gunn's Plains. You are already aware of the character of this place. It is situate on the River Leven, in a well-sheltered valley, and contains about 3000 or 4000 acres of good agricultural soil, interspersed with small grassy plains, and is only about 13 miles from the shipping place at Allison Township. The road from Allison towards the place in question has been surveyed under the Northern Board of Works, but not opened for a distance of ten miles. This road if opened, would give access, ere it reached the Plains, to about 3000 acres of good available Crown Land. The residue is principally taken up under the Pre-emptive Right Regulations of 1851.

The next suitable place is on the Blythe River, at Adam's Water, distance about ten miles from the shipping place at Heybridge. The road has been surveyed for about 8 miles, none cleared or opened, and the place contains at least 5000 acres of superior available forest Crown Land; and, as a general rule, the opening, bridging, cuttings, and draining of roads through this forest land will cost £100 per mile to render it effective or useful; and the application of any less amount, as the average per mile, will only frustrate the object in view, be unremunerative, and end in vexatious disappointment to all concerned.

The amount per mile allotted in your Report on the Waste Lands between the Mersey and the Leven, 1860, for a less extensive purpose than the one in question was £85 per mile; and it is highly creditable to the accuracy of that estimate to have to say, that none of the roads operated upon at a less expenditure per mile are practicable even for bullock teams.

The next and most important location for the application of the Waste Lands Clauses in question is, the Vale of Belvoir. This is a beautiful country, well adapted for European emigrants, and a position from which a Colony would expand and radiate in all directions, attracted by the extensive tracts of fine pasture lands bordering on the Middlesex Plains and Surrey Hills, and that extensive unknown region to the south and west, with all its glimmering indications of wealth, mineral, pastoral, and agricultural.*

* This is part of the fine tract reported on by the V. D. L. Company's Surveyors (Hellyer and Fossey) about 36 years ago, to which I have so often drawn your attention lately. I did not know that Mr. Dooley was acquainted with it, as he appears to be, or I should have had a Report from him before now.—J.E.C.

The road from the Vale of Belvoir would connect with one or other of two roads already opened, either at Alma on the Forth, or Eden near the Gawler, and would pass from the vale east of the Bluff through the Pine Forest, and about half-way between the vale and the coast through an extensive tract of fine forest land, well adapted for an intermediate settlement under the Agricultural Clauses, &c. The whole distance from a shipping place to the vale is about 30 miles, and the intermediate location about 15 miles. An outlay of £100 per mile on this route would render one-half of the entire Colony accessible to equestrians, and render available for immediate settlement an incredible amount of good available Crown Land.

To open any one of these projects and render them available by December, 1864, operations should be commenced forthwith : experience has proved to me that the necessary preliminary operations cannot be advantageously carried on in the winter time.

I fear you will deem the suggestion of a road to the Vale of Belvoir rather visionary. It was so thought of me when first I recommended the Kentish Plains as suitable for a Settlement. I am even more sanguine of this scheme, in proportion to its magnitude, than of the success of the Kentish. I might add, too, in its favour, that a timber trade in the pine would be likely to arise, either by carting in the summer time or rafting it down the rivers in the winter freshes; otherwise it might be sawn and dried there, and then profitably carted down, as it appears to me probable that the pine, cut and dried, does not exceed half its weight when green; and, again, if ever that undoubted auriferous region be properly explored, it will be by such an auxiliary as the settlement in question only can afford.

If I have too widely digressed from the question at issue, or omitted any essential points of detail, pardon my incapacity, and remind me of my omissions, and I will, to the best of my ability, supply such defects or matters of detail as you may deem necessary.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

JAMES M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor*.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire, Surveyor-General*.

THIS is a letter from Mr. Dooley, one of the District Surveyors of Devon, pointing out what roads are necessary in his District to perfect the communications between some fine tracts of agricultural land which he reports on and the seaports on the north coast line, and is written in answer to one which you directed me to address him.

No Surveyor is better acquainted with his district than Mr. Dooley is with the one under his charge, and no one in the Colony has done so much, successfully, to push forward settlement as he has. In promotion of this object, he now recommends the construction of about 50 miles of road into different parts of the fine district under his charge; namely, one of 13 miles (probably 15) up the Leven River to Gunn's Plains, which will open 6000 acres of rich land, and such mountains of limestone as I have never seen in any other quarter of the Colony. Another road of 10 (say 12) miles up the Blythe River into a very large tract of rich country; and, thirdly, a road from the Vale of Belvoir, 30 miles from the coast, but probably not more than 20 from the southern terminus of one or other of the two lines above indicated, which might possibly be continued to the Vale of Belvoir. We have reason to believe that there is a large area of fine pasture land here (but very elevated), as revealed to us by the Surveyors of the V. D. Land Company (Hellyer & Fossey) 36 years ago, and now confirmed by Dooley; the re-examination of which I recommended to the late Government, and which I hope the present one will have accomplished.

The above roads Mr. Dooley, whose judgment is generally sound, thinks can be formed for £100 a mile, which would require about £6000 for all; but if double that sum, or £12,000, be provided, there could then be a metalled way of 10 or 12 feet wide through their whole length, which would make them travelling all the year round. Of course, bridges would be extra.

I have long been an advocate for a road from the southern into the north-western districts, by an extension of the Lake St. Clair Road, 106 miles from hence, (already within 40 miles or so of the Vale of Belvoir) thereto; and should it turn out that there is that large extent of fine pasture land round about there as indicated by the fore-named Surveyors, I think it not unlikely that it would be as readily stocked from the vast flocks about the lake as from those elsewhere. For if a wide bridle road were cut through, it would then be as accessible from there as from any other quarter where there are sheep; and, moreover, the southern flock-masters should have a chance as well as others.

I very respectfully submit that, if the Honorable the Executive intend doing anything this season in the way of preparing their scheme of roads, they have no time to lose. Road-work in dense scrubs is a most difficult and tedious duty; so much so, indeed, that none but those who have been engaged thereon can appreciate it. I beg to say, that orders should be forthwith issued for Scott's proposed tramway through half of Dorset; that Burgess be dispatched forthwith to the Surrey Hills, to explore and open the country between that quarter and the west coast; and that Dooley and assistants be set on to the lines touched on in this letter. These surveys, with those required at Pembroke and Franklin, will just about consume the £2000 voted by the Parliament for these services.

J. E. CALDER.

The Lake Pedder Plains might also be thrown open.

Survey Office, 26th April, 1864.

SIR,

REVERTING to the subject of your letter of December 7th, 1863, about forming an agricultural area in your District, in connection with the 36th and following Clauses of the Act, will you be good enough to review your former recommendation. You pointed out the Vale of Belvoir as a suitable spot; but this place, according to Strezlecki, is 2930 feet above the sea. Think the whole matter over again, and recommend the best spot you know of for the purpose: let it be as near as possible to an accessible shipping place, and containing the greatest quantity of good land lying well together that you know of, and give me the best estimate you can of cost of road to and through same, with every information you can that may enable the Treasurer to go to his colleagues with a really good scheme. Reply as quickly as you can to this.

Yours, &c.

J. E. CALDER.

J. M. DOOLEY, *Esq.*, *District Surveyor, River Forth.*

Forth, 29th April, 1864.

SIR,

REVIEWING the subject matter of my letter of 7th December, 1863, in accordance with your instructions of 26th instant, I respectfully beg to suggest the place known as Gunn's New Country, on the River Leven, as the most suitable location for agricultural areas, &c., within my District, taking all matters connected therewith into consideration.

The area of good available land in this spot is about 4000 acres, and about 2500 acres from thence northward, extending as far as the south boundary of Eden Township produced westward by about one and a half miles west of the Gawler. Through this block of rich forest land the road from the 4000 acres would pass, and probably join the government road already opened to the Reserve Eden somewhere near that reserve. The two blocks join each other at a break in the range north of Gunn's New Country, through which I propose the road to the shipping place at Ulverstone shall pass, in the event of it being found practicable to join the already opened government road near Eden. The road to pass to and through the block of 6500 acres would not exceed in distance eight miles, and could be cleared, bridged, and culverted for £50 per mile, thirty feet wide, fitted for traffic as an ordinary bush road.

The road from Ulverstone to Eden has cost only about £33 per mile; but nothing has been done, only to clear the timber off about 30 feet wide. But roads through such lands, with an expenditure only of about £30 to £50 per mile, are impassable during at least three months in the winter season. Thus the road to Eden, coming northwards, say 8 miles at £50 per mile, £400; and say £20 per mile expended on the road from Ulverstone to near Eden, distance nine miles, £180: total £580, to make the block of 6500 acres available for the operations of the agricultural area clauses. Supposing the Road to pass *viâ* Eden to Ulverstone, the practicability of which I am not in a position to speak with certainty of, but, to the best of my opinion, believe to be practicable.

The only other route lies between the Gawler and Leven to the Reserve of Allison,—a distance of about sixteen miles, all through heavy rich forest land, at £50 per mile, £800, and, generally speaking, is the more natural outlet for the country in question; but, for the greater part, the land is taken up by speculators under the Regulations of 1851, neither is the port so advantageous as that at Ulverstone. For these reasons I prefer the route *viâ* Eden, providing it be found to be practicable.

The pasturage available at Gunn's New Country is a great element in the establishment of a nice settlement. In the reality there is something substantial, and the appearance has a wonderful effect in attracting intending settlers.

I am sanguine that a settlement here will be successful, if the road be only made something worthy the name.

I am,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

J. M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire, Surveyor-General.*

MEMO.

County of Devon. Parish of Bradworthy, Lots 470, 471, 472, and 490. Are these lots relinquished? (Yes. J.E.C.)

If so, this would be a suitable country for agricultural areas, and could be made available at a trifling cost.

Lot 681, 500 acres: R. J. Horne lessee. The vicinity of this lot would also be a suitable place were it not for the number of Pre-emptive Right holders north and west thereof, who appear to hold only on speculation. Ten thousand acres of good land could be found in this locality.

In the event of any of the Pre-emptive Right lots having been relinquished, will you be pleased to inform me?

Again, at the River Blythe, Parish of Ashwater, extending southwards from 317 acres applied for by W. Valentine about four miles, and westward to the Blythe, is a block of probably seven or eight thousand acres, from the centre of which the road to the shipping-place would be about twelve miles, all of which is to be opened. Though this is a good block, and nearer to a shipping-place than Gunn's Plains, yet there are no natural grasses, neither is the shipping-place so good as at Ulverstone.

Thus there are three other places having areas of good forest land of five, eight, and ten thousand acres respectively, and within about twelve miles of their respective shipping-places, which are unquestionably suitable for settlement; and, in the event of the experiment suggested to be tried at Gunn's New Country being successful, no doubt will be readily and anxiously sought after.

J. M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor.*
29th April, 1864.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire, Surveyor-General.*

Survey Office, 3rd May, 1864.

SIR,

REFERRING to my letter to you of the 26th ultimo, wherein I requested you to name the site of an agricultural area in your district, will you oblige me, at the same time, with the best approximate estimate you can make of the cost of forming a road suitable for farm vehicles to and through it, to connect it with a main or cross road, or to the sea, as required by the 56th Clause of the Act?

I am, &c.,

J. E. CALDER.

J. M. DOOLEY, *Esquire, District Surveyor, River Forth.*

Forth, 21st May, 1864.

SIR,

WITH reference to your letter of May 3rd, as to the cost of opening roads according to the requirements of the Act as to agricultural areas, &c., it admits such a latitude for consideration as can best be discussed in your presence, when the District Plan is placed before you. Instance: it is not where the cheapest road may be constructed to a suitable agricultural area the expenditure will be the most reproductive, but, principally, where the expenditure will tend to open the greatest possible amount of agricultural lands, and also its suitability for future extension into the interior, &c. Otherwise, when once the site is fixed upon, the cost of the necessary roads, &c. may be easily arrived at; and as you have resolved to come down here, I have no doubt you will be perfectly conversant with all necessary detail ere your return.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

J. M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General.*

EXPLORATION OF NORTH-WEST COUNTRY.

Westfield, 21st August, 1863.

SIR,

SOMETIME since, when at Hobart Town, I spoke to you about cutting a track to the south-west coast of Tasmania, since then I have written to Mr. Gwynne. I enclose you his letter in answer to mine of the 28th July. I have shown it to Mr. R. C. Gunn, and he thinks Gwynne's offer very reasonable, and highly approves of a track being cut through that country.

I am going to ask you a plain question,—what will the Government sell Messrs. W. J. & T. W. Field 5000 acres each, in the unsettled country, at per acre? We have pioneered the settled part of Tasmania, and if you give us encouragement, we will try the unsettled.

I remain, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

THOS. W. FIELD.

The Colonial Treasurer, Hobart Town.

Survey Office, 26th November, 1863.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor of suggesting to you the expediency of directing the examination of the N.W. quarter of the Island.

I take the liberty of throwing out this suggestion on several accounts. The chief of which are, firstly, because I have good reason for knowing that there is much fair pastoral land in that quarter; and, secondly, should this prove correct, I believe the Executive would not hesitate to take steps to throw the same open to the public, seeing that the natural and certain consequences of increasing the area of our pastures by opening new tracts of grass lands must be to check the importations of meat,* and to add something to our wool exports, which have been stationary for very many years, as may be seen by the extract given at the end from a paper published by me fifteen or sixteen months ago.

My reasons for believing that there are large tracts of good pastoral and agricultural lands in the north west are founded on the Reports of some of the most reliable Surveyors who have been engaged in the work of exploring Tasmania; viz., Messrs. Wedge, Hellyer, and Fossey, in 1827-28. The researches of these gentlemen were confined to the quarter which is now formed into the Counties of Wellington and Russell; but their Reports were written so long ago that they are now all but forgotten; and of the fine tracts of land which they discovered there is hardly a record, except in this office. Indeed, at the time their Reports were written, the quarter of the Island they referred to possessed no attractions; but now that settlement is advancing thitherward, I would submit to yourself and colleagues the propriety of another examination of this place, from which I should hope for good results.

It may be said that these results would be attained by republishing the interesting narratives of the above-named Surveyors. But I think it would be a necessary condition of the examination I propose, that certain matters be investigated, which the altered condition of the country in 1863 demands, that were naturally overlooked 36 years ago. Such, for example, as the accessibleness of the tracts reported on by Messrs. Wedge and Hellyer from existing settlements, their connexion with other considerable tracts of open land said to lie on the West Coast and about the mouth of the Pieman's River, and, above all, what portion of these fine areas still belong to the public.

I have already opened a correspondence with the District Surveyor, Mr. N. Simmons, requiring to know what he would charge to re-mark so much of the Van Diemen's Land Company's boundaries as it might be necessary to have revised to enable enquirers after Crown Land to know what they could select from. His reply is £3 per mile, which would require £180 if 60 miles were re-touched; and, if there be as much fine pastoral land outside the Company's boundaries as Hellyer assures us of, the money would be well spent.

While this work of re-definition were proceeding, I should advise that another Surveyor be employed to examine the country between the Company's lands at the Surrey Hills and the mouth of the Pieman's River, where, I have been informed by Alexander M'Kay, (one of Hellyer's travelling companions) that, on one of the many journeys of the Company's Surveyors through the N. W. quarter of Tasmania, extensive plains were discovered, which he has described to me as rather inferior in quality, but passably suited for stock. To this point I would propose to you to have a track roughly marked out, to be made travelling for stock, if any extent of good country were found along the West Coast to justify such a step.

The project of opening the country between the estates of the V. D. L. Company and the West Coast, with the view of increasing the area of the pastoral lands of the Colony, at present limited to about 6,000,000 acres, is no new idea with me, as will be seen on reference to the paragraph marked (A) of the printed slip attached to this letter,† wherein I also touched on the propriety of opening the vast plains that lie about Lake Pedder and the West Coast, which, though not inviting, would soon receive a fair trial of their stock-supporting capabilities, which might lead to their eventual occupation.

I should propose that the task of examining the N.W. quarter of the Island be entrusted to Mr. Gordon Burgess, who has had very considerable experience of duties of this nature; and, if this be approved, I will forthwith write to Mr. Burgess for his estimate of cost per month for employment in this service.

I cannot help thinking that an effort should be made this season to push into those counties named on recent charts, Arthur, Franklin, and Montgomery; and I would be happy to undertake the marking of the tracks through the scrubs mentioned in the printed slip myself; and, without offering any exact estimate of the cost of this preliminary act towards occupation, will venture to say, that, exclusive of my own salary, it would fall short of One hundred Pounds.

I very respectfully submit that one of the best and most lasting services which our Ministry could render the community would be to foster the examination and occupation of the unsettled portions of Tasmania, and believe that whatever efforts they make in this direction will receive the hearty approval of the Colonists.

I remain,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer.

J. E. CALDER.

* Valued at £664,859 during the past 6 years; or £110,810 a year of Live Stock and Preserved Meat.

† Part of the Preface of Lands of Tasmania, 1862.

WOOL EXPORTS of TASMANIA for the Ten Years commencing with 1852 and ending at 1861.

| FIRST PERIOD. | | | SECOND PERIOD. | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------|----------------|------------|-----------|
| Years. | Quantity. | Value. | Years. | Quantity. | Value. |
| | lbs. | £ | | lbs. | £ |
| 1852 | 4,689,969 | 245,201 | 1857 | 5,251,884 | 393,646 |
| 1853 | 5,425,550 | 326,067 | 1858 | 5,755,314 | 397,533 |
| 1854 | 5,223,476 | 325,438 | 1859 | 6,107,903 | 467,968 |
| 1855 | 5,762,990 | 368,822 | 1860 | 4,504,718 | 368,192 |
| 1856 | 4,619,674 | 320,461 | 1861 | 4,003,369 | 320,413 |
| TOTAL | 25,721,659 | 1,585,989 | TOTAL | 25,623,188 | 1,953,752 |
| | | | 1862 | 5,241,650 | 366,350 |

The picture is instructive, if not very gratifying. The remarkable similarity of the totals of the "quantity" columns reveals facts that are neither to be mistaken nor confuted. The first is, that the Wool Trade of Tasmania has made no advance whatever in ten years; while the second declares to us, as plainly as figures can speak, that her occupied pastures are stocked to the uttermost for the support of sheep, cattle, and horses, which, on a rough average of 10 years, seem *generally* to amount about 2,000,000 of sheep and 100,000 horses and cattle. The first figures fix the limit of wool production at about 5,000,000 pounds a year, beyond which the experience of 10 (11) years informs us that we cannot advance a step in the present state of our pastures.

(A.) These figures contain enough to set the most unreflecting heads at work to discover if there be no means as yet untried of increasing the wool supplies of the Colony. The first and most natural question that suggests itself for consideration is, Whether there is not room for a few more sheep in all the vast area of unsettled Tasmania? Surely ten millions of acres cannot ALL be barren, and unsuited for settlement. It is indeed known that, beyond the great central water-shed, there are vast plains cut off from settlement by about three dense but narrow thickets, which, I should think, might be penetrated at a cost of about £1000. Then would nearly a million of acres of perfectly clear land be thrown open to inspection, and, very possibly, to occupation also.* These plains, though inferior and producing only a coarse herbage, would possibly support sheep at the rate of one to ten acres. If this should prove true, a little expansion would be given to trade at once. *Again, reliable report speaks of extensive tracts of fair grass land (the property of the public) in the north-west quarter of the Island, lying just outside the estates of the Van Diemen's Land Company, which might possibly be turned to good account.*

These pastures must not be closed for ever from observation, nor wholly neglected because they are of an inferior quality. I submit that we cannot afford to reject inferior pastures. If we did so, a third of our stock must be got rid of at once, for on such pastures that proportion at least is supported. The necessities of the country demand their investigation. They have lain hidden too long; and, unless we desire the wool trade to remain for ever at its present level, a push must be made to pass the boundary, behind which so much lies hidden that must be exposed to observation.

Such a track as should be cut (say a dozen feet wide) would enable the pioneers of settlement to penetrate a vast country, whose reports, if at all favourable, would be the signal for an immediate movement towards it.

Rough General Report.

Launceston, 17th May, 1864.

DEAR SIR,

I AM obliged to you for your telegram of yesterday, and should have written last night but I was so thick-headed from the effects of the close confinement on board a small vessel, combined with a bad cold, I could not do so.

I shall not now furnish you with any details of my late trip, as without a plan I cannot well do so, but simply give you my general opinion as to the lands I have seen.

The lands to the eastward of Mount Cleveland are all covered with myrtle forest, as I have stated

* About Lake Pedder and the West Coast.

before; and I made a push through the open lands I saw from it in a south-west direction, striking the coast at about 10 miles south of Sandy Cape. These open lands consist of heath and button grass; but they are tolerably dry, and there is a larger amount of fine grass amongst the other than I have seen to the southward. This country seems to extend all the way from the Arthur River to the Pieman, if not farther; and I consider that, when properly burnt out, will be well suited for store cattle, which is, I believe, a kind of land much wanted in the Colony at the present time. It is intersected by the valleys of the Donaldson and other rivers, which are very scrubby and precipitous; and there is no land, that I saw, fit for agricultural purposes. The geological formation is similar to western country farther to the southward. The average height of the open land eastward of the coast range is about 1000 feet above the sea. The only part I consider fit for sheep is the land immediately upon the coast, which is, I may say, covered with kangaroo at the present time, owing, I suppose, to their not having been hunted for the last 10 years. When I get home I will make a map of the country, without which it is difficult to give you further information in writing; therefore, please excuse this meagre report. I am now going to the Surrey Hills to bring down the two men I have left there clearing the track, as I consider the season is too far advanced to ask for more money to continue the track. It is a much more difficult country to deal with than I ever anticipated, and took me 20 days to get from where I started (about 5 miles to the westward of Mount Cleveland) to the coast, and I was compelled to make up to Woolnorth. We were 25 days out, and the weather was extremely bad. I found a vessel at Woolnorth bound for Circular Head, so I took passage by her, and then on to be landed at Emu Bay; but there was too heavy a sea to do so, and I was compelled to proceed to Launceston, and shall leave this to-morrow for Emu Bay.

Please to excuse this letter, as I have a bad cold still, and feel quite stupid. I will write again if I think of anything.

I remain, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

GORDON BURGESS.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire*.

TRAMWAYS IN DORSET.

Launceston, 10th November, 1863.

SIR,

I most respectfully beg to submit through you, for the consideration of the Government, the following remarks and suggestions on the desirability of the Government constructing a tramway to give access to the large areas of crown lands and extensive forests of timber in the County of Dorset, yet almost in a state of nature, owing to the absence of means of access to markets or a proper shipping port.

The principal Crown Lands fit for agriculture in that county are situate on the Brid River, the branches of the Great Foresters, the Upper Ringarooma, and some on Piper's River.

Upon the land selected in the vicinity of the Brid River during the last four years, a population of 150 individuals is now settled; but there is no proper road or facility to send their produce to market, or a safe shipping port, therefore the large areas of Crown Land fit for agriculture in that quarter are likely to remain unoccupied; but, if a tramway were to be constructed from such lands to a safe and accessible Port, there is scarce a doubt but the whole of the available lands there would, at no distant time, be selected along the line of tramway, and the increased price and value of the lands soon repay the cost of construction; or, if sold by auction, along the line of tramway, much of it would realise more than One Pound per acre. Also villages, where found necessary, along the line, and, in many places, short branch lines would give increased value to the whole of that District.

The harbour of Bridport is now used for shipping the produce of that quarter; but it is only accessible at high water to vessels of about 35 tons, and questionable if it could be permanently improved, except by a large and unnecessary outlay. Also no good roads exist leading to Bridport.

The next most suitable spot for a shipping place is Egg Island Point, or Dorchester Village, River Tamar, 18 miles from Launceston. Here there is deep water, and space sufficient for vessels to lay secure, out of the way of other traffic up or down the river.

The advantages here are, steamers and other vessels passing almost daily to and from Launceston and the neighbouring colonies, which could ship the produce direct from the tramway. That township is yet crown land where the proposed line would pass, and, if the object is carried out, would be greatly increased in value; also the risk and danger of shipping in small vessels from Bridport, and the increased insurance avoided.

I annex tracings, showing what I consider an approximation to the proposed route for a tramway, so as to include the largest area of Crown Lands best adapted for settlement. From the shipping point at Dorchester to the dividing ridge at the George Town Road, Mount Direction, I estimate as 3 miles 50 chains, thence other 6 miles to Piper's River, thence skirting the high lands to the Little Forester or Brid River, all through Crown Lands, except 2 miles of bush land adjoining Dorchester Village, and thence to about the 50th half-mile mark, on the track marked by Mr. G. Burgess to the Ringarooma, and on to the fine land

on the Ringarooma River, in all about 50 miles to the junction of the Maurice Rivulet with the Ringarooma.

The advantages gained by the line skirting the high lands so far from the coast are, that for several miles inland the soil is inferior, and it is generally on the higher lands where the good soil and timber are found.

There are no very large rivers to cross on the proposed route, none I believe exceeding 1 chain in width; also the steepest gradients would be down hill in coming to the shipping place.

Near where the proposed line would pass Piper's River there is slate, (the best I know of in the Colony.) This would not be much over ten miles from the shipping port; and if it could be delivered by a tramway, a considerable traffic from it might be expected. The timber along the line, fit for all purposes, including fuel, seems inexhaustible; and if it will pay to send by tramway, any amount may be estimated for transit on the line, and the produce from the agricultural lands on the line will ultimately assist chiefly to keep the tramway in constant use.

As the proposed route would pass nearly the whole way through Crown Lands, perhaps it would be necessary, on lands being selected in that quarter, to make it a condition that Government could make a tramway through such on paying for the land actually resumed the usual upset price. Also desirable spots for villages and stations might be reserved as soon as the route is decided upon.

Such a tramway would give employment, and the means of settling upon the very fine Crown Lands in that quarter, to a large population, and add materially to the exports. I believe few Districts possess such advantages and resources as this does for a tramway. The area of Crown Lands which would be directly benefitted and increased in value by such a tramway would be very large.

I believe the Surveyors of that District (Messrs. Hall and Hurst), could, at a moderate cost, ascertain the practicability of carrying a tramway near where proposed.

I believe the cost of constructing a tramway as referred to would be nearly £610 per mile for a single line. This, for 50 miles, would be £30,500; and waggons, built in the colony, for about £60 each, complete.

In these estimates of the costs I have been assisted by Mr. W. H. Knight, engineer, who has had Colonial experience in forming the tramway, by Messrs. Grubb and Tyson, from near Launceston to Piper's River.

The detailed estimate for One mile is as follows:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|-------------|----------|----------|
| One mile of single rails, 4 feet 8½ inches wide; rails, 6 × 6 = 31,680 feet of gum timber, delivered along the line, at 10s. 5d. per 100 feet. | 165 | 0 | 0 |
| 2640 wedges, delivered at 5d. | 55 | 0 | 0 |
| Getting 1320 sleepers, 9 to 14 inches thick, 9 feet long, laying same and rails complete, cutting a trench on each side of line, filling up the track, ramming well in to the height of 5 inches below top of rails, cut and make cross drains every 30 feet, if required, per mile. | 170 | 0 | 0 |
| Felling timber and clearing same, per mile. | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| Good broken stone and gravel, laid on horse-track, 4½ feet wide 6 inches deep, 2s. 4d. per yard, or per mile. | 205 | 6 | 8 |
| | <u>£610</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>8</u> |

Eight turn-offs and points at each station-end for trucks to shunt, at £15 each, or £120.

Twelve carriages with screw breaks suitable for the line, made in the Colony, about £60 each, wheels 2 feet 6 inches diameter.

| | | | |
|--|--------|----|---|
| Thus, 50 miles, at £610 6s. 8d. | 30,513 | 13 | 4 |
| Eight turn-offs and points, £15 each. | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 carriages, about £60 each. | 720 | 0 | 0 |

Cost of 50 miles. £31,353 13 4

The cost of marking out the line, and superintendence, I have not estimated for.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JAMES SCOTT, *Surveyor*.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire, Surveyor-General*.

By the desire of Mr. James Scott, of Launceston, I have the honor of submitting this letter, with his tracings, which contains a proposal for the Government to construct a Fifty-mile tramway between the Townships of Dorchester, on the Tamar, and Maurice, on the Ringarooma River, (Dorset County.)

Dorchester (the western terminal point of the proposed line) is about twenty miles from Launceston, in the direction of George Town.

Maurice (the eastern end of the line) lies N.N.E. of Launceston, and is distant therefrom, by direct route, about thirty miles.

Mr. Scott gives an estimate of the cost of constructing this line, in which he has been assisted by an engineer of colonial experience (Mr. W. H. Knight), who formed the existing tramroad from Launceston to Piper's River, about twelve miles.

This estimate (which, however, excludes the cost of survey of £600 or £700, and of superintendence, which I am not able to give the worth of) rates the cost of the line at £610 a mile, or £30,513 13s. 4d.; to which is to be added £120 more for eight turn-offs, and a further sum of £720 for twelve waggons, which, with cost of survey and superintendence, would bring up the total to (I suppose) £33,000 or £34,000.

The quantity of good Crown Land that would be beneficially affected by this line is estimated by Mr. Scott at 100,000 acres; which, I may add, tallies with the reports of other Surveyors who have written on the good Crown Lands of Dorset, and my own personal observations also favour the statement.

The lands in question closely resemble the best lands of the conterminous County of Devon. They are of a dark red colour, and are of good depth. The timber produced here is of the usual useful kind found on the very superior soils of the northern and southern counties; but which can only be made profitable to the country by some such means as the one proposed.

I am not asked by Mr. Scott to offer any opinion as to the propriety of the Government incurring the expenditure required by his proposal; but, like a practical man, as I believe him to be, he makes out his case himself, without having recourse to others for aid: but this I must take permission to say for him, that his project, if it cannot be carried out just at this moment, is, nevertheless, very worthy of consideration and remembrance; and believing, as I do, that Dorset is a good District for an experiment in favour of the "Agricultural Area" Clauses of the Waste Lands Act, I think the line recommended by Mr. Scott might be surveyed for this purpose; and it may be devoted to the object proposed by him whenever desired by the public, and sanctioned by its representatives.

I shall be happy to give any further information about this District that may be required; and if I have it not within myself, I will lose no time in obtaining it.

J. E. CALDER.

20th November, 1863.

(Electric Telegraph Message.)

Hobart Town, 16th November, 1863.

CAN you give an estimate of the extent of good Crown Land that will be beneficially affected by the line of road from Dorchester to Ringarooma, as proposed in your letter of the 10th instant? Also, cost of survey?

J. E. CALDER.

JAMES SCOTT, Esquire, Launceston.

(Electric Telegraph Message.)

Launceston, 16th November, 1863.

ABOUT one hundred thousand acres of good Crown Land would be beneficially affected, and more of a secondary quality, by the proposed tramway. I think about Ten Pounds per mile would be required for the survey.

JAMES SCOTT.

J. E. CALDER, Esquire.

15th January, 1864.

DEAR SIR,

If you will kindly give instructions for the survey of the road from Dorchester eastward, I will give directions to the surveyor, and put him to work. I should much like your letter to name all surveys of this description that you would wish to have done, seen to now. I allude to those works we spoke of when you called at this office three days ago; namely, the Sorell and Bream Creek line, and the branch to the Carlton Scrubs.

At the same time, I think you said something about that part of the New Huon Road lying between Hobart Town and Leslie, which you will perhaps repeat, as I have forgotten it.

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

J. E. CALDER.

The Honorable CHAS. MEREDITH.

THE Surveyor-General will receive this as an instruction to obtain the survey of the line in question.

18th January, 1864.

CHAS. MEREDITH.

Launceston, 18th January, 1864.

SIR,

IN returning my letter of the 9th instant, I most respectfully, at the same time, beg to state, that from your remarks, it is not the intention of the Government to construct a Tramroad between Dorchester, on the Tamar, and the Crown Lands in Dorset, but merely to open the country indicated by an ordinary road, in connection with the Agricultural Area Clauses of the Waste Lands Act.

The suggestions by me, on the 10th of November last, as to opening out these Crown Lands by a route from Dorchester, as the shipping port, were only applicable in connection with a Tramroad; for, if an ordinary road is only constructed, the settlers for many localities on the route would not be able to send their produce along it so easy or cheap as they could by a Tramroad,—some to Bridport, others to Piper's River, and others direct to Launceston. Besides the distance to Dorchester, to send down timber from the best forests in the east or centre of the District, would be too great by a common road; and timber for many years will be a most important article of shipment, unless these forests are wantonly destroyed. Also a common road in that route could not be made passable in winter without "logging" all the bottoms, or macadamizing most of it, draining, and bridges, &c.; the cost of which, I apprehend, would be quite as much, to make it passable in winter, as what a Tramroad would cost. Also, the facility for quick transit and heavy loads of timber and farm produce by the Tramroad would *compensate* for the *increased distances* over the several present routes now in use, such as they are, but by which they would not attempt to send heavy loads.

I beg to forward a plan of the District with the present roads, tracks, &c., and about the proposed route of Tramroad; which I hope will help to explain the matter, and show that a common road there would not possess sufficient recommendation over those lines now used to warrant the Government acting on my suggestion if a common road is only to be opened, as it would be a very round-about way to benefit several of the localities,—so much so, that several would not be benefitted to any appreciable extent over the present routes.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JAMES SCOTT.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire, Surveyor-General.*

To His Excellency Colonel THOMAS GORE BROWNE, Governor-in-Chief of Tasmania, &c., &c., and the Honorable the Executive Council.

The Memorial of the undersigned Landholders in the vicinity of the River Brid, situate in the County of Dorset, Tasmania, generally known as "Scott's New Country."

HUMBLY SHOWETH :

1st. THAT your Memorialists, most of whom are now permanent residents in the above locality, are desirous of securing the means of transit for their produce to a shipping place, of which it is estimated that upwards of five thousand bushels of grain alone will be available this season for exportation.

2nd. That, owing to the absence of such means of transit, the produce grown in this Settlement is rendered comparatively valueless,—an effectual barrier to the individual and general prosperity of this Settlement remains in the way, tends to discourage the most persevering, occasions us considerable difficulty in meeting our instalments, and prevents many persons from selecting and occupying land in this vicinity, to the great detriment of the Crown Revenues.

3rd. That your Memorialists beg to observe, that during the last twelve months the population has increased nearly fifty per cent. ; such population numbering at present about one hundred and forty souls, by whose united efforts a building for public worship has been erected, including a cemetery.

4th. That a Petition has recently been forwarded to this Settlement for the signatures of your Memorialists, such Memorial having for its object the construction of a Tramway for the conveyance of produce, &c. from the several vicinities of the Rivers Brid, Ringarooma, and Great Forester's to some unmentioned shipping place.

5th. That your Memorialists beg to state, that a road from Bridport through this Settlement to the Ringarooma Road has already been surveyed and cleared, and believe that, if it were formed into a good cart road, it would sufficiently meet their requirements ; and your Memorialists beg to observe further, that this line of road is at present impassable from the want of being made, and which, owing to *the easy nature of the line*, may be done at a small cost.

6th. We therefore pray that your Excellency and Honorable Council will be pleased to cause such measures to be adopted as may be deemed necessary for the making a good cart road as hereinbefore expressed.

And, as in duty bound, your Memorialists will ever pray, &c., &c.

Thomas Tucker.
Joseph Bald.
William Stewart.
E. W. Bonner.
Thomas George.
Thomas Campbell.
Dugald M'Gill.
Thomas Hutchison.
John M'Kerrow.
James Campbell.
James Loone.
Thomas Loone.
Robert Brands.
E. W. Smith.

William James.
T. D. Heazlewood.
Peter Miller.
Alexr. Gill.
Thos. B. Harris.
Alfred Dalton.
Thomas Lilly.
David Pinner.
John Williams.
Thomas Diprose.
James Bonser.
Alexander Farquhar.
Alexander Rae.

George Tyson.
James Shearer.
John M'Bean.
A. W. Brewer.
Joseph Crabtree.
William Anderson.
James Connell.
R. W. MacEachern.
William Tyson.
James Hosie.
William T. Hingston.
Joseph Heazlewood.
George Gould.

Forwarded to the Honorable the Colonial Treasurer.

13th January, 1864.

FRANK C. TRIBE, (*for Colonial Secretary.*)

Referred to the Surveyor-General for his remarks.

Colonial Treasury, 15th January, 1864.

CHARLES MEREDITH.

The Petition of the persons interested in the construction of a road through Scott's New Country, handed me on the 15th ultimo, has been unavoidably detained on account of the necessity of collecting information from various sources respecting the cost of making a good cart-road from the shipping-place at the mouth of the Brid and Forester's Rivers to a point indicated in the Petition, which is about 19 miles inland.

By the expression "a good cart-road" is meant, of course, one that may be travelled with reasonable facility all the year through. Such a road would therefore have to be a made one; particularly in the case of good soils having to be crossed by such road, which, being always soft, are unsuited for traffic at some seasons. In such places a road, to be serviceable at all times, must be either slabbed or metalled. On barren lands this is not necessarily the case.

Of the road the Petitioners require to have made, I beg to say, that the first ten miles from the coast leads across a very poor tract, but some of which is boggy. On the same space there are a few small rivulets which will require bridging, and a little sideling ground must be levelled.

The work of forming a fair road across the barren land, the District Surveyor (Mr. Hall) thinks would cost £20 a mile, or £200 in all. The remaining nine miles is all good red soil, of great depth, and therefore unfavorable for road operations. To make a road here passable at all seasons, it must be either metalled or slabbed. The former work would cost, according to Mr. Scott, £300 a mile; and I believe something like half this amount would be wanted to lay down a good close slab road. At least the last-named estimate (£150 a mile) is the outside cost of such work on this side the Island, where I have had to seek my information*, having learned from Mr. Scott that there is no example of a slabbed road in the northern part of the Island. Adopting slabs for nine miles, and allowing Three or Four hundred Pounds for the road where it leads across the barren land, Seventeen hundred Pounds should meet the cost of the work pretty nearly. A sum of Two thousand Pounds should therefore be an outside one.

The slabs, I am informed, should be about 12 feet long, 1 foot wide, and 6 inches deep; then their own weight would prevent their displacement.

The area of good Crown Land that would be beneficially affected by a road through Scott's New Country may be taken at 5000 or 6000 acres†, and should return as fully as many Pounds within a few years, on a good road being made. For I may remark, that the good lands hereabouts are really most excellent, as I can avouch; so good, indeed, that notwithstanding the disadvantages of remoteness of situation, and most execrable roads, Fifty selections, covering Seven thousand four hundred acres, (containing many homesteads) are held here. The demand for land here has now abated, owing, I believe, to such disadvantages as I have depicted above; but this would probably revive if it were known that the prayer of this Petition would be granted.

If this road be made from public funds, it seems likely that it must be under a special grant; for I take it that very little of the contribution that may be made to the Road Districts in which Scott's New Country lies, under virtue of the 86th Section of the Land Act, will be expended hereabouts.

I think there can be little doubt if £2000 were expended in so completing the line of approach to this Country as would suit present necessities, that in three years we should recover it from lands sold alone.

But this, I respectfully submit, is not the only consideration to be kept in view in dealing with measures having for their object the advancement of the Country Districts. There are such things to be cared for as the employment of our population, the expansion of our export trade, and the improvement of local markets, which every enlargement of settlement does something to help forward.

I must here take leave to suggest, whether the line of road cleared by the Northern Sub-Board of Works, marked A.B.C.D.E.F.G.H. on the lithograph chart that accompanies this letter, had not better be looked over again for a better direction than it seems to take. The road, it is true, is an authorised one, reserved piece by piece as the land was taken up, and before it could be known what direction settlement would follow. These reserves, which we are required to make for the benefit of every lot, are not designed as part and parcel of any general scheme of District Roads, but only to prevent a purchaser being blocked in. If the Government are favourable to the petition, I will lose no time in addressing the District Surveyor on this matter.

In conclusion, I must be permitted to say, that, while strongly disposed to recommend the Executive to aid in the construction of this or any other local road which, if formed, would tend to bring about the several objects enumerated in the last paragraph but one of this Memo., I must recommend that a cautious consideration be given to any application for aid of a nature like that contained in this Petition, however strong the grounds on which it is urged; seeing that if liberality, however wise, be exercised in any case, it will be but a signal for the presentation of many similar Petitions, often from localities having no such claim to public aid as Scott's New Country.

The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer.

J. E. CALDER.
17th February, 1864.

* My informants are Messieurs Degraives and Cheverton. The latter is the Foreman of Public Works.

† Mr. Scott says 8000 or 10,000. I reduce it, not to be over the mark.—J.E.C.

SIR,

Launceston, 25th February, 1864.

IN accordance with your instructions of the 22nd of January last, I have examined the country between Dorchester Reserve, on the Tamar, and Maurice Reserve, at the head of the Ringarooma, and have now the honor of reporting my proceedings. I visited the Reserve for the Township of Dorchester on the 26th January, and commenced my observations from that place. The quality of the soil on the Reserve is very poor, and seems quite worthless for any purpose other than building on. I followed, on leaving Dorchester, a course much in the same direction as a proposed route for a Tramway shown upon the accompanying plan; and when I came to a part of the country with which I was not previously, or but imperfectly acquainted, I made a *detour* to ascertain the quantity and quality of the land in that place. I crossed no land of any value until I came to a branch of the Fourteen Mile Creek, where there may be a few hundred acres of medium land, which is of the more value from having a small stream of good water flowing through it. The land from hence to Piper's River is of a very inferior quality. The timber is principally peppermint and stringy bark. On the banks of the Piper there are a few small plots of medium land, but no extent in the vicinity of where I crossed. However, as I proceeded, I found the timber improve very much in quality; and, although the ground was poor, the timber (stringy bark) was good. This kind of country lasted for about two miles, when it rapidly changed into what is termed a "dogwood scrub," swamp gum and blackwood being the predominating timber, with an underwood of dogwood, musk, fern trees, &c. This continues with little variation to near the twenty-second mile-mark on the road to Bridport. As the quality, situation, and extent of the various blocks of land which I crossed over are represented much more distinctly upon the plan than I could describe them here, I beg to refer you to it for that information. Between this point and the middle branch of the Little Forester the land is generally of an inferior quality, but still produces, in some places, good timber, such as stringy bark. On the middle branch of the Little Forester there is a considerable flat of good ground, which would make excellent grazing land, and could be easily and cheaply irrigated, as it has a finestream flowing right through it. It is, however, I believe, in its present state, liable to flood in winter time; but that could be soon obviated. The eastern branch of the Little Forester is the finest stream of the three, and I think its existence must be unknown to the Survey Department, as I have not seen it shown on any of the plans. I find, in a south-westerly direction from Scott's Country, that there is a considerable quantity of both first-class and medium land, producing a splendid forest of timber, such as swamp gum (generally called stringy gum in this part), blackwood, silver wattle, myrtle, musk, and fern trees. The swamp-gum forest can be traced in one continuous belt from the Brid to Piper's River, which would give, in that locality alone, a very extensive field for splitting operations. Between Scott's Country and the good land at the Ringarooma there is a considerable tract of very poor and inferior soil, quite worthless except for what timber it produces; and, also before reaching it, there is a high tier of hills to cross, on some of which the land is of a fair description, while other portions are steep and stony: however, there is a considerable quantity of excellent timber, such as swamp gum, blackwood, and wattle, but when getting nearer the river, the timber (white gum, blackwood, and wattle) is not so good; but the land is of the very richest description, and very well watered. There is no portion of Tasmania, which I have seen, so suitable for settlement, if reasonable means of access were given to it, as the land in the vicinity of the Ringarooma River. There are thousands of acres of fertile land where the applicant may have plenty to choose from, and the advantage of having good land lightly timbered.

I have shown on the plan the existence of nearly fifty thousand acres of first-class land, and nearly seventy thousand acres of medium land; making a total of about one hundred and twenty thousand acres of land suitable for settlement, the whole of which could be opened up with one main line of road, and a branch line or two of a few miles long. It will be a matter for consideration, what kind of road would be most suitable for the purpose of opening up the large extent of land mentioned above; the kind required being that which will combine cheapness of construction with the greatest facility of conveying all kinds of timber and produce: and I believe those two important considerations would be united in a well-constructed tramway. I think a good tramway could be constructed for half what a macadamized road would cost, and the latter would not answer the purposes of the former. What is wanted in this case is a road on which all the produce of the land could be brought to the point of shipment, such as large logs for saw-mills, piles, telegraph poles, railway sleepers, logs used in ship building, lime, freestone, &c., &c., besides split and sawn timber. Then there would be also all the farm produce, which would pay the interest on the capital expended on constructing the road, for by the time a tramway was open for traffic there would be an immense quantity of grain and other farm produce to bring to market. There would also be a great income from the timber, for the timber merchants in Launceston tell me they cannot get half enough to supply the demand; and one affirmed that, if a tramway were made into the fine forest about Piper's River, he could find a market for all the timber a hundred men could split. The timber between Piper's River and the Great Forester River must be worth, at the very least, two hundred thousand pounds, and that would not be three pounds per acre; and then there is plenty of land in that neighbourhood that would yield twenty pounds per acre worth of timber, if there were a good road to get it to market. Half the value of the timber would go for freight, for that is what the carters get for bringing split stuff from Piper's River to Launceston, a distance of about twelve or fourteen miles. If it is considered necessary to have a tramway surveyed through the country between Dorchester and Maurice, I think it right to remark, that there will be a good many physical difficulties in the way of getting a first-rate line, owing to crossing so many ridges which divide the different streams on the proposed route. If a good line of road, either tramway or ordinary road, were made, it would very sensibly increase the value of the crown land through which it passed; and I would beg to suggest, in such a case, that the upset price of medium land should be one pound per acre, and all which is surveyed and found to be first-class land should not be sold for less than two pounds per acre. I have no doubt that plenty of purchasers would be found at those rates under such a circumstance; but, as the land stands now, without a passable road, I do not think that the best of the land will sell, but a good deal of that which is already taken will, ultimately, be given up.

I have, &c.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire*.

RICHARD HALL.

(*Electric Telegraph Message.*)

Hobart Town, 1st March, 1864.

ON the plan that accompanies your report of the Ringarooma Country, of the 25th of February, soils of different values are indicated by the colors yellow, red, and green; but you have not stated what each means. I presume the yellow shows inferior land, the green good, and the red very inferior. Am I right?

J. E. CALDER.

RICHARD HALL, *Esquire*, Launceston.

(*Electric Telegraph Message.*)

Launceston, 3rd March, 1864.

ON my plan which accompanied my Report of the Ringarooma Country, the red indicates good land, green medium, yellow inferior or unknown.

R. HALL, Launceston.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire*.

(*Electric Telegraph Message.*)

Hobart Town, 7th March, 1864.

WHEN may I expect an answer to my letter of the 1st instant, asking what superior advantages will be obtained by directing Scott's proposed tramroad to Dorchester over a line running direct to Launceston? Answer quickly, for valuable time is passing.

J. E. CALDER.

RICHARD HALL, *Esquire*, Surveyor, Launceston.

Launceston, 7th March, 1864.

SIR,

IN answer to your letter of the 1st instant, in reference to what superior advantages a tramway connecting the Ringarooma Country with the Dorchester Reserve would possess over a line which would connect the same tracts of land with Launceston direct, I beg to state, as regards the proposed route from Dorchester to the Ringarooma, that, as the terminus would be about twenty miles from Launceston, and probably a great deal of the produce conveyed by the tramway would be shipped at once to some of the adjoining Colonies, it would save about forty miles of difficult river navigations; because any vessel taking timber or other produce brought down by the tramway to Dorchester would not have occasion to proceed any higher up the Tamar, and would therefore, I presume, not incur the expense of various dues which would have to be paid by a vessel going alongside of the wharf in Launceston.

I believe the proposed route would intersect more saleable crown land, and better timber, than one direct to Launceston, and would go through less private property; consequently less compensation would be required, and a greater benefit would be obtained.

The distance would be less in going to Dorchester than in coming to Launceston, because it would not do to traverse the country south east of Mount Arthur (Row Tor), and pass to the south of that mountain; for then the same tracts of land could not be connected, and, furthermore, the country in that direction is exceedingly rough, and the hills are very precipitous and lofty.

Following out the proposed route would open up an entirely new country, and not in any way interfere with any existing road, as it would, most likely, in coming to Launceston. A new line could be constructed as cheaply as if it were the site of an old road.

Although the advantages appear, at first sight, to be in favour of making a terminus at Dorchester, still I am of opinion that the public would reap the most benefit by its terminus being at Launceston; for there would be so many things transmitted to be bought or sold in Launceston, that it would make it very inconvenient to have them brought by a tramway to Dorchester and then sent by vessels to Launceston.

If it is designed to make this line the greatest good to the greatest number of people, I think it could best be done by having it direct to Launceston; for as it is expected to carry a large amount of produce, it would be of considerable advantage to Launceston to have that place made the repository for the produce of such an important district as the tramway in question is designed to open up.

I have heard no one express an opinion on the subject, but I firmly believe that all who are interested in the construction of a tramway through this district would rather see it direct to Launceston than go to Dorchester; for there are so many things, such as butter, eggs, vegetables, &c., &c., which will either have to be collected into larger quantities in Launceston for shipment, or else consumed there, that would make it very inconvenient to have to send to Dorchester by tramway, and then by water to Launceston.

There is another thing to be considered in constructing a road into a comparatively new country like the present, which is, that all their first wants will have to be supplied direct from Launceston, such as provisions, agricultural implements, seed, &c., &c., which, of course, could not be furnished from a place like Dorchester.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,
RICHARD HALL.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire*,
Surveyor-General, Hobart Town.

Launceston, 14th March, 1864.

SIR,

I BEG to forward a tracing showing a proposed route for a Tramway from Launceston to the Ringarooma, in accordance with the request contained in your telegram of the 11th instant. The course indicated on the sketch is about the direction a line of Tramway would have to take if it were constructed from Launceston to the Ringarooma with a view of opening up the country about Piper's River, the Little Forester's River, and Scott's Country. If it were desired to get from Launceston to the Ringarooma in the shortest distance, I suppose a route south of Row Tor would be taken, which would make a difference of some miles in the length; but then the same tracts of land would not be united by it, and the hills over which it would cross would be of considerable altitude.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,
RICHARD HALL.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire*,
Surveyor-General, Hobart Town.

Survey Office, 4th April, 1864.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor of handing you several letters from Messrs. Scott and Hall, Surveyors, of Launceston, treating on the values of the soils of an extensive tract of country lying in Dorset, between a Village Reserve called Dorchester on the Tamar and the Ringarooma River.

One of these letters*, which is from Mr. Scott, contains a proposal to construct a Tramway from public funds through this tract, Fifty miles long, at an estimated cost of nearly Thirty-one thousand Pounds, and most of the other letters touch on this project also.

Soon after the receipt of Mr. Scott's letter of the 10th of last November, one of the Surveyors of the District it described—viz. Mr. Hall—was sent to make a particular inspection of the country referred to. From his Report (25 February, 1864) it will be seen that he passed over about One hundred and twenty thousand acres of good Crown Land, which he classes into superior and medium; Fifty thousand being of the first-named class, and Seventy thousand of the latter; the whole of which is well-watered, and covered with forest trees of great size and of considerable commercial value.

The good land described by Mr. Hall is contained in three principal masses, lying east and west from each other; beyond which, and in a westerly direction from all the rest, lies the large tract lately reported on by Mr. Thomas, the extent of which is said to be at least Forty thousand acres, thus raising the good Crown Lands of this District to not less than One hundred and sixty thousand acres.

The first of the three principal tracts reached by Mr. Hall lies on the east of, and pretty close to, Piper's River, indeed touching it in one quarter. It is thus described by him, as he entered it after traversing some most inferior lands:—"This kind of country (that is poor lands) lasted about two miles, when it rapidly changed into what is termed a dogwood scrub; swamp-gum and blackwood being the predominating timber, with an underwood of dog-wood, musk, fern-trees, &c."

Mr. Hall next pushed across a barren country in a nearly easterly direction for about a dozen miles, a small space only of beautiful land occurring in the middle of this wilderness. He then plunged into a second forest, similar in every respect to the one he met on or near to Piper's River, of which he writes, "In a

* 10th November, 1863, first handed to the Treasurer on the 20th November, 1863, and now re-submitted.

southerly direction from Scott's Country there is a considerable quantity of both first class and medium land, producing a splendid forest of timber, such as swamp gum (generally called stringy gum in this part), blackwood, silver wattle, myrtle, musk and fern-trees."

Poor soils in large quantities again intervened in crossing from Scott's Country to the Ringarooma, which Mr. Hall describes as quite worthless; but, on reaching the third great tract of good land on the Ringarooma, soil was found of a very different description, and in large quantities, of which he writes:—"There is no portion of Tasmania, which I have seen, so suitable for settlement, if reasonable means of access were given to it, as the land in the vicinity of the Ringarooma River. There are thousands of acres of fertile lands, where the applicant may have plenty to choose from, and the advantage of having good land lightly timbered."

Mr. Hall next informs us that all the lands precedingly described "could be opened up, with one main line of road, and a branch or two a few miles long."

He then considers what sort of road would be most beneficial for the country under notice, and concludes that a tramway would be the best, as he considers it would combine the greatest amount of usefulness, with reasonable cheapness of construction; and such a road he thinks would enable the Government to dispose of very large areas of land, whereof he says there are Seventy thousand acres which he rates at 20s. an acre, and Fifty thousand more at 40s. the acre, which should fix the value of the good Crown Lands he visited at the large sum of One hundred and seventy thousand Pounds. But there is usually a good deal of difference between speculative calculations and realised facts; and if I were to indulge in predictions of this kind, I would prefer basing them on the revelations of experience as supplied by the records of this Office (to which, however, Mr. Hall could not have access to correct his estimates). From these we learn that the average value of all the country lands purchased from the Crown during the last six years has been (rejecting only the fractional part of a penny) exactly a guinea an acre.* Those six years have not, it is true, been years of prosperity, nor have all the lands that have been sold at that price been of first-rate quality; still, even with good times, and such lands as Mr. Hall describes in the market, I do not think it safe to adopt high figures in any calculations relating to future transactions which experience may not confirm. Mr. Hall, however, speaks confidently of plenty of purchasers being found for lands in the Districts he has lately traversed, if a road be made therethrough. Indeed his visit seems to be producing good effects on settlement already, for I find that since the beginning of this year Twenty selections of Two thousand two hundred acres nearly have been made in the tracts of land which this proposed line is expected to penetrate, though as yet nothing certain can be known of the intentions of the Executive, or the action of Parliament in relation to this matter.

I confess I have no great belief in the present success of the project of terminating any great road as Mr. Scott proposes; namely,—at a place absolutely without inhabitants, as Dorchester (a mere Village Reserve on the Tamar) is. This place, it is true, is not without some advantages; but which, as it appears to me, are not sufficiently weighty to counterbalance those of Launceston, which town must, for very many years to come, be the chief mart of the principal portions of Dorset.

Dorchester is about twenty miles from Launceston, in the direction of George Town. Its advantages as a shipping-place for the fertile lands lying easterly of it are thus summed up by Mr. Scott:—

"Here, he says, is deep water, and space sufficient for vessels to lie secure, out of the way of other traffic up and down the river. The advantages here are steamers and other vessels passing almost daily to and from Launceston and the neighbouring colonies, which could ship the produce direct from the tramway."

By this project, of having the shipping-place for the produce brought down by this line at Dorchester, about twenty miles of river navigation would be saved.

Mr. Hall, who has officially given a great deal of attention to the subject of the proper communications for Dorset, does not under-rate the advantages of having the terminus at the place proposed by Mr. Scott†; but still thinks the shipping terminus should be Launceston, and not Dorchester, believing, as he does, that the first-named place must have far more to do with the settlement of the north-eastern Districts than any other place,—that whatever supplies are required there, must come from Launceston, whilst most of the produce raised in Dorset will be sold there also; for Dorchester is little likely to play a conspicuous part in the affairs of the Colony for many years to come.

I cannot but side with Mr. Hall; and I believe that if a main line were directed from Ringarooma to Dorchester, with a branch line into Launceston, the branch would completely divert the flow of commerce from the channel intended from the main stream. Provisions, tools, and everything required in the formation of new settlements would have to be obtained from Launceston; and doubtless most of those who went thither to buy, would go there to sell also, which must make it the chief emporium of Dorset. Indeed there will be few who would not prefer seeing the shipping terminus of the line in the principal Town of the North rather than in any uninhabited reserve, whose chief advantage over Launceston appears to be, that about twenty miles of river navigation would be saved on all produce not intended for the Colony.

* Since the passing of the Waste Lands Act, in February, 1858.

† Mr. Scott's proposed line, shown on the accompanying plan by a double red line, (dotted). Hall's by a strong pencil line.

Without desiring to throw cold water on a project which will possibly have some advocates, I still hope that nothing which I have written in this letter will be construed into a recommendation to the Government to engage in a present outlay of about forty thousand pounds for a prospective advantage. For myself, I own, that I very much question if the first inland communications of a district like Dorset (hardly yet transformed from a wilderness) should be anything but ordinary ones. Such highly improved means of transit as those recommended by Mr. Scott should follow, and not precede, settlement. They presuppose a condition of things at least equal to that existing in the country that intervenes between Deloraine and the Mersey, which fair ordinary roads will soon lead to,—that is where such large tracts of good land as those recently visited by Mr. Hall exist. And I cannot but believe that, if we laid out the line he suggests in such a manner that it might be made a tramroad of whenever the necessities of the district required it,—clearing and forming it as a fair bush-road for carts only, at present—as large a Settlement would soon be formed in Dorset as it is reasonable to hope for from a population so inconsiderable as ours. I believe a few thousands laid out this way, and in the improvement of bad places on existing lines of communication, would do much to direct settlement into Dorset, and meet every present want. Indeed the petitions of the inhabitants of this quarter, who must be taken to be good judges of their own and the district's necessities, ask for this in preference to any other scheme of roads, one of which seems to have been proposed to them and rejected.*

Should the Executive be pleased to entertain the question of opening the lands described in Hall's Report, by the construction of roads at the public cost, I would respectfully advise that no time be lost in the preliminary measures of inspection and survey, which, I presume, can be gone on with without further reference to the Legislature.

I regret the constant demands on my attention lately have delayed this report a few days beyond the time when I expected to have had it ready.

A plan, with necessary references, showing the position and approximate extent of the lands described in Mr. Hall's Report of the 25th February, with also the designs of routes as proposed by both Surveyors, Hall & Scott, is herewith, with also all their Reports.

I remain, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

J. E. CALDER.

The Honorable Colonial Treasurer.

Launceston, 4th April, 1864.

SIR,

HAVING recently visited the country on the Great Forester and Ringarooma, I beg to address you on the importance of having the roads formerly surveyed and cleared now opened out and made practicable for carts to that quarter. At present, all communication to there from Launceston is obliged to be carried on by the circuitous road by way of Mount Direction and Lower Piper's River (a distance of about 65 mile), to the farms on the Brid River, and 75 to 80 miles to Ringarooma Country,—the latter portion only available for a pack-horse, and in floods impassable and dangerous,—whereas, if the road formerly cleared of scrub by way of Patersonia, extending from about the 12th half-mile mark to the Brid River (about 11 miles) was cleared of the fallen timber, which might be done for about £40, and thence to the 57th half-mile mark, about another £40 would erect bridges over three dangerous creeks, to render it passable for a horse or foot passenger. But to make these 11 miles on the west side of the Brid River fit for a cart, by cutting and levelling the sideling hills, would require about £1000, and the remainder could be made passable to the Upper Ringarooma for about another £1000; also, a cart-road direct to the mouth of the Ringarooma River would be most desirable to open the good land between Mount Horror and the Ringarooma.

I spent some time in travelling through the scrub from the present track on the south west of French's Lot to the 54th half-mile mark, searching for a better line than that now in use, but failed. But that search leads me to believe it is yet possible to find a better and shorter line, leading from the 50th half-mile mark to near Mr. French's lot, which would open out the Upper Ringarooma, and lead direct either to Launceston or to Bridport. Such a line from French's lot to Launceston is about 46 miles, and about 28 miles to Bridport.

Were these roads made fit for carts by the Government, I feel warranted in saying that much of the land there would be shortly selected, as numerous enquiries are now being made about it,—and the roads being blocked up, deter many from visiting even, or selecting land in that quarter.

Messrs. Butt and others, who selected land on the Upper Ringarooma, were there in the spring, intending to begin improvements, but, owing to the tracks being impassable, left without commencing; and as the Trustees of the North Esk Road District only received about eight shillings of yearly Road-rate from that part, they will only contribute a like sum, together with half the sum (or four shillings) to be contributed by the Government towards opening these roads, which is, of course, utterly useless under the circumstances.

Unless the Government can at once do something towards making these roads fit for carts, a very large

* Date of Petition unknown; but it was handed me 15th January, and returned 16th February of this year.

area of excellent land is locked up, and all improvements to that already selected is stopped; whilst by spending a few thousand pounds on the roads, it would at once return a large revenue to the crown, and parties settling there would then be enabled to keep the roads in order after they are made.

These roads also ought to be made quite irrespective of the proposition to construct a tramroad from the West Tamar to that district, as the roads will be of permanent use, and help to render that part only more fit for a tramroad.

Three selections have been recently made, to my knowledge, under the belief that the Government will open these roads, and several others are only holding back until they see the same begun to be constructed. I therefore feel justified in bringing this matter thus prominently before you, knowing that it is your endeavour to do the utmost for the settlement of the Waste Lands; also, that what I have stated will be borne out by the Surveyor of the District, as well as by the Government Geologist, who has recently examined that quarter.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant.

JAMES SCOTT, *Surveyor*.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire*,
Surveyor-General, Hobart Town.

I WAS in the act of forwarding these letters to the Executive when I saw the Treasurer. I think, from what he said, he would like to have a plan showing, as exactly as possible, what portions of Burgess Road from Launceston to Ringarooma can be conveniently travelled at present without any expenditure thereon, and what cannot. All this could be shown on our lithographed maps of Dorset. Will Mr. Scott be good enough to get one up, showing the parts travelling at present in one colour, and the rest in another, and give all possible information thereon about cost? Mr. Scott must be kind enough to give an outside cost rather than one too closely estimated or under the mark.

The same also with regard to the road between Scott's New Country, the Ringarooma, and Bridport.

J. E. CALDER.

15th April, 1864.

IN accordance with the Surveyor-General's request of the 15th instant, I beg to annex the following approximation of what is necessary for the roads in Dorset, leading to the north east of Launceston.—The same are shown on the lithograph plan herewith forwarded:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|----|
| <i>First</i> .—From Launceston, by way of Patersonia, the present road is passable for carts to A. From A to B is 11 miles, all blocked up by fallen timber across the 15 feet of cleared scrubs. This, to make passable for a horse only | 32 | 0 | 0 |
| But for a cart..... | 1300 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Second</i> .—From B to C ($7\frac{1}{2}$ miles), 3 dangerous creeks, and several boggy places, —for a horse only | 18 | 0 | 0 |
| But for a cart, with bridges | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Third</i> .—From C to the Upper Ringarooma Country, to D (a new road to be yet surveyed), in lieu of the present road from E to D..... | 800 | 0 | 0 |
| The road E to D is cleared 8 feet wide, but one from about C to D is recommended in lieu thereof. | | | |
| <i>Fourth</i> .—From C to Ringarooma Township, all to be cleared beyond the point E. | 2000 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Fifth</i> .—The road from Bridport to the point about C, passing through the land selected at Scott's New Country, about 20 miles | 1000 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Sixth</i> .—The road from Launceston to Bridport, by way of Piper's River, for a cart, about | 1000 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Seventh</i> .—The road by way of Mount Direction to Piper's River requires bridges over the rivers, about | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Eighth</i> .—Road to Upper St. Patrick's River, 10 miles | 400 | 0 | 0 |

Thus the Summary will be, for carts :—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|--------------|----------|----------|
| <i>First.</i> —A to B | 1300 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Second.</i> —B to C..... | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Third.</i> —C to D | 800 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Fourth.</i> —C to Ringarooma Township | 2000 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Fifth.</i> —C to Bridport | 1000 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Sixth.</i> —Launceston to Bridport, by Piper's River..... | 1000 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Seventh.</i> —Bridges on old road, Piper's River | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Eighth.</i> —Road to Upper St. Patrick's River, 10 miles | 400 | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>£7180</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |

E to D. I would propose to abandon this track, provided a better can be found, say about from C to D, as it will shorten the distance to Launceston, as well as to Bridport.

The road A to B is of importance to be opened so that a horse could get along ; and a root of a tree, &c. removed, as it is dangerous for even a horse to pass a portion of the sideling hills.

B to C, to be safe for a horse, requires some bridges over deep creeks, &c.

The road to Upper St. Patrick's River is blocked up, and bridges down : a horse cannot get along part, for about 6 miles.

I trust this, together with the plans, will show the lines of roads where requiring to be made.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire*,
Surveyor-General, Hobart Town.

JAMES SCOTT, *Launceston.*
22nd April, 1864.

Survey Office, 27th April, 1864.

SIR,

IN my Memo. of the 4th instant, written to accompany the Reports of Messrs. Scott and Hall, on the propriety of constructing a tramroad from public funds from Launceston or Dorchester to the Ringarooma Country, I could not advise the Executive to ask the Legislature for a grant of between thirty and forty thousand pounds for such purpose, at any rate in the present state of that district; for notwithstanding the large area of first and second class land which Mr. Hall reports that such line would throw open to occupation,—viz. about 120,000 acres (more than enough to pay the cost of such a work,)—I do not believe that tramways or railways are the styles of thoroughfare suitable for the commencement of the settlement of a district, which is almost literally uninhabited. Since then, however, Mr. Scott's ideas seem to have undergone some considerable modification, and he now begins to think as I do, that common roads are best at first; and though, in the letter which discloses this change of sentiment, I think he proposes too much for the present, I can have no difficulty in recommending his present projects, and if not entirely, at any rate to a considerable extent.

He now proposes to perfect so much of existing roads leading to and through much of the fine lands described by Hall as cannot be travelled by carts (see his letter of the 4th received on the 7th instant); and in a subsequent letter written at my request, 22nd April, he gives estimates of what he considers would be the cost of making the necessary improvements in the various lines which he thinks require attention.

Of the Launceston and Ringarooma Road, he states that the first nineteen miles require nothing expended thereon, as this distance is quite passable for carts already,—that is to the point marked A on the plan. From this point to B (eleven miles) the ground is rough and hilly, and before it can be fitted for carts a great deal of hill-side cutting must be done, for which Mr. Scott puts down, I fear, the too moderate sum of £1300.

The next section of the road, from B to C (seven and a half miles), he thinks would require a further sum of £600 to make it passable; while £800 more would be requisite for opening and completing a portion yet to be explored from the point C to D on the Upper Ringarooma Country. This last sum, of course, is only a guess.

Thus £2700 he thinks would open the Upper Ringarooma (where many selections have lately been made, and to which place public attention is strongly attracted on account of the discoveries of our Surveyors) with Launceston.

That no mistakes may be made, I have, in another letter, asked your sanction to have this road minutely examined by some professional road engineer, that we may be sure the estimate we have before us will really cover the cost of the work, that there may be no going to Parliament a second time for a supplementary sum, or, at any rate, not for any considerable one.

Mr. Scott then proposes a continuation of the road from C of the plan to the point where the Ringarooma River enters the sea; but I should like to have some further information before recommending this just at present. The cost, Mr. Scott thinks, would be £2000. At any rate it may wait for another season, as our hands will be pretty full if we do all we propose elsewhere.

Returning again to the point C, Mr. Scott proposes to complete the road to Bridport, passing through Scott's Country, for which he puts down £1000. This, I submit, is a most important line for settlement, and beg to give it a hearty commendation, though, as in the case of the Ringarooma line, I shall, under sanction, seek further information of its probable cost.

There are other projects mentioned in Mr. Scott's letter for perfecting the Dorset thoroughfares, but they are not of the same urgency as those I am writing about, and must give way to the most important ones, as we shall only complicate and confuse our arrangements if we undertake too much at a time. I would therefore submit that minor roads are made to stand over for a season.

I remain,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer.

J. E. CALDER.

HARBOURS BETWEEN GEORGE'S BAY AND GEORGE TOWN.

Mr. James Scott's Report of the Northern and North-eastern Harbours, written for the information of the Colonial Treasurer, to whom it is submitted.—J. E. CALDER, 2 December, 1863.

Launceston, 30th November, 1863.

SIR,

AGREEABLY to your request, I beg to submit the following Report on the Harbours between George's Bay and George Town.

1st. "The Gardens," at Ethrington Village Reserve, is an open boat harbour to the east winds, surrounded by rocks.

2nd. Anson's River. The ford is about three feet deep at low water, at one mile in from the sea; the entrance from which is narrow, and vessels of only about 60 tons could with safety venture in at high water.

3rd. The Great Muscle Roe River is only about two chains wide at the entrance, and dangerous to get in or out, owing to the sudden turn in the river from east and west to south. The exact depth at the entrance I cannot say, but it is not fordable on foot. The ford is about four feet deep at half a mile in from the entrance.

4th. Little Muscle Roe River is one foot deep on the bar at low water.

5th. The "East Boat Harbour" at Cape Portland is sheltered by Green Island. I have known a vessel of fifty tons there: perhaps larger could lie with safety, but not if the wind is from the east.

6th. The Ringarooma River is open to the west winds; in summer the bar is thrown up with not more than five feet at low water, besides being on a lee shore generally. It is dangerous for a vessel to get in the bay if the river cannot be entered. The entrance is from two to three chains wide at low water. A forty or fifty ton vessel is the utmost that can safely enter. Inside the river is crossed by a flat sand of about three to four feet deep at ebb tide.

7th. Tomahawk River is dry at low water.

8th. At Waterhouse Point boats have loaded wool, but the risk is great, and in rough weather impracticable.

9th. The Great Forester's River, or Bridport, only two feet at low water. The largest vessel that can enter at high water only about thirty-five to forty tons. There is also a dangerous rock in the entrance.

10th. Little Piper's River, dry at low water.

11th. Piper's River. A bar of stones nearly dry at low water in summer. The entrance, from being due east and west then suddenly north and south, is dangerous to go out or in, even to a steamer, as the short distance does not allow the course to be changed before they get on shore. There have been instances of this happening. Between Piper's River and George Town there is no opening of any consequence. There are no means of anchoring off these rivers to wait for the tides to enter them. In summer the bars at the entrances are more thrown up than in winter, when the floods clear them out.

I am,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General,*
Hobart Town.

JAMES SCOTT.

REPORT OF THE LANDS IN THE VICINITY OF THE SANDFLY ROAD.

The Huon Track, 3rd March, 1864.

SIR,

In addition to my former exploration and Report dated 17th January, 1862, I have lately made a more minute examination of the country lying between the North West Bay River and the Huon, comprising the land at the head of Allen's Rivulet, also the large tract of undulating land on the numerous branches of the Sandfly River, with the view of ascertaining more certainly the exact quality of the soil, and the description of timber thereon.

In order to accomplish this more thoroughly, it was deemed advisable to cut various tracks through the dense scrub at intervals of about a mile apart, starting out of the present road, and extending the tracks from about a mile to two and a half miles in length, according as the country presented a favourable prospect.

The extent of land thus opened up amounts to about *fifteen thousand acres*, and I estimate about *two thirds* (or ten thousand acres) of it to be well adapted for cultivation. A very considerable part of it is of a very superior description, consisting of a dark red colored loamy soil of great depth; this sort mostly predominates on lines B. G. H. & L., whilst the lands on the remaining lines A. C. D. E. F. I. & K. contain a very fair proportion of good dark brown soil.

The prevailing timber over nearly the whole district is fine straight Swamp Gum of immense height, and in endless variety, the greater part apparently well suited for splitting purposes. More particularly on lines B. G. H. & F., there are several small knolls of fine Stringy Bark trees, also two or three rather extensive beds of fine Blue Gum timber. Large Silver Wattle trees, of from eighteen inches to upwards of two feet in diameter, are very numerous throughout nearly the whole district; well suited for cask staves.

I estimate the value of the timber on the foregoing lands (when converted into palings or sawed stuff) delivered in Hobart Town, calculating at the very lowest scale possible, at Two hundred and fifty thousand Pounds.

In order to give full accommodation to these lands, a road will be required to be made through the centre of the good lands on the southern side of the present road, while another road should be made to the north, thus allowing all the allotments to have a frontage on a road, and at the same time preserving a more level outlet. A road would also be desirable down the North West Bay slope by Allen's Rivulet to the water-side at North West Bay, or otherwise to join the Huon Road.

These roads might be either common tracks or tramways, but should have an inclination or fall towards the outlet.

On reviewing the matter as affecting the District generally and permanently, I am of opinion that it would be much the better plan to connect the foregoing lands with the new Huon Road, and thus carry the produce direct to the market, as the cost of freight (after it was taken to the Huon or North West Bay) would be an ample charge for the whole carriage direct to Town.

I am quite positive that timber tramways are the best and cheapest modes by which we can get out the produce from the heavily timbered forests, and feel certain that were a single line of tramway laid from the Sandfly Block direct to Hobart Town, using the Huon Road (or the side of it), that it would not only clear its first cost within ten years, but would contribute to the making of numerous off-shoots so as to thoroughly open up the lands of South Buckingham.

I sincerely hope that the Executive will at once initiate the system of tramways into this District, otherwise I am fearful it will sadly retrograde, or in fact go back to nothing.

I remain,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JAMES COMBES.

To J. E. CALDER, *Esq.*, *Surveyor-General*.*ESTIMATED Cost of Tramroads for the Sandfly Country (if taken to Outports.)*

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|----|
| A single line of tramway from the Huon up to the Hill Top at line B on plan, keeping round the Southern side of the Basin, a distance of about ten miles, at £300 per mile..... | 3000 | 0 | 0 |
| A branch out of the above to take the northern side of the Sandfly Basin, and to join the first at line B; say five miles, at £300..... | 1500 | 0 | 0 |
| A line from B on hill down by Allen's Rivulet to the waterside at North West Bay, a distance of about six miles, at £300..... | 1800 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL..... | 6300 | 0 | 0 |

Assumed Traffic.

Say each person splits, on an average, 1000 palings per week, worth 30s. per thousand for carriage.

Fifty men engaged as above, at 30s. each for carriage, makes £75 per week.

£75 per week ; say, 50 for the year = £3750 for gross earnings.

It would take two men and four horses to take out the above 50,000 per week, which would cost somewhere about £10 weekly, or £500 per annum.

£3750 gross earnings; less £500 for working out = £3250 net earnings to go against making road and interest, &c., or 50 per cent. in outlay.

NOTE.—It would take about 26 years to get out the estimated quantity of timber in the district at the above rate.

ESTIMATED Cost of Tramroads for the Sandfly Country (if taken to Hobart Town direct.)

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|----|
| A line from B on Hill back round the southern side of the Sandfly Basin until it reaches the end of Exploration Line I; say a distance of five miles, at £300 per mile..... | 1500 | 0 | 0 |
| A line from B round the northern side of the Sandfly Basin, a distance of about five miles, at £300 per mile..... | 1500 | 0 | 0 |
| A line from B to join the Huon Road, a distance of about five miles, at £300 per mile..... | 1500 | 0 | 0 |
| A line along the Huon Road to the Wharf, Hobart Town, 12½ miles, at £300 per mile..... | 3750 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL..... | 8250 | 0 | 0 |

Same traffic as above, or £3750 from the Sandfly District; an equal amount, or £3750, from the lands along the Huon Road = £7500 gross amount of traffic.

It would take six men and twelve horses to work this traffic through, or £30 per week, or £1500 per annum.

£7500 gross earnings, less £1500 for working; leaving £6000 for net earnings to go against cost of road and interest, or more than 70 per cent. on outlay.

JAMES COMBES.

Huon Track, March 14, 1864.

DETAILED Estimate of Expense of constructing one Mile of Timber Railway (or Tramway.)

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|------|----|----|
| To clearing and levelling (one mile), taking the average cost of the present Sandfly Road | 110. | 0 | 0 |
| To splitting 640 transverse pieces for sleepers, eight feet long by 12 inches × 6 inches, at say 7½d. each | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| To 320 hundred of sawing in rails, 6 inches × 6 inches, at 5s. per hundred | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| To laying and ballasting line, say four men at 5s. each, will be able to complete one chain per diem, or for £1..... | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| Incidental expenses..... | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cost of One Mile..... | 300 | 0 | 0 |

JAMES COMBES.

Huon Track, 14 March, 1864.

I do not think there will be much difference in the expense of constructing either of the lines (per mile), excepting that if the line of Huon Road were converted into a tramway (exclusively) the cost would be something less; but, if there were a reserved space of 8 or 9 feet for horsemen and ordinary carriages, involving the widening it to about 15 feet altogether, it would cost about the same as the lines through the bush; and if more than 8 or 9 feet were required for the ordinary public, it would be cheaper and better to select a new line altogether through the bush at a lower level.

J. C.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE COLONIAL TREASURER.

The Sandfly Road and adjacent Lands.

I HAVE the honor of forwarding a Report* received from Mr. Combes (a District Surveyor of this Department) of a tract of good country lying about fifteen miles south west of Hobart Town, and on each side of the track known as the Sandfly Road.

* A plan to illustrate this Report was sent you some weeks ago.

The land reported on, which the Surveyor estimates (and, I think, rightly) at about fifteen thousand acres, is made up of something like 5000 acres of superior soil; about 5000 more which, though not quite so good as the last named, is still very fair; and about 5000 others which are indifferent or inferior. Of this latter class a good deal lies on either side of the present road.

The land I am describing occupies the bottom of a large hill-encompassed basin. It is generally, though not uniformly, undulating, though seldom so steep as to be obstructive of cultivation, except about parts of the banks of some of the little streams that drain it. These water-courses, when united, form the Sandfly River, which falls into the Huon opposite the upper or northern Egg Island.

In the bed of one of these small streams an impure-looking coal is found, which is the only mineral as yet observed thereikely to possess any economic value.

The whole of the tract, except those spaces marked on the plan "poor," produces very fine forests of trees, the commercial value of which Mr. Combes estimates at a quarter of a million of money. Of these forests, one of the best and most experienced judges of such subjects in Tasmania, who has personally examined them, namely, Mr. Charles Degraives, has pronounced in favour of them in terms admitting of no misconception. This gentleman has told me, and I believe yourself also, that, until he travelled along the Sandfly Road, he had no conception that such magnificent forests as he then saw were to be found anywhere.

The principal timber found here is that producing the ordinary sawing and splitting wood of the Colony; but, in addition to this, there is a large supply of wattle trees of very great size, such as are in great demand at present for the manufacture of casks, many of which were measured by Mr. Combes and myself, and found to be over six feet in circumference.

Excepting in the country between Southport and Port Esperance, I know of no tract southward of Hobart Town so suitable as an "Agricultural Area" block, in connection with the 56th and three following Sections of the present Waste Lands Act, as this is. The idea of adapting it to this purpose, I believe, first occurred to yourself and the Attorney-General, during a journey from the Huon to Hobart Town; so you will have no difficulty in commending it to your colleagues and to Parliament as a fitting site for a Settlement under the clauses in question.

To this important end, and also with a view of turning this place to the best advantage for the Colony, I feel justified in submitting a suggestion of connecting it with the best and nearest shipping place, not by a common road, but by a wooden tramway, on which I would front the lots to be leased under the Agricultural Area Clauses of the Act. If connected with the shipping place by a common road only, its immense stores of timber (which must not be thrown away) will be absolutely half lost to the Colony, unless we provide the means of getting it to the coast disencumbered of a large part of the heavy expenses which attend the carriage of timber along common roads. To give an example of this, I may mention that, at a neighbouring place, about equally distant from the nearest shipping place, the cost of conveyance of manufactured wood is half its value*; fifty palings or fifty feet of sawed stuff being the toll taken on every hundred.

This state of things is, of course, most discouraging to those engaged in an important trade, which languishes rather than lives under such a pernicious system of taxation.

I do not propose troubling you with any remarks about the advantages of tramroads (so usual in discussions of this nature), which no one disputes, and whose tendency is more to swell a report than to contribute to any one's information, nor shall I go into any calculations illustrative of the diminution of the cost of transit by tramroads which always follows their adoption, but shall simply say, that this diminution on a three or four mile line would be, at least, equal to half the cost chargeable on a common road of the same length. But for the use of any one desiring information on these subjects I beg to submit a printed Report by another, where they are elaborately treated.

I must, however, trouble you with some remarks on what I consider to be the proper course of such a line of tramroad as will be necessary to turn the produce of this fine area of land to the best account.

I said before, that it occupies the undulating bottom of a large valley (or rather two valleys), separated by a ridge by which the natural drainage is divided, part taking the direction of the Huon River, and part flowing into North West Bay, three-fifths or more inclining to the river. The great bulk of the good land lies equidistantly between these places.

I should further explain that, from the peculiar configuration of the place, no single road directed through it would be sufficient to drain off more than half its produce, but that a road suiting the whole basin should run right round it, having somewhat the shape of a ring, which, when connected with the coast by as direct a road as can be discovered, may be roughly represented by the small Roman letter q, or, if by a branch continued from the main line, by letter Y. The shipping place should be either at the Huon, nearly opposite the passage between the Egg Islands, or at North West Bay, near a point called the "Chimneys."

* Mr. C. Oates, who is the person doing the carting, so informs me.

The advantage of directing the tramway to the Huon is, that as most of the land in the basin slopes that way, this natural fall (if one may speak of it before survey) seems in favour of all the gradients being descending ones; but, beyond this, I know of no benefit that would be gained by carrying the line that way equal to those presented by adopting the opposite direction; namely, to North West Bay. From either place there would be a good deal of water carriage to reach Hobart Town, to which nine-tenths of the produce will most likely find its way for many years; but the distance from the Huon is something like three to one greater than from North West Bay. The difference of freight between the two places is at present 6*d.* a hundred on palings in favour of North West Bay. Of course cost of freight to Hobart would wholly disappear on all exports destined for foreign marts, if a direct trade were to open between these marts and the places above named; but this does not seem very likely to take place for a long time, considering the general apathy that pervades this community, and the circumspection, almost amounting to distrust, with which it approaches any new enterprise. But when the day arrives that will see the existence of such a trade, I fancy a preference will be given to North West Bay as a port of entry, which is a wide expanse of deep water unencumbered of any difficulties to deter navigation; while the Huon, for two or three miles below the Egg Island Passage, is shallow, and so narrow as hardly to exceed two hundred yards in width anywhere. Another benefit to be gained by directing the line toward North West Bay is, that it would open some good land, while the route by the Sandfly (the only one open to us after leaving the basin) would disclose nothing but what may be safely locked up for ever without much disadvantage to the Colony.

But whichever place we fix on for the terminus of the line, its entire length would be about the same. Such a road, including the circuit of the Sandfly Basin, would be about fifteen miles long, and its cost, which would hardly exceed £600 a mile, including compensation and jetty accommodation, should be about £9000, or say £10,000; which would not be much when weighed against the substantial benefits which the trade of the Colony would derive from the undertaking. Nor need we forget that the lands fit for occupation, that it would make accessible, are at least equal in value to the cost; though, if taken under the Agricultural Area Clauses, the repayment would be slower than if selected under the ordinary conditions of the Act.

It has been proposed to me to recommend the direct Huon Road as a fitting line for a tramway to the basin, but without thought that it is in charge of trustees, who have moved only for improving it as a common road. Its nearest distance to the edge of the basin is fifteen miles. Now, according to the best information I have of cost of transit on a tramroad (6*d.* per 100 for first mile, and 3*d.* for each succeeding mile), the carriage by the direct Huon Road would cost 4*s.* per 100, while it would only be 3*s.* 3*d.* by North West Bay, freight and all included; besides, there are very steep ascending gradients on the Huon Road (1 in 10 for instance), which I do not expect we should have on the North West Bay line.

The survey of the line must not be postponed, if it be approved.

J. E. CALDER.

26th April, 1864.

REPORT OF LANDS BETWEEN THE CARLTON AND CAPE BERNIER, EAST COAST.

Sorell, 7th March, 1864.

SIR,

I HAVE to report the result of an exploration undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining the nature and quality of the land unoccupied in the parishes of Alvanley and Kellevie, Pembroke.

Starting from the end of the road lately cleared by the Government through the tract of good land known as the Carlton Scrubs, I proceeded easterly along the north boundary of the lots measured for sale, and continued still in an easterly direction towards Cape Bernier.

I regret to say, that my course led me through land altogether of the most barren and worthless description, useless for either agricultural or pastoral purposes, and consisting entirely of high stony ranges covered with dense, almost impenetrable scrub (chiefly the wire-weed and prickly wattle), offering a most formidable obstacle to progress.

I crossed in all no less than fourteen gullies; some of them very steep, and all more or less so. Five of them contained constant streams of some size, with a flow to the northward, and supposed to be tributaries of the Tea Tree and Sandspits Rivers. Upon nearing the coast, I crossed a very high range running north and south, with rather better soil on its eastern fence, but still too stony and steep to be likely to become available for settlement. Finding that the country presented an appearance ahead if anything rougher than before, I deviated somewhat from my course, following in a general north-easterly direction the course of the Pine Rivulet to its confluence with the sea.

From the tops of the hills I was able to obtain a good view of the country for some miles north and south, which all presented the same unprepossessing appearance, being apparently composed of nothing but high ranges and deep narrow gorges.

Further examination would, I therefore conclude, involve an unnecessary expenditure of time and money.

This expedition has, I think, established the correctness of an opinion I previously expressed; viz.—that the lots measured by me for sale in the Carlton Scrub embraced all, or very nearly all, the area of available land in the neighbourhood.

I will afford further detail respecting the country examined, upon the map to accompany my Report upon the roads, &c., of the District, now in progress, and for which I have obtained all necessary information.

I propose returning to Hobart Town upon my way to the Franklin on Wednesday next, and

Have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

GEORGE INNES, *District Surveyor*.

J. E. CALDER, *Esquire, Surveyor-General*.

Franklin, Huon, 21st March, 1864.

SIR,

In accordance with your instructions of February last, I have thoroughly examined the existing road from Sorell to Bream Creek, together with a branch of the same to the Carlton Scrub.

In order to render my Report as clear and concise as possible, I have considered it best to present the detailed information, estimates, &c., in the form of an Appendix, which has been carefully prepared from the information I have obtained, and from notes taken during chain measurements.

The work upon which I have been engaged suggests the following as subjects for consideration:—

1st. The importance of good roads as means of communication, with their influence upon agricultural prosperity.

2nd. The connection that exists, particularly in our own Colony, between agriculture and commerce, with the influence that the prosperity or otherwise of the one exerts upon the other. And,

3rd. The particular advantages which the formation of the two lines of road especially referred to may reasonably be supposed to confer upon the trade of the south.

1st.—Importance of good Roads, &c.

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of good roads as internal lines of communication. They are, if not a source, at least unfailing indications of national prosperity, of which we have abundant proof in the past and present history of our Mother-country, of America, and of the great Continental Nations. A glance at the map of the world will show us that those countries which have attained the highest stage of civilisation and general advancement are also those in which the facilities for locomotion and inter-communication are the most extended and abundant.

It may not be out of place here to quote the opinion of a writer (Gregory) on this subject, who says,—“The absence of good roads to facilitate general intercourse is a barrier to national advancement in science, arts, manufactures, trade, commerce, agriculture, and every other thing calculated to increase the amount of human happiness. Without good roads, by which to bring manure from one place to another, the natural sterility of some soils would render them still unproductive, notwithstanding the care and attention bestowed on them by the farmer, whilst the spontaneous produce of the most luxuriant soil is considerably deteriorated by the difficulty and expense consequent upon the want of easy access to a market.”

Whatever arguments may be adduced in favour of rail or tramroads may, with equal effect, be employed also in favour of common roads, which are, in fact, but the pioneers of the former, tending, by increase of settlement, manufactures, agriculture, and commerce, to prepare the way for their successful introduction; and although grave doubts may, and do exist, whether the population of our Colony is yet sufficiently large, or our resources yet sufficiently developed, to warrant us in initiating the more expensive system of railways, it is, I believe, almost universally admitted, that improved facilities for traffic and internal communication throughout the Island are not only desirable but urgently needed.

In the present age of competition and progress, we must not expect to keep pace with those around us unless we are prepared to take advantage of every opportunity tending to place us upon a footing of equality with them; nor can it be denied that, notwithstanding the many advantages we can offer both in climate and soil, the occupation and settlement of the Waste Lands of the Colony is not progressing as rapidly as it should do: and it is also equally true, that numbers of the industrial classes, whom it is our special object to retain, are daily leaving us. We cannot, indeed, expect it to be otherwise, until something is done to render our “Lands” not only available as to price and terms of purchase, but also accessible as to facilities for communication and conveyance of produce. Of what avail is it to expatiate to an intending settler upon the remarkable fertility of our heavily wooded lands, or upon the value in the market of the timber they produce, while we are unprepared to answer the natural query in such a case, as to how the said market is to be reached, and at what cost?

With reference to the influence of good roads upon agricultural prosperity, another author (Donaldson) writes as follows :—

“ It may be very safely affirmed, that the making of roads as convenient lines of communication are the first improvements to be done in any country. * * *

When roads are in bad repair, the wheel-carriages are broken, the animals of draught are distressed, and small loads are transported,—circumstances which operate against the prosperity of agricultural undertakings.”

Notwithstanding that so much has been said and written to the same effect as the foregoing, the subject appears to have been hitherto overlooked or neglected in this Colony, the roads being, with some very few exceptions, mere bush-tracks, unformed, unmade, and undrained, and consequently often impassable, or nearly so; by which (setting aside all other considerations) the cost of transport of produce is enhanced to an exorbitant degree.

2nd.—The Connection that exists, particularly in our own Colony, between Agriculture and Commerce, &c.

In this, as in most newly settled countries, the community may be said to consist of but two distinct classes. First, those engaged in the cultivation of the soil, or otherwise rendering available its natural products; and, secondly, those whose business it is to supply the various requirements (whether necessities or luxuries) of the former, dealing with them for the produce they have to dispose of.

Prosperity with the farmer, with the grazier, or with the splitter, means an increase in the payment he receives for his labour, or as interest for the capital he has embarked in his particular pursuit, and must arise from one of two causes; viz., either from the improved value of the description of produce he may have to dispose of, or from a decrease in the cost of production or transport to a market.

Prosperity with the merchant, the tradesman, and the mechanic, implies either an advance in the markets individually affecting them,—thus securing a larger return for their money or labour,—or else an increase in the number or means of their customers, creating an extension of business, more profitable employment for ships and surplus capital, improved facilities for trading, &c. It follows, therefore, as a matter of course, that causes tending to depress the agricultural or producing interests of the Colony must have a corresponding effect upon trade and mercantile operations; and on the other hand, that the advantages arising from any measures for improving the condition and prospects of the one class must be, to a considerable extent, shared by the other.

Having shown, under the two preceding heads, the importance of good roads, first to the agricultural, and secondly, through them, indirectly, to the mercantile class, it only remains to consider, lastly, How far the construction of the two particular lines of road referred to will tend to promote the object in view?

It has hitherto been too much the custom, in the consideration of any projects involving an expenditure of the Public Funds, to test the same by reference only to their direct and tangible reproductiveness. It is to be hoped, however, that broader and more comprehensive views on these subjects are beginning to be generally entertained.

In this case, indeed, it may not be possible to point to extensive tracts of agricultural land, or forests of valuable timber, still the property of the Colony, to be opened up and rendered productive, or yet, as with proposed railways or tramroads, to the profits to accrue from the working of the same; but, nevertheless, taking into consideration the importance of the Sorell District, and its position with regard to the Capital of the Colony, the advantages to be derived from the works proposed are, if not so direct, at least as real and substantial.

It appears by the Returns of Stock and Crop, that the Sorell District (which includes Lower Settlement, Bream Creek, and part of Orielton) is estimated to grow this year (1864) :—

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 30,500 bushels Wheat. | 380 bushels Grass Seed. |
| 24,000 bushels Barley. | 354 bushels Tares. |
| 16,400 bushels Oats. | 374 tons Potatoes. |
| 160 bushels Rye. | 711 tons Mangold Wurtzel. |
| 12,000 bushels Peas. | 1640 tons Hay. |
| 1600 bushels Beans. | 55 tons Turnips. |

making (in round numbers) 85,000 bushels, 2800 tons of agricultural produce,—a very large yield, and proving that this District still deserves the reputation it has hitherto held of being the granary of the south, and establishing its claim for consideration in the event of the carrying out of any scheme having for its object the improvement of the Public Roads of the Colony.

The present road from Sorell to Bream Creek passes through, or forms the outlet for, a considerable area of agricultural land already under cultivation, for the most part of superior quality; and its terminus, the settlement of Bream Creek, is a place fast rising into importance, owing to the increase of population and the superior quality of the soil. A considerable quantity of crown land has been selected in the neighbourhood under *The Waste Lands Act*, and is situate in what is known as the Ragged Tier; there being still about one thousand or fifteen hundred acres for sale. It is heavily timbered with dense scrub, and of the most fertile character, and it is most probable that nearly all of it will very soon be alienated. The state of the roads is, however, a great drawback to the settlers in this locality; they having at present to convey

their produce some 9 or 10 miles to East Bay Neck, along a very bad road; from thence it has to be shipped to Hobart Town at a high rate of freight. The improvement of the road to Sorell and the completion of the Sorell Causeway would be a material benefit, enabling the produce to be carted direct to Town, at less expense and much greater convenience to the cultivator.

The road from Sorell to the Carlton Scrubs also passes through very much of the best agricultural land, being, indeed, one of the principal roads in the District for the conveyance of produce; and at its terminus (the Carlton Scrub) there are some 2000 acres of the finest agricultural land, still the property of the Public: it is at some distance (about 14 miles) from a shipping place, and at present the road leading to it is in such a bad state of repair that it is hardly likely to find purchasers. It is also the case that some of the farmers upon this road have left off growing crops owing to the impossibility of conveying them at a reasonable cost to a market.

Although these two roads are the principal, there are others, the construction or improvement of which is necessary to complete and render perfect the means of communication between this District and Hobart Town, being—

- 1st. The construction of a line of road connecting Buckland with Sorell.
- 2nd. The improvement of the existing road to Richmond; and
- 3rd. The improvement of the existing road to the Carlton and East Bay Neck.

The construction of a shorter and more practicable route to Buckland is most desirable, as forming an important link in the chain of communication connecting that place, Spring Bay, and the whole of the East Coast with Hobart Town. The line proposed is an entirely new one, following an almost direct course between the two townships. There is much difference of opinion with reference to its practicability, which it requires further examination of the country to establish to satisfaction. The road, if practicable, will be somewhat expensive, a considerable amount of side-cutting being required.

The road to Richmond is of some, but chiefly of local importance: it is in very bad repair, and in the winter almost impassable.

The same may be said with regard to the road to Carlton and East Bay Neck, excepting that it is in better repair. These places being on the coast, and having each their respective shipping places, consequently the heavy traffic between them and Sorell would be inconsiderable.

In conclusion I may, however, observe, that other considerations are involved in the question of the improvement of the road communication of the district of Sorell besides the mere cheapening the cost of carriage of produce,—particularly taken in connection with the Sorell Causeway, which it is to be presumed will ultimately be completed as originally projected and commenced. Amongst them may be enumerated,—

The encouragement thereby offered to the land proprietors or agriculturists, inducing personal residence, and the expenditure of capital in desirable and permanent improvements.

The establishment of periodical markets for the sale of produce, store, and fat stock, &c.; thereby tending to promote improvement in the system of farming, and to supply at least a portion of the meat which we are now obliged to import at so large a pecuniary cost to the Colony.

The cheaper and more rapid conveyance of the lighter descriptions of produce, such as fruit, vegetables, butter, eggs, &c.

Increased facilities for the conveyance of mails, &c.

The detailed information, estimates, &c. referring to each line of road will, as observed before, be found in the accompanying Appendix.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

GEORGE INNES, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General.*

APPENDIX TO REPORT.

DESCRIPTIVE Remarks, Bream Creek Road, with references to Sketch.

A. to B., 36 Chains.—Starting from bridge over Sorell Rivulet. Road in very good order; would be better for a drain on one side.

B. to C., 21 Chains.—Rough and stony, good bottom; requires drain (both sides), surface forming and levelling.

From C. a considerable improvement may be made in direction; reducing the distance, cutting off angles, and lessening descent to, and ascent from, the Iron Rivulet. Alteration about sixty chains.

C. to D., 80 Chains.—A bad piece of road; steep in places; soil soft but stony; ford bad and subject to floods.

After crossing the rivulet the road rises a hill (rough and stony); the surface much cut by water; bottom chiefly good; would require draining, forming, and making in places.

D. to E., 10 Chains.—Good hard bottom (white loam); drain both sides, and forming.

E. to F., 92 Chains.—Hard white loam, alternating with sand and gravel; clay subsoil; very good bottom; requires partially clearing; cutting in places (very slight); drain one or both sides, and forming.

An alteration in direction is suggested, cutting off the angle at F., and thereby shortening the distance.

F. to G., 52 Chains.—White loam alternating with sand (hard), has been recently improved by the Road Trust; drain one or both sides, and forming.

An alteration is suggested from G., avoiding the sharp angles of the present road; taking better ground (for road purposes), and shortening distance.

G. to H., 43 Chains.—Soft (agricultural) soil; road much cut up by traffic and water; requires drain both sides, forming, and making in places.

H. to J., 14 Chains.—Soft soil,—better bottom; drain both sides and forming, &c.

J. to K., 37 Chains.—Good bottom (gravel and loam); stony and rough in places; drain both sides; cutting as required, and forming.

K. to L., 15 Chains.—White loam and gravel; very good bottom; drain one side and forming.

L. to M., 80 Chains.—White loam and gravel alternating with sand (hard); clay subsoil; requires clearing; drain one or both sides; cutting in places (slight), and forming.

M. to N., 40 Chains.—White loam and gravel; drain one or both sides, and forming.

N. to O., 40 Chains.—Alternately sand and gravel; very much cut up by traffic and water; part has been improved recently; drain (chiefly one side); cutting (slight); making in places, and forming.

O. to P., 40 Chains.—White loam and gravel alternating with sand; drain (chiefly one side); clearing, cutting, (slight) and forming.

P. to Q., 40 Chains.—Rising hill; stone and gravel alternating with sand, white loam, &c.; drain one side; clearing, cutting (slight) in places, and forming.

Q. to R., 80 Chains.—Sandy loam (chiefly hard), much destroyed by water in places; drain (chiefly one side), and forming.

R. to S., 20 Chains.—Hard gravel and stony; descending hill to Tanner's Rivulet (rather steep); drain one side; cutting in places, and forming.

An alteration in the line of road can be made here to advantage, reducing the descent of hill.

S. to T., 20 Chains.—Hard gravel, stony, alternating with sand; requires drains one side; cutting (slight) and forming; has been improved recently.

T. to U., 40 Chains.—Hard white loam alternating with sand and yellow clay; has been partly improved recently; drain one side, cutting (slight) and forming.

U. to V., 40 Chains.—Known as the Red Hill; has been recently improved by cutting, &c.; red gravelly soil; very good bottom; drain one side; cutting (slight) and forming.

May be much improved by slight alterations in line of road.

V. to W., 80 Chains.—Hard sandy loam alternating with soft sand; very bad in places, and much cut up by water, &c; drain (chiefly both sides) making where soft, and forming.

W. to X., 40 Chains.—Descending to Carlton River; hard gravel, sometimes rough and stony; drain one side; cutting (slight) and forming.

X. to Y., 40 Chains.—Crosses Carlton River; hard gravel and stone; road pretty good; drain one side and forming.

Y. to Z., 40 Chains.—Sand (hard and soft alternately); boggy in places; drain both sides, making where bad, and forming.

Z. to *a.* 120 Chains.—Hard sand and gravel alternating with soft places; very much cut up; drain (chiefly both sides) making where bad, and forming.

a. to *b.*, 90 Chains.—Yellow clay and gravel alternating with white loam and sand; much cut up in places; drain, both sides (chiefly), making where bad, and forming.

From about *b.* it will be better to take an entire new line to Bream Creek, thereby avoiding the steepness of the present one.

b. to *c.*, 43 Chains.—Gravel, stony, and rough—soft soil; would require drain both sides, making in places, and forming.

c. to *d.*, about 110 Chains.—This portion of the existing road will have to be entirely abandoned, it being so steep as to be hardly practicable, and so much cut up as to be almost beyond repair.

It has been proposed to form a new road along the side line (north-west boundary of Hugh M'Ginness' 320 acre); but I should rather recommend the alteration referred to above, commencing at *b.*, or thereabouts.

SPECIFICATION of Works suggested to be done in the Improvement of the Bream Creek Road, upon which the Estimates are based. The same also refer to the Carlton Scrub Road.

1st. Draining.—The drains to be made on one or both sides of the road, as the nature of the ground may require, and of the shape and dimensions shown by Diagram No. 4.

2nd. Forming.—The surface of the road to be rounded up, as shown by Diagram No. 5. Having a width between the drains of at least 18 feet; 7½ feet from each side of centre to be properly cleared of all growing trees, stumps, roots, large stones, or other obstructions, and rendered fit for traffic.

Inside cutting.—The form to be as shown by Diagram No. 6, the road being sloped at an angle of 45°, and a clear space of 2 feet left between the base of cutting and edge of drain, the roadway being left at least 15 feet wide.

3rd. Making.—All holes to be filled up with good sound material (stones when procurable), boggy and soft places being made solid, either with stones or timber, as most convenient, in a substantial manner and sufficiently covered with hard material, gravel if possible.

From the foregoing remarks, it will be seen that the general course of this road is through a country comparatively level, and highly favourable in every respect for road-making, the character of the soil being for the most part of an inferior nature (either sand or sandy loam) and with good drainage, which is the most important particular. The natural surface would in most cases suffice to support the traffic at all seasons of the year.

With regard to direction, it is, however, capable of considerable improvement in many places besides those shown upon the sketch; indeed it would require properly defining throughout before any important works were commenced.

I should recommend causeways at the crossings of the streams in the place of bridges, being less likely to be damaged or carried away by floods.

The total distance from Bream Creek to Sorell is about 17½ miles.

DESCRIPTIVE Remarks.—Carlton Scrub Road.

A. to B., 36 Chains.—From Sorell Bridge, described before under heading of “Bream Creek Road.”

B. to C., 34 Chains.—Soft agricultural soil; rough and stony in places; requires drain both sides, and forming.

C. to D., 70 Chains.—Same as above; drain one side cutting (slight) in places, and forming.

D. to E., 20 Chains.—Gravel; drain one side, and forming.

E. to F., 90 Chains.—Soft soil; drain one or both sides as required; cutting (slight) in places, and forming.

F. to G., 28 Chains.—Soft soil; bad in places; drain both sides, making where requisite, and forming.

A slight alteration may be made to advantage from G., reducing the steepness of descent to the creek.

G. to H., 47 Chains.—Soft soil; steep and much cut up in places; drain both sides, making as required and forming.

H. to J., 5 Chains.—Stony and rough; drain both sides, make and form.

J. to K., 50 Chains.—Chiefly white loam; good bottom, but bad in places; drain one side, making where required, and forming.

It will be necessary to alter the line of road from here, it being too near the creek, and subject to be washed away by floods.

K. to L., 24 Chains.—Very rough and much cut up by the floods; would require drain one side, making and forming.

L. to M., 6 Chains.—Very bad indeed, the road being in the bed of the creek. To make it good would require a causeway, which would also be liable to be washed away by floods.

The line of road should be altered to avoid this, crossing either lower down or higher up.

M. to N., 50 Chains.—Ascending hill; very rough and stony; drain one or both sides, and forming.

N. to O., 60 Chains.—White loam and sand; good bottom; drain both sides and forming.

From here the road is in a very bad state of repair, and it would cost more to make it good than to construct a new one. Two or three different routes are suggested, avoiding the hills in the present road; but further examination is requisite to decide upon either. The distance to the commencement of the “Carlton Scrub Road” is about four miles, making in all ten and a half miles.

This line of road passes chiefly through a description of land unfavorable for road-making, it being for the most part soft agricultural soil, consequently the expense of making will be proportionately greater than in the case of the Bream Creek Road, and without metal (not provided for in the estimate) it will not be so substantial a work. With thorough drainage, however, (which is a most important consideration in road-making) and a proper form of surface, it will at least be greatly improved and rendered passable at nearly all times, which it is not at present.

The newly made line of road to and through the Carlton Scrubs is in fair order and available for traffic, excepting that there are a few trees fallen across it, and the drains are somewhat filled in.

Estimates.—Bream Creek Road.

| <i>Chains.</i> | <i>Per Rod.</i> | <i>£ s. d.</i> | <i>Chains.</i> | <i>Per Rod.</i> | <i>£ s. d.</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| A to B 36 at 2s. 0d. | | 14 8 0 | S to T 20 .. 3s. 0d. | | 12 0 0 |
| B to C 21 .. 5s. 0d. | | 21 0 0 | T to U 40 .. 2s. 6d. | | 20 0 0 |
| C to D 80 .. 5s. 0d. | | 80 0 0 | U to V 40 .. 3s. 6d. | | 28 0 0 |
| D to E 10 .. 4s. 0d. | | 8 0 0 | V to W 80 .. 5s. 6d. | | 88 0 0 |
| E to F 92 .. 3s. 6d. | | 64 8 0 | W to X 40 .. 4s. 6d. | | 36 0 0 |
| F to G 52 .. 2s. 0d. | | 20 16 0 | X to Y 40 .. 3s. 0d. | | 24 0 0 |
| G to H 43 .. 10s. 0d. | | 86 0 0 | Y to Z 40 .. 3s. 6d. | | 28 0 0 |
| H to J 14 .. 5s. 0d. | | 14 0 0 | Z to a 120 .. 5s. 6d. | | 132 0 0 |
| J to K 37 .. 3s. 6d. | | 25 18 0 | a to b 90 .. 5s. 0d. | | 90 0 0 |
| K to L 15 .. 3s. 0d. | | 9 0 0 | b to c 43 .. 7s. 0d. | | 60 4 0 |
| L to M 80 .. 3s. 6d. | | 56 0 0 | c to d 110 .. 5s. 0d. | | 110 0 0 |
| M to N 40 .. 3s. 6d. | | 28 0 0 | Causeway Iron Rivulet | | 120 0 0 |
| N to O 40 .. 3s. 0d. | | 24 0 0 | Ditto Tanner ditto | | 30 0 0 |
| O to P 40 .. 3s. 6d. | | 28 0 0 | Ditto Carlton River | | 70 0 0 |
| P to Q 40 .. 3s. 0d. | | 24 0 0 | | | |
| Q to R 80 .. 3s. 0d. | | 48 0 0 | | | |
| R to S 20 .. 4s. 6d. | | 18 0 0 | | | |
| | | | | | <u>£1417 14 0</u> |

Estimates.—Carlton Scrub Road.

| <i>Chains.</i> | <i>Per Rod.</i> | <i>£</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> | <i>Chains.</i> | <i>Per Rod.</i> | <i>£</i> | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|--|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| A to B, 36 chains, included in other Estimates. | | | | | K to L 24 .. | 10s. 0d. | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| B to C 34 at | 5s. 6d. | 37 | 8 | 0 | L to M 6 .. | 30s. 0d. | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| C to D 70 .. | 3s. 6d. | 49 | 0 | 0 | M to N 50 .. | 8s. 0d. | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| D to E 20 .. | 2s. 6d. | 10 | 0 | 0 | N to O 60 .. | 4s. 6d. | 54 | 0 | 0 |
| E to F 90 .. | 4s. 0d. | 72 | 0 | 0 | Remaining distance, about 4 miles, averaged at 5s. per rod..... | | | | |
| F to G 28 .. | 5s. 0d. | 28 | 0 | 0 | Causeway, Iron Rivulet..... | | | | |
| G to H 47 .. | 7s. 0d. | 65 | 16 | 0 | | | | | |
| H to J 5 .. | 10s. 0d. | 10 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
| J to K 50 .. | 3s. 6d. | 35 | 0 | 0 | | | | | |
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THE WHOLE COLONY.

| | 1848. | 1862. |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Wheat | 1,153,313 bushels. | 1,008,569 bushels. |
| Barley | 331,184 " | 199,310 " |
| Oats | 756,762 .. " | 737,633 " |
| Peas | 12,900 " | 24,354 " |
| Beans | 1805 " | 7964 " |
| Hay | 67,155 tons. | 54,506 tons. |
| Potatoes | 18,231 " | 39,553 " |
| Turnips | 41,241 " | 6237 " |
| Mangold | No Return. | 16,442 " |

In discussing the subject of the possibility of reviving the agriculture of the south, it was thought that a good deal might be done to this end by improving the inland communications; and it was considered that where so much good might be done it was, at least, worth a trial, under the reasonable belief that wherever the public thoroughfares are made good, the condition of the farmer is also improved, by leaving in his pocket the difference between the cost of conveyance on good roads and its cost on bad ones, beside the diminution in the wear and tear of drays, draught cattle, &c., and the gain in time; for even a few pence saved on every bushel of grain, or a few shillings per ton on root crops, will, in most cases, go far to cover the rent of a farm. The once great agricultural district of Sorell was then named for the experiment.

It may be said, that a high-priced labour has had something to do with the decay of agriculture in the south; but it is hard to maintain this opinion when we see it year after year extending itself throughout the northern counties in face of this disadvantageous circumstance.

Mr. Innes, to whose Plans and Report I must refer you for details, estimates the cost of making the Sorell and Bream Creek Road a good trafficable one at about £1420; and that leading from the first-named place to the Carlton Scrub at very nearly £900,—though it is to be observed that the latter road will require metalling in many parts, that it will be safe to add another £1000 to the cost for that work, but as I think the estimate is rather under the mark it would be safer to put the total cost at—(say) £4500.

The good agricultural land of the district that is still the property of the Crown Mr. Innes estimates at 3500 acres; which, if roads are made, will assuredly be disposed of, before many years are passed, at a price not far short of the expenditure said to be necessary for these roads.

Of late it has been so much the custom to look only to the direct advantages derivable from the expenditure of public funds, that it is almost hazardous to say that this is not nearly so material a subject for consideration as the general benefits that a well-directed outlay confers on the public by whom that revenue is produced. I humbly submit that our principal concern in the matter should be for the advancement of trade, and the consequent increase of general prosperity, in comparison with which all mere fiscal calculations are inconsiderable; though, if the effect of our expenditure be the advancement of the general good, we may be assured of the Public Revenues increasing in a greater degree by thus improving the condition of the farmer than by the profits of Land Sales.

But, as the making and repairing of roads in the District of Sorell is entrusted by law to the Municipality, it will be obviously out of the question for the Government to undertake any portion of the management of the same independently of the local authorities. All it can do will be to offer its co-operation in the event of Parliament providing a grant in aid of such an object as the improvement of the thoroughfares of the agricultural districts of the Colony; and, as a preliminary step toward this co-operation, I would respectfully suggest the propriety of forwarding Mr. Innes' Plans and Report to the Warden of Sorell, with a request to be favoured with the opinions of himself and colleagues on the general soundness of the views contained in the Report in relation to the improvement of the roads he has surveyed, and of the value of his estimates; and if they please to accept the offer of Government co-operation (subject, of course, to the action of Parliament), that they will be good enough to say what sum they would require to be added to so much of their own local rates as they may feel justified in expending in the improvement of the roads from Sorell to Bream Creek, and from Sorell to the Carlton Scrub, as will enable them to finish them in a twelve-month or so. On the subject of making a road from Sorell to Prosser's Plains their views may also be asked.

J. E. CALDER.

18th April, 1864.