

(No. 74.)



1888.

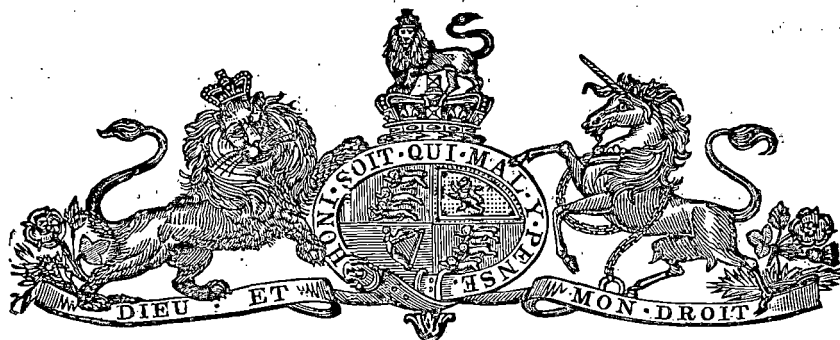
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

TASMANIAN RAILWAYS:

REPORT OF ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF, AND CORRESPONDENCE
RELATING THERETO.

Return to an Order of the House of Assembly, Session 1884. (Mr. Dooley.)

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, June 20, 1888; and ordered by
the House of Assembly to be printed, June 22, 1888.



*Public Works Department, Engineer-in-Chief's Office,
Hobart, 12th May, 1888.*

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY—SESSION 1884.

Order No. 6. Mr. Dooley.

"That the Engineer-in-Chief shall furnish, annually, on or before the meeting of Parliament, a Report upon the condition and requirements of the Permanent Way, Rolling Stock, and Station accommodation of all Railways in Tasmania, distinguishing what is chargeable to repairs and maintenance from what is chargeable to construction and supply of Rolling Stock."

SIR,

In obedience to the above Order, I have the honor to report as follows:—

MAIN LINE RAILWAY.

This has been dealt with in the usual special and separate Report.

NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

Permanent Way.—On the Launceston and Deloraine Section this is generally in good order, the exceptions being due to bad usage,¹ or insufficiency of provision for maintenance in the past. The reduction of the gauge shortly will afford an abundance of surplus ballast of very good quality, which is most needed between Evandale and Launceston.

The timber bridges still continue to require repairs and patching, and one in particular (A.) (Loone's), to which attention has been previously called² is in a very bad state, but temporarily propped with sleepers. (B.) Westbury Bridge will require early attention³; the condition of others has been improved since last Report. (C.) The Longford Bridge has not yet been painted, but is to be taken in hand shortly. It is of great importance that the costly iron bridges should not be allowed to deteriorate for the sake of a little expense in painting.

(D.) On the Deloraine and Formby section the waste and settlement on embankments require to be made up, and some additional ballasting done for security under occasional high speeds⁴. I should think £200 would suffice for this, and the amount is very moderate for a new Line upon which no ballast train has yet been out since it was opened.

Rolling Stock.—Appears to be all in good order. A large amount of the old broad-gauge stock has been converted to narrow-gauge requirements by the Locomotive Superintendent in a manner which is very satisfactory.

Stations.—Buildings at some minor Stations referred to in previous Report are in poor order, but funds have been provided for necessary repairs and improvements. At Dulverton there would appear to be a necessity for road connection with the Settlements near.

FINGAL RAILWAY.

Permanent Way.—Is in very good order, but small quantities of ballast are required in places, and the waste of earthworks made up, but not to any large extent. The various bridges are in good order, and only require some further screwing up and wedging after the long dry season. (E.) One bridge, at 45m. 1ch., has been badly scoured, and requires some stone pitching.⁵

¹ What is meant by "bad usage?"—E.B.

² Put up correspondence.—E.B.

³ Has condition of Westbury bridge been reported?—E.B.

⁴ It should be stated here what Engineer-in-Chief recommended, and what was voted and expended.—E.B.

⁵ What about fencing and shortness of ballast in places?—E.B.

Rolling Stock.—Is in good order. The carriages in use are the old converted broad-gauge stock. There was a recent proposal for additional carriage stock for this Line, but it hardly seems advisable until the traffic shows some signs of improvement, and special demands could possibly be always provided for from outside.

Stations.—Are in good order, and accommodation at present in excess of requirements, except at Conara Junction, and there I think some alteration or addition to improve the facilities for interchange of traffic is necessary.

PARATTAH AND OATLANDS RAILWAY.

Permanent Way, Rolling Stock, and Station are in good order. The old Mersey rails answer very well for the traffic, and the road is now well consolidated.

DERWENT VALLEY RAILWAY.

(*North Bridgewater to Plenty Station.*)

*Permanent Way*⁶.—Is in good order, although the necessity for running with tender of engine in front tried some of the curves at first. The road under the Derbyshire Rocks being now well consolidated and protected by signals and watchmen, it is desirable to consider if the very slow speed could not be improved.

Rolling Stock.—Is in good order.

Stations.—Are in good order, and a footbridge for the security of passengers is being erected at Bridgewater Junction.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

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

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

MEMO. as to distribution of charges—Items A. B. C., maintenance; Item D., maintenance £100, construction £100; Item E., maintenance.

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Hobart, 28th May, 1888.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to reply to your queries on my Report dated 12th instant in their order, as below:—

¹*North-Western Railway.*—By “bad usage” I mean the crippling of the rails, which, I was informed, had been done by Contractors during construction.

²*Loone's Bridge.*—Correspondence attached.

³*Westbury Bridge* was included generally with the whole of the timber bridges referred to in previous Reports as requiring repairs, many of which have since been attended to.

⁴*Deloraine to Formby Section.*—I recommended £200 out of £400 asked for by Manager last year for widening the original tramway banks, as in going through the Manager's estimates you invited me to suggest reductions where I thought they were practicable, but an Engineer being sent out to examine the work proposed, advised the full amount being kept (£400). It was a difference of opinion, and I deferred to Manager because he had to take the responsibility of traffic. Amount expended, as per advices from Manager, is £388 3s.

⁵*Fingal Railway.*—The fencing did not appear to require any especial comment, and does not come within the strict terms of my instruction under head of “permanent way,” but at your request I have dealt with the subject at length in a special Report. The small quantity of ballast can be put on by repairers in the usual course.

⁶*Derwent Valley Railway.*—I respectfully submit that my Report should be independent of Manager's views; and as there may be a doubt as to my moderate suggestion coming within the terms of my instructions, I have no objection to excise it on those grounds.

I have, &c.

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

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

⁶ Opinion of Manager should be taken before report is printed.—E.B.

EXTRACT FROM ENGINEER'S REPORT ON DERWENT VALLEY RAILWAY.

“(North Bridgewater to Plenty Station.)

“*Permanent Way* is in good order, although the necessity for running with tender of engine in front tried some of the curves at first. The road under the Derbyshire Rocks being now well consolidated and protected by signals and watchmen, it is desirable to consider if the very slow speed could not be improved.

“*Rolling Stock* is in good order.

“*Stations* are in good order, and a footbridge for the security of passengers is being erected at Bridgewater Junction.”

REFERRED, by order of Minister, to the General Manager for his remarks.

W. SMITH, C.C.P.W.
1. 6. 88.

MR. Dowling, for your Report.—F. B.
4. 6. 88.

Hon. the Minister.

I ENDORSE Mr. Dowling's Report. I propose to explain to you at an interview where I have a right to come upon construction funds to complete this line.

The question of speed over joint occupation, I take it, hardly comes within the provisions of the Engineer-in-Chief.

FRED. BACK.
6. 6. 88.

Tasmanian Government Railways.
Engineer's Office, Launceston, 6th June, 1888.

MEMO. for the General Manager.

Bridgewater to Plenty.

“*Permanent Way* is in good order, &c.”

THE location of this line, containing so many compounded sharp curves, sparsely ballasted, and with very indifferent quality, renders it difficult to maintain a first-class condition. The road is imbedded in the formation, and ballast must be provided shortly to render it practicable to secure a condition demanded for the rate of speed run, and the reasonable protection of the way from undue depreciation. This weakness, and consequent increase of labour, involves the necessity for a full staff for some time to come.

Any available ballast immediately in the vicinity of the various sections (which, unfortunately, is very scarce, and consists chiefly of large stone, requiring to be hand-broken) is daily secured by the staff, or the present condition could not have been retained. The very dry season has also materially assisted, but it will be a positive necessity before long to provide a ballast-train to make up this deficiency.

“*Stations* are in good order, &c.”

These buildings were hurriedly erected with very green timber, and consequently exhibit such signs of shrinkage, &c. as to render it compulsory to give them a thorough overhaul at once to secure a satisfactory condition.

L. DOWLING.

CORRESPONDENCE re *Timber Bridges* referred to in second foot-note on *Engineer-in-Chief's Report*, 12th May, 1888.

MEMO.

“THE Public Works Execution Bill, 1886,” contained the following item :—

North-Western Line.
Renewal of timber bridges £1500

The item was struck out in the Legislative Council, on 1st December, 1886.

*Tasmanian Government Railways.
Public Works Office, Hobart, 2nd December, 1886.*

<i>North-Western Line.</i>	<i>£</i>
Item 18—Renewal of Rails, &c.	2500
Item 19—Renewal of timber Bridges.....	1500

SIR,

As I notice that these items of the Public Works Execution Bill have been struck out in the Legislative Council, I have the honor to point out to you the desirability, and, indeed, the urgency, for their being reinstated.

I recommended the adoption of these sums as the minimum amounts required consistent with the safety of the traffic, and if they are disallowed I must request to be relieved from responsibility in the matter.

In reference especially to the item *re* Bridges, (which, with the permanent way, I had examined throughout), the bridge known as "Loone's" was originally a very poor construction, and is now in a very indifferent condition indeed for the support of the heavy engines. It was intended to renew the abutments, wings, and piles of this bridge in cement concrete if the vote was passed.

I have, &c.

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

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

*Tasmanian Government Railways.
Manager's Office, Launceston, 24th March, 1887.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to bring under your notice the unsafe condition of the railway bridge on the Western Line known as "Loone's Bridge"—sometimes called Quamby Brook Bridge. The Engineer-in-Chief has reported on this matter. This bridge is so unsafe that it should not be allowed to go any longer without attention. Should an accident happen the Staff can hardly be held responsible.

I have the honor to recommend that the suggestions of the Engineer-in-Chief be acted upon without delay, as I consider the matter most important, and that any delay will incur risk to both life and property.

I have, &c.

FRED. BACK, *General Manager.*

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works, Hobart.

REFERRED to the Engineer-in-Chief.

NICHOLAS J. BROWN.
25. 3. 87.

I QUITE concur with the Manager that this bridge should have prompt attention, and recommend that survey and plan with estimate be made at once.

J. FINCHAM, *Engineer-in-Chief.*
25. 3. 87.

APPROVED.

NICHOLAS J. BROWN.
25. 3. 87.

MEMO.

WORK was included in item of £1500 towards renewal of timber bridges in Public Works Scheme, but it did not receive the sanction of the Legislature.

J. FINCHAM.
26. 5. 88.

NORTH-WESTERN LINE.

Public Works Office, 25th March, 1887.

Loone's Bridge.

THE Honorable the Minister has authorised me to obtain a working plan and estimate. I will have them made directly I can get survey, which will be without delay.

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

To the Manager.

7

NORTH-WESTERN LINE.

Public Works Office, 25th March, 1887.

Loone's Bridge.

I AM going to have drawing and estimate made here in order to erection of new bridge. Can you furnish survey and levels of site to large scale, or shall I send some one if you are too busy?

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

L. DOWLING, *Esq., Launceston.*

Tasmanian Government Railways.

Permanent Way Office, Launceston, 26th March, 1887.

Timber Fencing at 29 miles—Western Railway—Loone's Bridge.

In reply to your Memo. of the 25th instant, I forward diagram of original flood-opening, which will possibly, with the sections, (a copy of which you should have, I think, being sent down some time ago and not returned), give all information required.

Permit me to add, the bottom is good and not very deep for foundations. No stone nearer than Perth for building purposes; therefore suggest concrete for abutments. Thirty feet (30 ft.) ample water-way, and might be slightly reduced if necessary.

Excuse me by saying my idea was abutments of concrete, which could be put in without interfering with traffic. Between Saturday night and Monday the wooden or girder runners could be secured in time to avoid stoppage.

I have, &c.

L. DOWLING.

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

Tasmanian Government Railways.

Permanent Way Office, Launceston, 31st March, 1887.

Bridges, Western Railway.

At an early date, at your convenience, I should very much like to meet you on several of the above bridges, to receive your professional opinion of their condition, with my proposals for renewal and alteration of design. They are a source of continual anxiety, and expensive maintenance.

Yours, &c.

L. DOWLING.

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

Tasmanian Government Railways.

Permanent Way Office, Launceston, 16th May, 1887.

Western Line—Loone's Bridge.

KINDLY advise me what is likely to be done with above, and how soon? I wish to avoid unnecessary renewal to old bridge, which is in a very weak state.

Yours, &c.

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

L. DOWLING.

General Manager's Office, Launceston, 27th February, 1888.

Loone's Bridge.

DEAR SIR,

I BELIEVE that a survey, &c. and plan of site was made by one of your officers some time ago for this bridge.

If you will kindly allow me to have a sight of these, they would materially assist the Engineer (Mr. Dowling), in the work he is going to do.

Yours, &c.

FRED. BACK, *General Manager.*

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

1st March, 1888.

*Manager.**Loone's Bridge.*

SURVEY of site, as requested, by separate packet. Tracing of plan made for intended new bridge also sent.

J. FINCHAM.

General Manager's Office, Launceston, 5th March, 1888.

Loone's Bridge.

DEAR SIR,

I AM very much obliged for survey of site and tracing of plan received as per advice dated 1st instant. I have handed them over to Mr. Dowling.

Yours, &c.

FRED. BACK, *General Manager.*J. FINCHAM, *Esq., Hobart.*