

(No. 84.)



1873.

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TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

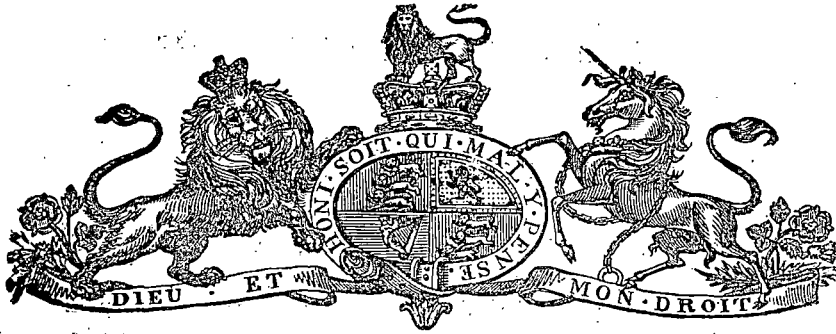
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ROADS AND BRIDGES.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON BONUSES IN LAND.

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Brought up by Mr. Meredith, and ordered by the House to be printed,  
August 5, 1873.



*SELECT COMMITTEE appointed on the 3rd July, 1873, to consider the advisability of offering to such individuals or companies as may be disposed to construct Roads and Bridges, to the satisfaction of the Government, certain Bonuses in Land proportional to the extent and value of the Works executed.*

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. LEWIS.	MR. O'REILLY.
MR. YOUNG.	MR. MOORE.
MR. CASTLEY.	MR. MINISTER OF LANDS AND WORKS.
MR. DOOLEY.	

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DAYS OF MEETING.

July 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 23, 25, 29, and August 1.

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WITNESSES EXAMINED.

James Scott, Esq., M.H.A.	Mr. John Russell.
Osborne Geeves, Esq.	Richard Hill, Esq.
Mr. H. Chesterman.	Henry Butler, Esq., M.H.A.
George Innes, Esq.	J. W. Brown, Esq.
Mr. Andrewartha.	J. M. Dooley, Esq., M.H.A.

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R E P O R T.

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THAT your Committee, having had referred to it the Resolutions passed by the House on the 2nd July, as follows,—

“1st. That the formation of Roads and the erection of Bridges are essential works to the success of any general system calculated to induce immigration and prevent the exodus of the native born, and utilise the millions of acres of Crown land still unalienated in this Island, (some portions of which are fitted for agricultural and pastoral purposes, and other extensive tracts abounding in iron, tin, slate, coal, and various mineral wealth are singularly adapted for the development of mining industries); such works being alike needed in unsettled localities to render occupation even possible, and in all to give encouragement to both individual and collective enterprise; and to afford means of transit and communication to the occupants who, without the facilities such works afford, are unable to convey their produce to market, and to derive from their labour and invested capital an adequate return.

“2nd. That, until such works be constructed and access thus be obtained to the large tracts of land still unoccupied, these lands will remain comparatively valueless to the community.

“Resolved, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the advisability of offering to such individuals or companies as may be disposed to construct Roads and Bridges, to the satisfaction of the Government, certain bonuses in land proportional to the extent and value of the works executed.”—

and after having taken the evidence of a number of persons well qualified to speak upon the subject, have to report that, as well in their own judgment as in evidence, there are portions of the Island that might be opened by the scheme in question, and recommend that power be given to the Governor in Council to deal with such exceptional cases.

CHARLES MEREDITH, *Chairman.*

August 5, 1873.

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS.

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MONDAY, 7 JULY, 1873.

The Committee met at 12 o'clock.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Moore, Mr. Dooley, Mr. Castley, Mr. Young, Mr. Lewis.

*Resolved*, That Mr. Meredith do take the Chair.

*Resolved*, That permission be requested from the House to call for persons and papers.

*Resolved*, That, contingent upon such permission being granted, Mr. Henry Chesterman be summoned to attend on Tuesday, 8th July, and that Jas. Scott, Esq., M.H.A., and S. Henry, Esq., M.H.A., be also requested to attend on the same day.

The Committee adjourned at 1:20 P.M. to 11 A.M. on Tuesday, 8th July.

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TUESDAY, 8 JULY, 1873.

Committee met at 12 o'clock.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Dooley, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Young.

1. James Scott, Esq., M.H.A., called in and examined.

2. Osborne Geeves, Esq., called in and examined.

3. Mr. Chesterman to be summoned for 10:30 to-morrow.

Adjourned till half-past 10 to-morrow.

Adjourned at 1:15.

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WEDNESDAY, 9 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Lewis, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Young.

*Resolved*, That the following witnesses be summoned:—Richard Hill, Hospital Bay, Tuesday, 15th July; John Russell, Port Cygnet, Tuesday, 15th July; Henry Chesterman, Port Cygnet, Thursday, 10th July.

Adjourned at 11:30 to 11 A.M. on Thursday, 10th July.

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THURSDAY, 10 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dooley, Mr. Moore, Mr. O'Reilly.

Certain questions submitted by Mr. Meredith.

Committee adjourned at 20 minutes past 12 o'clock to half-past 10 o'clock on Tuesday next.

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TUESDAY, 15 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Moore, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Lewis, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Dooley, Mr. Young.

Mr. Henry Chesterman called in and examined.

Mr. George Innes called in and examined.

Adjourned at 1:20 to 10:30 on Wednesday.

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WEDNESDAY, 16 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Dooley, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Andrewartha called in and examined.

Mr. Russell called in and examined.

Adjourned at 1:20 until 2.

Two o'clock.

*Present*—Mr. Dooley in the chair, Mr. O'Reilly, and Mr. Lewis.

Mr. R. Hill called in and examined.

Adjourned at 4 o'clock until 10:30 on Thursday.

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THURSDAY, 17 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dooley.  
Adjourned until 10.30 on Tuesday, 22nd.

WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Dooley.  
Adjourned until 11 o'clock on Friday, 25th July.

FRIDAY, 25 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dooley, and Mr. Moore.  
The Hon. Dr. Butler called in and examined.  
Mr. J. W. Brown called in and examined.  
J. M. Dooley, Esq., M.H.A., examined.  
Adjourned until Tuesday morning at 11 o'clock for the purpose of drawing up a Report.

TUESDAY, 29 JULY, 1873.

*Present*—Mr. Meredith, Mr. O'Reilly, and Mr. Lewis.  
Evidence read and agreed to.  
Draft Report read and adopted.

## EVIDENCE.

TUESDAY, 8TH JULY, 1873.

JAMES SCOTT, *Esq., M.H.A., examined.*

*By Chairman.*—1. You are a Member of the House of Assembly, and by profession a surveyor? I am.

2. You are acquainted with a large portion of the unoccupied crown lands on the north side of the Colony? I am, especially of the district of Dorset, which is only partially occupied.

3. Do you believe that the formation of roads and the erection of bridges are essential works to the success of any general system calculated to induce immigration and prevent the exodus of the native born, and utilise the millions of acres of crown land still unalienated in this Island? \* \* \* I do. They are essential. I believe the whole of that notice states the case complete, and until roads and bridges are made the land will not be occupied.

4. Are you aware of the propriety of offering alternate blocks to persons who may undertake to open out roads? I have considered the matter, and fully understand it.

5. Are you aware of any district where the scheme would be applicable? Here is one before me: I hand it in. It is the Township of Dorchester on East Tamar; the occupied lands are marked yellow, the unoccupied crown lands are marked white, the particular Road District not occupied is marked green. The road would commence at Dorchester, on Egg Island Creek, and you are immediately on crown land: at one mile and a half the line is kept past the slate quarries to a distance of five miles of slate formation on Piper's River, about ten miles from the River Tamar. Such a road would give access to farms occupied on the Lower and Upper Piper's River that at present have no passable road to the Town of Launceston; and the crown lands surrounding the settlement have the best of timber on it. Then the line runs further about ten miles, passing through crown lands, crossing the head of the Little Forester's River, and another 20 miles up to Springfield and Great Forester's River; in all 40 miles in length, entirely through crown lands, the forests of which contain the best of timber, such as gum, stringy bark, blackwood, wattle, musk, ironwood, and myrtle in abundance. After passing numbers of streams of water, which are useful for driving machinery of all kinds at all seasons of the year. Such a line would also pass 80 lots of crown land marked off about two years ago by the Government surveyors, none of which are yet sold, for want of an available road. Such a line would also pass generally over low-lying lands, and no great tiers, and the bridges on the line need not cost more than about £50 or £70. After the timber shall have been cleared off, a quantity of that land would be generally over about 30 miles of that road capable of growing good crops and grass. Mr. Gould, F.G.S., in his geological map shows limestone to exist at one spot on the Piper's River within a few miles. If a shipbuilding company or any company

were established to work the timber beds or slate quarries, such a line would just suit to be opened up by the companies. Myrtle timber is unlimited, capable of being able to be made into furniture in Victoria. Blackwood and wattles and the same forests of timber are at present abundant, and will abound until it is cleared off. That road would also pass within two or three miles of Scottsdale, and would also give access to settlers who have formed establishments at Ringarooma River, where the timber is a complete drug, and is burned and got rid of as a nuisance. The country generally inclines from the further end towards the shipping port, and would be generally downwards, in favour of the produce going to the shipping. The acreage of Dorset is about 230,000 acres, or 3600 square miles. As to the description of road, it is advisable to make macadamised roads fit for carts at all seasons, with permission to a company to lay down a tramway alongside. The road should be a public road, and free, but a charge should be made for the conveyance of goods along the tramway. The compensation for works should be proportioned to the amount of the work done on the road.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—Every alternate piece of land of 320 acres should be strictly kept; and the picking out of one piece from another should be prevented. Any company would think when the roads were made the compensation would be uniformly good. The granting of land to companies would facilitate the promotion of companies: wherever this has been done it has been advantageous; but the V. D. Land Company is an abuse of the rule. No grant should be issued till the road was completed, when the Government could sell the alternate lots.

*By Mr. Young.*—It would be better for parties who made the roads and took up land to keep the roads in order for a term of years before the grant should be issued. If the road were formed and made good, you could bind them to keep the road in order for one or two years, but after that the parties using the road should keep it in repair, or it could be handed over to the Road Trustees.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—Capitalists from Victoria would offer if roads were opened up,—I mean people engaged in the timber trade and slate quarries. I consider the Resolutions most beneficial to the Colony to give them a trial: and I would go further, to those who have put up tramways now, and would make roads for the public,—these should have compensation in the same manner, which would work well. This only operates where the crown lands are concerned.

*By Mr. Dooley.*—The company must take the tramway alongside the road. It would not do to give larger blocks to persons making roads, because the Government would lose all further lien on the good land which would be selected by the party making the road. No company would be formed to make a small line of road. The land along the road would be cultivated or laid down in grass.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—In my opinion this scheme would facilitate the small allotment system, especially in districts where the area of agricultural land is only small.

*By Mr. Dooley.*—This scheme would not supersede the 24th Section of the Waste Lands Act, but would be a great aid to the development of the crown lands.

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OSBORNE GEEVES, *Esq.*, called in and examined.

*In reply to Questions by Mr. O'Reilly.*—I am proprietor of the tramway at Honeywood, and deal largely in timber. We export about 50,000 palings every month, and pay to the Government about £30 a year for licences to split timber.

By our line of tramway we have opened up about 4½ miles through crown lands to enable us to get at the timber.

Settlers will not take up the land which lies beyond or alongside of our road commencing three miles from the river, because of the uncertainty of the road being kept up.

All the crown land along the line is taken up for about three miles.

Our station is about a mile and a half back.

We are extending our road because there is much timber available.

The agricultural land is not so extensive as the timber beds, and yet it is found in rather large patches. I know of one area of about 2000 acres of as good land as is the average of the Huon District.

The timber is unlimited for miles upon miles, and will last for generations.

Mr. Hill's mill has been in work for 40 years, and there is still plenty of timber available.

I am aware of the scheme of Mr. Meredith, the Minister of Lands, which is now before Parliament.

Our road wants a more simple provision,—merely compensation proportionate to the outlay which may be incurred.

Such a scheme would induce me to invest further capital at once. I would extend our road two miles more, and finish it to a certain point. In fact I would complete three miles more at my own expense within three years if this scheme were carried out; and I know parties would be inclined to erect a saw mill where there is an unlimited supply of timber.

The owners of alternate blocks under Mr. Meredith's scheme should be charged a tariff of transit rates for their produce along the road if it is a tramway—the rate to be fixed by law.

*By Chairman.*—I think the cost of tramways would be about three to four hundred pounds per mile. Where bridges have to be erected the expense would be greater. We have nearly twenty miles of tramways in the district.

*By Mr. Dooley.*—I would extend my road in a direct line, because I believe it would be better to leave the laying out of roads to private individuals rather than to the Government.

The roads would open up coal mines in our neighbourhood. We have found coal to exist by sinking a small shaft, but it is not worked.

*By Mr. Young.*—I believe the proposed grant of land under Mr. Meredith's scheme in compensation for work done to be in excess of the probable cost of the tramway, because speculators might take it up. Certainly the land need not be granted by deed until after a term, during which the roads should be kept in order by the person who made it.

There is iron ore at Southport.

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TUESDAY, 15TH JULY, 1873.

MR. HENRY CHESTERMAN *called in and examined.*

*In reply to Questions from the Chairman.*—I have been seventeen years in the Colony, and have been engaged in operations that would give me experience in waste lands of the crown. I most undoubtedly believe that a system of roads and bridges are essential works to the success of any general system calculated to induce immigration and prevent the exodus of the native born, and utilise the millions of acres of crown land still unalienated in this Island.

I am aware of the object of the Committee, and understand the principle of the scheme as shown in plan.

South and east of Adamson's Peak, where little or no occupation has taken place; and in the localities of Southport and Esperance, South Huon, are thousands of acres distributed to which this project would be likely to apply.

There has been very little or no settlement or sale of crown lands in all the country west of the Huon.

How much might be opened up this way? Not any great extent in one direction: from 2000 to 5000 acres.

Is the land valuable for its timber, its quarries or mines, or for agricultural or pastoral purposes? Principally for timber, subsequently for agriculture after removal of timber.

Are there any rivers to bridge? None of importance that I have a knowledge of.

What roads are most suitable? Tramroads in the earliest stages of settlement are cheapest and most justifiable: from £300 to £600 per mile would be the cost about there. At £300 an ordinary tramway capable of carrying loads of 2 to 3 tons with horse-power, provided the incline was towards the shipping-place, which is usually the case—in fact almost invariably.

What would the £600 road be like? It would have more solid foundations and larger timbers. A £300 tramway would last 10 years, and would, if provided for at first, be suitable for an ordinary road after, by having slabs sufficiently wide: for a tramroad only slabs need be 6 feet wide, but if intended for a macadamised road afterwards they should be 10 feet.

Do you know any parties who would construct roads in this way? I think several would take advantage of such an arrangement.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—What is your opinion of the scheme? Favourable; and I believe that it is more applicable to timbered localities.

*By Mr. Young.*—Do you think the amount of land offered excessive? The land varies too much in value to speak positively.

Should the grant be issued immediately on a road being made to the satisfaction of the Government? I think not until after 10 years' occupation.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—What description of road do you recommend in opening up crown land—tramways or macadamised? Tramroads where there is little or no settlement.

*By Mr. Moore.*—Have you had experience of tramroads? I have constructed six miles.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—How would the settlers be affected if the Company making the road were to fail? I cannot speak from experience as to what would result.

Government slab roads have been commenced at Southport and Esperance.

Immense quantities of timber are taken out, but no settlement has taken place.

Is any of the land favourable for agricultural settlement along this Government slab road? Yes.

Why has the land not been occupied? Because the timber trade is more remunerative, and the supply is not exhausted: when it is, settlers may come in.

These Government roads are much out of repair, and have been repaired by the Government.

The persons using the roads only nominally contribute to these roads, that is by licence to cart timber on the road.

The roads are not in a good state; the receipts are paid into the Government.

Does the land at Southport contain splitting timber? Yes; the timber is excellent.

How would you recompense a company going through private land? The Government would have to purchase the land.

Would you operate under this scheme? I think so.

*By the Chairman.*—How many live by the timber trade in the southern districts? Nearly all the inhabitants—it is the gold mine of the Colony; it would be a great pity if agriculture were to take precedence of timber production.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—Is not settlement impeded by the splitting of timber on the land prior to occupation? Certainly not.

*By Mr. Moore.*—Would tramways tend to develop the localities by attaching a fixed agricultural population to the soil? This population would follow, as for instance at Honeywood and Port Esperance.

Do you think such tramways as you have described durable? The Honeywood one is, and is the best kind of road: they require constant repair, but last if the foundation is substantial.

Can you give any opinion as to mineral sections? No.

Would Government be justified in giving this bonus to saw-mill companies? Yes, if the road were available to all comers; but this should only be for lengths of not less than five miles (opened up progressively).

Are tramways more conducive to permanent settlement than macadamised roads? Macadamised roads have failed in the Franklin District.

Tramways are justifiable from question of cost; it would not be wise on a question of cost to make macadamised roads.

You spoke of 2 horses drawing 3 tons, on what gradient would this be? One in 15 or 16—I have worked them for short pinches thus.

Can you find a line without survey in favourable localities with these gradients? Yes.

What length of tramway? Five miles from water's edge; for timber purposes only.

*By the Chairman.*—How would you use the 7th Sect. of the Waste Lands Act? First remove the timber, and then let the lands for occupation.

*By Mr. O'Reilly.*—How has the present system under Waste Lands Act been used in the Huon District? No roads have been constructed under 28th Section with the money reserved, thus the system is good if properly administered.

Were unsettled lands ever worked or taken up? No; on account of the distance from settled country.

*By Mr. Moore.*—Would settlement follow leasing land for timber? Yes.

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GEORGE INNES, *Esq.*, District Surveyor, called in and examined.

*By the Chairman.*—Your name is George Innes, and you are a District Surveyor? Yes.

Do you understand the principle of giving alternate blocks? Yes; but know of no place where this would be applicable without the roads through the private lands were first made.

Do you concur in the motion made in the House of Assembly on which this Committee was appointed? It is objectionable; it tends to encourage speculation. Companies might come, make the road, and lock up the land.

Do you know in your district how much unoccupied land is available? I know of a block of land of 4000 or 5000 acres in my district which would be benefited by the opening of a road into it, but do not think that the proposed scheme would apply. I refer to land in the vicinity of Port Cygnet, reported upon by Mr. Laffer, the outlet at Nicholl's Rivulet: it is situate 5 miles from the water, and a road would have to be constructed for that distance through private land or crown land of a worthless character; and if a company constructing a tramway were to receive 640 acres of the good land for each mile, it would absorb nearly the whole, and would, I believe, tend to monopoly and speculation in land which it has been the object of all recent legislation to discourage. I view the scheme in my official capacity of District Surveyor, and although it might apply in other cases, I think that its ultimate effect would be to retard rather than advance the increase of settlement at the Huon.

What description of road would you recommend? A tramroad: these can be made from £100 upwards, about £300 or £400 would be quite sufficient to construct one in every respect suited to the requirements of the district.

How long would a £300 or £400 tramroad last? Practically for ever, with ordinary repairs.

What would macadamised roads cost per mile? At least £1000.

I am under the impression that a macadamised road would cost more to keep in repair than a tramroad, but on this point I cannot speak from experience.

Would the present occupants benefit by opening up this block? Yes.

Are there any rivers to cross? No; I think not.

Would people take this land payment for making roads? Yes; provided they receive land to the extent named for making that portion of the road which would necessarily pass through private property or worthless land, and also possibly in the case of the proposed extension of a road already constructed for a certain distance, but I know of no such case in my district.

*In reply to Questions by Mr. O'Reilly.*—The roads through the private properties might be paid for by blocks at the back of the land taken up under the scheme. Without these roads through private lands being made, the scheme would not work. I would suggest that the lands should not be granted, but proceeds of the sale of these crown lands should be handed over to companies: this would obviate lands being blocked up, as I have already mentioned.

If the scheme were modified somewhat as I have suggested, it might apply to my district.

This scheme would facilitate occupation partially; that is if the land were kept by the Government. The 28th Section of the Waste Lands Act has, I think, worked well.

*By Mr. Dooley.*—How would you lay out the money under the 28th Section—say £1000? Improve the existing road beginning from the water's edge up to the land: this would be to the advantage of the purchasers at the back, and it would be spending the money in accordance with the spirit of the Act.

Would you in a new country give splitters licences? No; I would do away with the system of licensing for splitters in a new country. At Southport a slab road was made, the land was rushed by splitters, and they have destroyed the land.

Have splitters opened up any crown lands? Yes, to a limited extent.

MR. ANDREWARTHA *examined.*

*Mr. Meredith.*—Do you believe that the formation of roads and the erection of bridges are essential works to the success of any general system calculated to induce immigration and prevent the exodus of the native born, and utilise the millions of acres of crown land still unalienated in this Island? \* \* \* Under certain circumstances.

Do you understand the principle of giving alternate blocks of land in lieu of money payments to persons or companies who may be disposed to construct roads and bridges to the satisfaction of the Government through unoccupied crown land? I understand the system, but do not know any land in the Huon District to which it could be applied. I will divide the land in the Huon District into three classes. First, Agricultural; second, Agricultural and Timber-producing; and third, Timber-producing only and unsuitable for Agriculture. The Franklin may be taken as an example of the first, Honeywood of the second, and Southport and Port Esperance of the third class. Franklin, having spent all the available moneys both from Road Rates and Local Boards of Works upon the main roads of the district, has left the bye-roads completely out of repair, and consequently no person will undertake to make roads into the crown lands at the back of these bye-roads. In the Honeywood District something might be done. I consider, however, that a tramway would not be a sufficient return for the free grants of alternate sections, but this scheme would not induce settlement. There are plenty of roads even now, and the construction of them has not tended as yet to settle the crown lands. Southport and Port Esperance, the proprietors in this district are in possession of nearly all the inlets to the crown lands easy of access for the purpose of obtaining timber. Those proprietors have sunk much capital in steam machinery and tramways. About 20 miles of tramway have been made, and this and the machinery have cost about £30,000. These persons have no protection. They buy land and run their tramways into crown land for the timber. The Government should reserve, say, a square mile, for a period of two years, at the end of these tramways, so as to enable the proprietors to work the timber, and at the end of that time the land could be sold, and thus allow settlement; but if land is sold before the tramways are made, the purchasers ring the trees, and thus destroy the timber before machinery is at hand to work it into a form suitable for sale. My own tramway cost £400 per mile, and is very superior, but some lines have cost 1s. 6d. and some 2s. per yard. Strathblayn Mills tramway cost about 4s. per yard. The best constructed lines would last perhaps 7 or 8 years without any very great outlay for repairs. Franklin was at first entirely timber-producing; then Honeywood followed, and Port Esperance and Southport are still entirely timber-producing, and the agriculturist does not come in until after the timber is partially cleared. Giving alternate blocks for formation of roads would interfere with vested interests in my district, but in unoccupied districts it would answer, provided the persons or company were bound to construct a macadamised road. I think it should be conceded to tramway proprietors that a square mile should be reserved at the end of their lines for at least two years, they, the proprietors, being bound to carry on the road through the reserve, otherwise the Government should come in and sell.

*Mr. Dooley.*—What roads are there in the Southport and Port Esperance district, and what is their character? There are two public roads, one at Southport and the other at Port Esperance, as well as the tramways.

Have these roads conduced to the settlement of the localities? No, for the reasons I have given in my previous remarks. They have led to a temporary settlement by the timber cutters, but not by agriculturists.

Do you think that the application of the rates to the main lines of road to be the most judicious course? I do.

Has much land been taken up under the 24th Section of the Waste Lands Act, 1870? Not much, except for splitting purposes. The splitters take the land and cut all the timber off, and then throw it up, in the portion of the district where I reside nothing will induce settlement so long as we are timber producing.

*Mr. O'Reilly.*—Do you approve of slab roads in unoccupied districts? No.

Could you construct a tramway and slab road in one? Yes, by having a narrow gauge line and running the cart wheels outside the rails.

Would the proposed scheme of bonuses in land be applicable in settled districts? No; and in reference to the crown land at present unoccupied in the Honeywood District I think that there is no inducement to settlers, one reason being that the present price of the land is too high.

What would be the effect upon the roads in your district were the Government subsidy to the Road Trusts to be withdrawn and the 28th Section of the Waste Lands Act, 1870, to be repealed? The whole of the roads in the district would collapse, as the rates at present only amount to £220, and about 56 miles of road have to be kept in repair.



*Mr. Meredith.*—Would making roads by the Government as proposed through the unoccupied crown land in your district interfere with vested rights? It would at Port Esperance and Southport, and then would not tend to settlement.

Is there any part of the unoccupied crown land in your district which would be improved by the formation of roads and bridges? Yes; I believe there are good lands at the back, and they would be improved in value, but I don't think it would tend to settlement from the fact that there are at the present time six miles of Government slab road which are not settled on, viz., three miles at Southport and three miles at Port Esperance; and, besides, people do not care to go so far back from the frontages. In my remarks I have alluded more particularly to the Port Esperance and Southport districts.

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MR. JOHN RUSSELL *called in and examined.*

*In reply to Mr. Meredith.*—I am Chairman of the Port Cygnet Road Trust, and I reside at Port Cygnet.

Do you require any roads in your district? Any amount.

For what object? Partly to assist already settled, and partly to open up lands at present unoccupied.

Are you aware of any unoccupied crown land which should be opened up by roads and bridges? Yes; at Nicholls' Rivulet there is a block of about 3000 acres of good land, and every acre would be taken up were there a good road made into it.

Do you think the proposed scheme of alternate blocks would answer in this case? It would depend upon the way it was given. There is a road into this land, but it is at present unpassable.

Would a company construct a road on the terms as proposed in the scheme now before the Committee? I believe if the Government would allow for the cost of a road from the river to the commencement of the land in question that it would be done.

*In reply to Questions from Mr. O'Reilly.*—Many young men from my district have been compelled to go out whaling, simply because there was no land available owing to the want of roads. The land in my district is principally taken up for agricultural purposes. All the available land in my locality is taken up, and persons are constantly applying to me to point out good land available under the 24th Section. On the block of land I have above referred to the timber is very light, and the place is suitable for a very nice settlement. There is one road in the district in course of construction under the 28th Section of the Waste Lands Act. This system of settling land has worked remarkably well in my district. I am not aware of a single lot in the district of land thus taken up having been abandoned. There is land in my district in blocks of, say, 500 to 800 acres which would be settled on were roads made into it. The 28th Section plan would lead to their occupation. On the whole the 24th Section system is the best ever introduced, and has worked most beneficially. Were the grants in aid to the Road Trusts withdrawn it would have a most disastrous effect.

*Mr. Meredith.*—What effect would the withdrawal of the 28th Section system have? It would have a very injurious effect, as many have taken up land in the hope that others would select near them, and thus get the assistance from the Government towards making a road provided under that section.

*Mr. Lewis.*—In reference to the land at Nicholls' Rivulet, do you think young men would join to make a good road from Crooked Tree Point to the land in question in consideration of having blocks of land given them in suitable sections of 100 acres on the completion of the works as a recompense for their labour? Yes, and the whole of the land would be taken up, but at present they have not the necessary capital to enable them to make the road themselves. Unless the road is made in some way the land will remain unoccupied for another generation.

*Mr. Dooley.*—In the event of the 28th Section of the Waste Lands Act being repealed before the required quantity of land is taken up in the localities you have referred to, what will the effect be upon those already settled in the vicinity? The effect would be very injurious indeed.

*Mr. Moore.*—What kind of roads would you recommend? A good slab road to cost about £150 to £200 a mile would be the most useful sort of road for the places I refer to. It would require six miles to lead into the land at Nicholls' Rivulet, the distance from the commencement of the land to the water's edge being about four miles. I consider that were a road opened into this land it would all be taken up for agricultural purposes. There are already some few applications for land in this locality made in the hope that the Government would construct the necessary road into it.

*Mr. O'Reilly.*—Which system do you think would answer the best, the present one under the 28th Section, or the scheme as proposed of bonuses in land as applied to the settlement of crown lands? I think the present scheme the better of the two; it will tend more to the settlement of the vacant crown lands.

*Mr. Dooley.*—It has been the prevailing idea that the moneys paid under the 24th Section of the Waste Lands Act should be confined within the area selected, or very nearly so. Does this idea prevail in your district? Yes, and has been acted upon, and the parties have applied to the Road Trusts for aid to open and repair the road in front of the locality in which the land has been selected, the parties being under the impression that the Government had not the power to expend the money in so doing.

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MR. RICHARD HILL, *Chairman Liverpool Road Trust, and Tramroad proprietor, called in and examined.*

*Mr. Dooley.*—Do you understand the proposed scheme of giving bonuses in land in lieu of money payments for the construction of roads? Yes, I understand under certain circumstances.

Do you concur in the motion as passed in the House of Assembly? I do. There would be a vested interest which would induce persons to construct tramroads in particular, for the purpose of opening up beds of timber, and it would ultimately lead to the settlement of crown lands in my district.

Do you know of any land in your district to which the proposed scheme could be applied? Yes; there is land at Honeywood, at the She-oak Hills, and at Port Cygnet.

What extent? At She-oak Hills 3 to 5000 acres; at the back of my own neighbourhood there is a very large extent, say about 5000 acres in the valley of the Arve.

For what are these blocks of land chiefly valuable? For their timber; but they are also adapted to agriculture.

Would costly bridges be required in opening roads into these lands? No.

Would the gradients be good supposing tramways were to be made into these lands? For 5 miles they would be good, then an ascending grade from the valley of the Arve would have to be overcome. In a valley at the back of the Franklin towards Hospital Bay there is a block of land about 3000 acres which might be opened up by a tramway with a descending grade.

Do you know of any persons or companies who would be likely to undertake the construction of roads on the terms of the proposed scheme? Yes, I know two persons in Honeywood who would undertake to extend the existing tramroads under the terms as proposed. As for the public convenience a legalised scale of charges might be fixed by the Government. I would propose a slab road 8 feet wide with rails laid thereon for a tramway. The company or person to keep the tramway in repair, and the district the slab road. Such a system is adopted at the present time in my own district to utilise bridges. The district undertakes to repair any damage on the bridges.

*Mr. O'Reilly.*—My own locality is naturally favourable for the construction of such a system of road. In order to utilise the proposed scheme the present tramway would have to be used. In the event of the scheme being adopted, the security I would give that the roads should be properly carried out would be, that the Government should have power to take possession of the tramroad in the event of the company or person failing to fulfil his obligations. A company would not consent to construct the tramroad beyond the extent of the Government land without additional remuneration. I think that persons or companies would be inclined to take additional blocks in the rear of the frontage ones as remuneration for constructing the line through the private property. I have extended my own tramroad through crown land which is suitable for agriculture as well as for timber-cutting purposes. I produce a plan of the Liverpool Road District showing that settlement has followed the construction of the tramways where extended through crown lands. About 2500 acres have been sold consequent upon the construction of tramways by private enterprise, and the lands have been taken up by small resident holders in lots of from 15 to 50 acres. It is not correct to say that settlement has failed to follow the opening of lines of tramway through crown lands. In my own locality the population has been steadily on the increase. A school has been opened about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles up the tramway from the bay, which is attended by 60 children, thus showing the increase of population. It takes about two years for settlement to follow the opening of the crown lands by means of tramways. The settlers join agriculture to their labours as splitters and sawyers, and they appear to be in a satisfactory condition. I am quite sure this progressive state of affairs would not have taken place had not the line of tramway been opened. Previous to this the people were leaving the place. I have not as yet in running my tramway through crown land, and when completed for the use of timber carriage, been obstructed by private selection. There is deep water in Hospital Bay, where large shipping can load. I estimate that by the extension of the existing tramways in this locality about 8000 acres could be opened for selection. It is not likely that the present tramways will be extended unless some encouragement is given to private enterprise. The extension of the existing tramways would be the most economical and practicable way of developing the resources of the locality by opening up the crown lands. As a general rule the land in the Huon district is adapted for agricultural purposes, but it does not run in large blocks, and the crown land of this description mostly lies about three to four miles inland from the river. I think the proposed scheme would not apply in cases where the blocks were only of 1000 acres. The present system of making roads under the 28th Section of the Waste Lands Act has had a most beneficial result in my own district, and has promoted the settlement of the crown lands. This system is a good one, but I know of a locality where the money, though due for some time, has not yet been expended through obstructions in carrying the road through private property. In my own locality we have had £300 expended in the construction of bridges and roads, which have enabled the settlers to bring their produce to a market. In the case where persons have already taken up land under the 24th Section with a view of roads being constructed under the 28th Section the repeal of these sections would do a very serious injury, as it would deprive them of the means of securing the outlet to the main roads which they were led to expect they would have when the full complement of land had been selected. Generally speaking the repeal of these sections would have a very depressing result, and retard settlement. The proposed alteration of the land law curtailing the extension of credit would not offer equal inducements for the settlement of the crown lands to those afforded by the present system under the 24th Section of the Waste Lands Act, 1870. In stating that the bonus system would not apply to blocks of 1000 acres, I refer to private individuals or companies. It would answer for a Road Trust to undertake a work under this system. The Trustees could borrow money under the Road Act, and when the land was sold it would pay off the loan and save the district from a rate. I think the Road Trustees would meet with the sanction of the residents to such a proposal. An endeavour has been made in my district to borrow money under the Local Public Works Act. The district was proclaimed a Tramway District, but the second petition failed in consequence of the want of some such inducement as the proposed bonus system. The opposition was offered at a public meeting of the land proprietors, and the proposed scheme fell through. The withdrawal of the grants to the Road Trusts would have in the Huon district a most disastrous effect, as even with that assistance we cannot keep our roads in proper repair; and were it not for the 28th Section operating in the Honeywood locality we should have been left without the bridges over the Kermandee on the main line of road from Franklin to Southport. The power given under the Road Act to borrow money on the security of a special rate has not been exercised in the Huon district, as the plan is more applicable in districts where the property is mostly in private hands, and not as with us where the crown has the greater interest in the lands. The rateable value of the property in the district is very low. The amount of rates at 1s. in the £ of four Road Districts in the Electoral District of Franklin is only about £220.

FRIDAY, 25TH JULY, 1873.

*The Honorable HENRY BUTLER, M.H.A., called in and examined.*

*In reply to Questions by Mr. Lewis.*—I was Minister of Lands and Works in the late Administration. I had the subject of the proposed scheme of giving bonuses in land in lieu of money payments for the construction of roads and bridges brought under my notice when in office, and I made enquiries with reference to one District in which I thought it might be tried,—that District was the Huon. A tramway had been made there by joint proprietors, who allowed the use of the tramway to settlers in the vicinity on payment of a toll; but from the fact of its being supposed that the interests of the proprietors was the primary interest of the traffic on the line, the other settlers were not disposed to continue the system unless the roads so formed were entirely under the supervision and direction of the Government, in order to protect their interests: the other objection to it was the very short period of time during which a tramway is in repair, and the large sum which it takes at the expiration of from 7 to 9 years for its renewal; therefore if the fee simple of the land was conveyed to the promoters at its first construction, no security could be formed that the beneficial result of the tramway would be permanent. These arguments do not apply in my opinion to the construction of macadamised roads or bridges, because when once properly constructed the expenditure required for their maintenance and repair is comparatively small. I think the proposed scheme is one which might be tried in opening out new country: it has been successful in Canada to a small extent, but it has not been found applicable to districts already settled. I think that there are portions of this country the settlement of which could be effected by this scheme. I think it would be advisable to try the proposed scheme at one point by way of experiment, and that the roads and bridges so made should be of a permanent character and for general use. I am only doubtful of the experiment succeeding from the difficulty of finding a capitalist to undertake it, as it would require large means at the outset. Provision would also require to be made that a grant in fee simple of the land should not be given until the entire work was completed. The position of the Mersey and Deloraine Tramway shows the necessity of this provision, as the land is permanently alienated and the work is not completed. The scheme might be tried by constructing a road commencing at the Ringarooma River and meeting the road at present constructed to Scott's New Country. I am not aware of any localities in the West Devon District where the scheme could be tried. But I think there is a tract of country at the back of the Van Diemen's Land Company's block at Circular Head where it might be applicable. There is a place also in the vicinity of Port Cygnet starting from what is known as the Deep Creek, in which there is a considerable tract of good country, where the scheme would apply.

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*MR. JOHN WM. BROWN, District Surveyor, called in and examined.*

*In reply to Questions by Mr. Meredith.*—I know the nature of the proposed scheme. I concur in the motion as made in the House of Assembly in reference to roads and bridges.

There is a large extent of land in the Ringarooma District where the scheme might be applied. I should say that there are about 20,000 or 30,000 acres in the locality I refer to. The land is valuable for agricultural purposes. I cannot say whether the roads necessary to open up particular country would necessitate the erection of many bridges, as I have not gone into it from the seaboard. I am decidedly of opinion that the roads should be macadamised, and not tramways, as my experience of tramways in Tasmania is that they are constantly in want of repairs.

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*J. M. DOOLEY, ESQ., M.H.A., examined.*

*In reply to Questions by Mr. Meredith.*—I have read the motion and resolutions bearing on the question before the the Committee, and believe that the system indicated therein would be applicable in many cases. I believe, too, that the character of the road should govern the tenure of the land to be given in consideration of the construction of such roads. If a tramroad, the tenure of land should be dependent on the satisfactory completion and maintenance of such tramroad, and the carrying of goods at a stipulated tariff. I think tramways are the most likely to be undertaken under this system, and that saw-mill proprietors and companies working minerals are the most likely class to undertake such works. In all such cases the promoters will require the control of the line, and subsequently such roads may lead to the settlement of unoccupied crown lands. In the event of a road to be constructed being a macadamised one, the grants of the lands to be given as bonus might be issued on the satisfactory completion of the said road. In all cases the extent and quality of the road should be first determined by the Minister of Lands and Works. I know one locality particularly adapted for the application of the proposed scheme. It is at the River Blythe, Devon, commencing at the mouth and running southerly along the course of the river to any distance deemed expedient. The lands on each side are the property of the crown. And at about four miles south from the starting point are immense deposits of iron-ore, which are now being taken up under the Mineral Leases Act of 1870. And by extending the road four miles further an area of about 10,000 acres of good crown land suitable for agricultural purposes would be rendered available for settlement; and a still further extension of eight miles would strike other mineral lodes, such as tin, copper, and various others of unknown extent, and render available a celery-top pine forest of considerable extent.

The whole line of road runs through good timber. In this case a tramway would be infinitely the cheapest and most efficient owing to the nature of the country to be passed through. I believe that there are other localities where the proposed scheme might be applied, but none with greater chances of success than in the locality I have indicated.