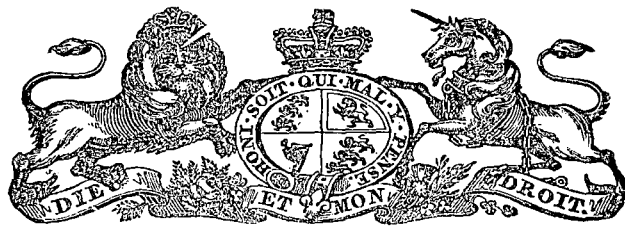


(No. 30.)



1872.

SESSION II.

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T A S M A N I A.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

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CROWN LANDS AT PORT CYGNET.

REPORT OF MR. LAFFER.

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Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands and Works, and ordered by the House to be printed, December 17, 1872.

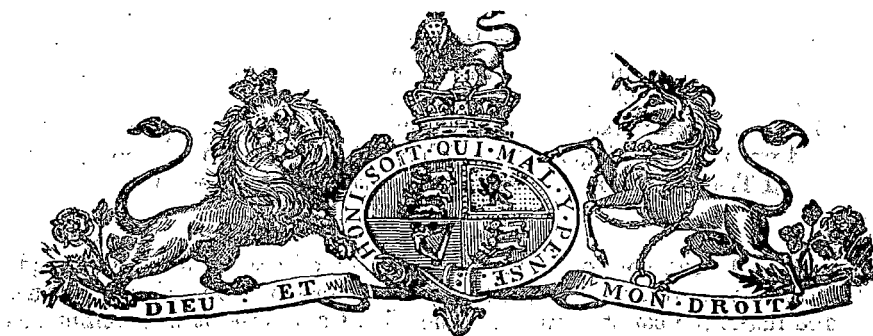


COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAM

SCALE TWO INCHES TO A MILE







*Port Cygnet, 31st May, 1872.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to state for the information of the Honorable the Minister of Lands and Works that, in obedience to your instructions, I have superintended the cutting of a few miles [ $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles], of bush tracks on the banks of the Nicholls Rivulet at Port Cygnet, for the purpose of examining the nature and quality of the land in that locality, and am pleased that I am enabled to report most favourably.

I enclose a tracing, with the tracks I have had cut, marked upon it as accurately as I could do so—sufficiently so however, I hope, to answer the purpose for reference.

I will first describe the land on the western side of the Nicholls Rivulet, commencing with the track marked from A to B, a distance of about two miles, passing along the face of a hill, which, after a few chains of flat land next the rivulet, gradually rises for about two miles, the first mile of which from the creek is, generally speaking, of the very best description the whole of the distance, and admirably adapted for agricultural purposes, being but very lightly timbered, except only in one portion where the track passes through a very fine bed of splitting timber.

The scrub growing on this land consists of pear-tree and dogwood, the timber of swamp and blue gum. The land higher up the hill, from E to F, is of inferior quality, but has good splitting timber growing on it.

Looking from the point A to C and D, it has the appearance of being an extensive basin, and on travelling the track from A to C, a distance of about a mile, I passed over from end to end some of the finest land I have seen in the Huon District, rather steep in places, but still not too much so for cultivation. It also has the advantage of being easily cleared, there being but a few large gum trees to be seen growing, with very little dead timber, but thickly covered with pear-tree scrub. From C to D the land is still good, but of a heavier character, with good splitting timber growing on it. I have also every reason to believe, from what I have seen, that a great portion of land on Lot 246 and that adjoining will prove of the same excellent character as that I saw on the track from A to C, and from A to B. If so, there will be at the least, so far as at present known, on the western bank of the rivulet, all watered by and accessible therefrom, between two and three thousand acres of first-class land, such as is rarely to be met with in the Huon District. What quantity of land there may be of such a quality unexplored it is impossible to say, it is certainly of large extent towards the north, and the foliage has the same appearance; but, whatever its character, it must have the same outlet.

The land on the eastern side of the rivulet, although on the whole of fair average quality, is not so unexceptionally good as that on the western side already described. The land on the line from K to L, following the bank of the rivulet, is flat, of a strong character, and moreover passes through some very fine splitting timber, which continues along the track to M, and does not then end.

The land on the track from K to O is generally of very fair quality; it rises towards the east for about a mile, the land being the same, as is also the greater portion of Lot 273, although the scrub is thicker and the land is more heavily timbered than that on the opposite bank, making it more difficult to clear for cultivation.

I continued the track from O to N, chiefly with the intention of ascertaining the possibility of getting a practicable horse track to the Snug, but having met with more difficulty than I expected, I did not consider myself justified in going to any more expense without further authority. The quality of the land is not inferior, but too precipitous for any practical purpose.

Looking over, therefore, the whole of the land I have examined, I believe that I am safe in stating that the present old road on being extended from two to three miles would open up several thousands of acres of land, a very large proportion of which being of the very best quality; in fact, I may say with truth, that I know of no locality in the Huon District so eligible for settlement as that I have described—it has every requisite, good land, good aspect, easily cleared, well watered, about five miles only from water carriage, from which a tramroad may be made if required, and a jetty erected at Crooked Tree Point for a few pounds, at which the largest trading vessel might load in all weathers.

I am sure, therefore, I need not point out the necessity of having an outlet made from this locality towards Hobart in the direction of the Snug or Oyster Cove, in order to induce passenger traffic through it, and make the country known, otherwise I am afraid it will continue as at present, as totally unknown as if it were situated twenty miles in the bush instead of five only, with a road, (certainly a very wretched one), from water carriage into it—the miserable state of which road has, I believe, hitherto acted as a barrier to people exploring the country.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. LAFFER.

FRANCIS BUTLER, *Esquire, Director of Public Works.*