1873.

NEW ZEALAND.

RAILWAY: FOXHILL TO GREYMOUTH.

(PAPERS RELATIVE TO.)

(Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM for consideration of Government relating to Mr. Calcutt's Report upon the 1,400,000 acres of Land proposed as security for the construction of Railway from Foxhill to Brunnerton.

MR. CALCUTT estimates the quantity of level land at about 200,000 acres, of which 50,000 are open land, and 150,000 are covered with timber. He estimates the value of these 200,000 acres at £137,000 in their present comparatively inaccessible position, or at £288,000 when the proposed railway has been made.

Mr. Calcutt, however, makes no estimate of the value of the remaining 1,200,000 acres.

We cannot agree with Mr. Calcutt in the opinion that only that portion of the level bush land, covered with fine timber, which lies within one mile on each side of the railway, would be enhanced in value by the construction of a line connecting it with a first-class port. On the contrary, we think a distance of ten miles on each side of the line would be a more reasonable calculation. Nor can we accept the view that level land covered with "excellent" birch timber is of value for the timber only.

We need not follow Mr. Calcutt into his calculations of the cost of clearing bush land and of the cost of survey which Mr. Calcutt asserts "would represent a large percentage on the amount realized."

On the latter point we will, however, mention that a contract for surveying 10,000 acres of the heavily timbered land, to which Mr. Calcutt refers, into fifty-acre sections, was lately completed for 1s. 2½d. per acre.

Adding to Mr. Calcutt's valuation of £288,000 for the 200,000 acres of level land, the value of the 1,200,000 acres which he does not take into account, and which, although for the most part hilly and even mountainous, are nevertheless almost entirely covered with timber, and have been proved to contain large deposits of coal of various qualities, ranging from good steam coal to ordinary brown coal—over which extensive alluvial mining has been carried on for many years past, and in which numerous auriferous quartz reefs, especially at the Inangahua and the Lyell, are now in successful and profitable work (see Annual Report on Gold Fields), we submit that ample security has been offered for the construction of the proposed railway, without taking into account the additional security of the revenues of the Province, which, in the case of most of the other railways authorized in other Provinces, has been deemed to be sufficient in itself.

OSWALD CURTIS.
A. J. RICHMOND.
JOSEPH SHEPHARD.
CHAS. PARKER.
D. M. LUCKIE.
A. S. COLLINS.
EUGENE O'CONOR.
W. H. HARRISON.

No. 2.

MEMORANDUM for consideration of Government relative to proposed Foxhill and Brunnerton Railway.

IN the event of the Government deciding finally not to ask authority of Parliament during the present Session for the construction of the whole of this line, we have the honor to submit the following proposal:—

That the Government take authority from Parliament, this Session, to continue the line from Foxhill to the junction of the Owen with the Buller, a distance of about forty-five miles.

The late discovery of a seam of coal at that point appears to us to make it a matter of urgent importance that no time should be lost in connecting that district with the port.

The seam to which we refer is, at the point of outcrop, 2 feet 6 inches in thickness, and its quality for steam purposes at least equal to the average of the coals imported from New South Wales. (See Dr. Hector's Report herewith.)

A reference to the reports of Dr. Haast and Dr. Hector will place the fact of the existence of large deposits of coal in this part of the Buller valley beyond doubt.

The distance from Foxhill to the junction of the Owen with the Buller, by way of the Hope valley, is, as above stated, about forty-five miles.

The cost of construction, we believe, would not exceed the average of the through line, say £4,000 per mile, or £180,000.

As regards security, we would suggest that the Government might take such proportion of the 1,400,000 acres offered for the entire line of 140 miles as they think would be sufficient, in addition to the Provincial revenues, for the protection of the Colony.

We trust that the Government will not refuse to accede thus far to the urgent desire of the people of Nelson, in common with other parts of the Colony, to open up the interior of the country.

Oswald Curtis.
A. S. Collins.
Joseph Shephard.
A. J. Richmond.
Eugene J. O'Conor.
Chas. Parker.
D. M. Luckie.
W. H. Harrison.

Enclosure in No. 2.

Dr. Hector's Report on Coal from Owen River and Richmond.

Sir,— Geological Survey Office, Wellington, 21st July, 1873.

I have the honor to report the results of the analytical examination of the samples of coal from the Owen River and Richmond.

No. 1427 | L., Owen River.

This is a semi-bituminous coal, resembling in external appearance the Collingwood coal and also some of the coal from Mount Rochfort, but differing from them in not being a strong caking coal.

It is massive, homogeneous, hard, and lustrous. Colour—in mass, black; in powder, brown. Its structure is laminated with rhomboidal fracture.

It cokes very imperfectly, and does not puff up. From its ash being of a light brown colour, it may be inferred to contain but little iron or sulphur.

This coal is, from its composition, of average quality as a steam generator, and will be useful as a household coal. Its value is about the same as that formerly worked at Pakawau.

Composition.

Water	4·82
Fixed carbon	52·85
Gaseous	38·21
Ash	4·12
	100·00

Evaporates 6·87 times its weight of water.

No. 1410 | L., Richmond.

Brown coal, of very soft friable nature; its very inferior appearance being due, I suspect, to the sample having been taken from an exposed outcrop. It burns freely, with a clear, voluminous flame, but does not yield any coke. Its ash is reddish.

Except in the lower percentage of water and fixed carbon, this coal resembles the common brown coals of New Zealand, and is different from the coal formerly worked at Jenkins' mine, which contained 62 per cent. of carbon.

It is very desirable that this deposit should be examined with the view of determining if the seam improves in quality, and whether it occurs under conditions favourable for working.

I consider it quite equal to the brown coal that is largely mined in some parts of the Colony, but would not answer for raising steam.

Composition.

Water	16·67
Fixed carbon	29·16
Gaseous and oils	48·21
Ash	5·96
	100·00

It evaporates only 3·76 times its weight of water.

I am, &c.,
James Hector.

His Honor the Superintendent of Nelson.

By Authority: George Didsbury, Government Printer, Wellington.—1873.

[*Price 3d.*]