

No. 4.

THE HONORABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY TO THE SUPERINTENDENT, NELSON.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Auckland, 6th December, 1862.

SIR,—

In reply to your Honor's letter of the 17th ultimo, I have the honor to inform you that His Excellency the Governor will be advised to assent to the Bill for the Loan of Fifty thousand Pounds for working the Coal Mines near the Buller River, should the Provincial Council pass such a measure.

I have, &c.,

ALFRED DOMETT.

His Honor the Superintendent, Nelson.

No. 5.

THE SUPERINTENDENT, NELSON, TO THE HONORABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Superintendent's Office, Nelson,  
April 17th, 1863.

SIR,—

I have the honor to recal your attention to the subject of the proposed loan for opening the Coal-Field on the West Coast of this Province. Since my letter asking His Excellency's assent to the introduction of a Loan Bill for the above purpose in the next Session of the Provincial Council, the discovery has been made, that Coal, believed to be of the same formation as the Grey Coal, and to all appearance equal in quality, is to be obtained at a point half-way between Nelson and the River Buller, and probably accessible by a road not exceeding and perhaps less than sixty miles in length.

The advantages of opening this part of the field if it be practicable, are very great. First, the port of Nelson is incomparably better as a place of shipment than any of the Rivers of the West Coast, the best of which, the Buller, is only a small harbour of third-rate quality. Secondly, the wealth and population of the Province is principally in that part of the Country of which Nelson is the natural outlet, and any road constructed for Coal Traffic by way of Nelson would be a great convenience to the district, whilst a road made for opening the Coal-Field at the part adjacent to the River Buller, would be made in a country where as yet there is neither population nor investment, and would accommodate little at any time except the Coal trade itself. Thirdly, a road to the newly discovered portion of the Coal Field would be an important part of a main line from Nelson to the Buller and Grey districts, and would be a means of facilitating the settlement of some valuable country which at present is almost inaccessible.

For these reasons I hope it may prove, on fuller examination, that the newly discovered coal is in quantity and quality deserving of a large outlay to bring it to the market, and that the intervening country offers no serious difficulty in the way of constructing a narrow gauge railway from its site to the Port of Nelson.

Before entering on any costly survey of the suggested line, or bringing the scheme previously described to His Excellency before the Provincial Council, I am anxious to be informed whether in the event of the circumstances of the newly discovered coal deposits proving as favourable as present information describes them, His Excellency would assent to the increase of the proposed Loan to the sum of One hundred and twenty thousand Pounds; and to the amount being appropriated in general terms to the opening of the Nelson Coal-Field at the most practicable point instead of limiting its use to the particular part near the River Buller.

I enclose an estimate which I believe is a moderate one, of the extent of land which would most of it be materially increased in value by such a work as a Railway to the head of the Wangapeka river, the site of the new discovery, and which may moreover be fairly reckoned as saleable if such a work were constructed within the period of redemption of any debt contracted at the present time. I think this land will be considered an ample basis for the additional credit I am now asking, beyond the Fifty thousand Pounds for which I have His Excellency's approbation.

I have, &c.,

J. P. ROBINSON,  
Superintendent.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Auckland.