

FRIDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER, 1877.

The Committee met pursuant to adjournment at 10.30 o'clock.

PRESENT:

Mr. Pyke in the chair.

Mr. Bunny,
Mr. Carrington,
Mr. De Lautour,
Mr. Fisher,

Mr. Hislop,
Mr. Macandrew,
Hon. Mr. McLean,
Mr. Stout.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. Macandrew read and handed in a telegram he had received from R. H. Leary, Dunedin, dated 6th September. (Appendix E.)

The Committee considered draft of resolutions.

Resolutions proposed by Mr. Macandrew.

Amendment to resolution 1 (Hon. Mr. McLean): Add at the end of the resolution, "But the line from Palmerston appears to be the one that would bring in the quickest return on account of the large number of people now settled in Shag Valley, as also the shortest to construct. This Committee recommend that the Government should at once have inquiries instituted by a Commission of two, one to be the Engineer-in-Chief and the other to be a resident out of the Provincial District of Otago, to investigate and report which line would best serve the interests of the public, and be the most desirable to construct."

Amendment negatived.

Another amendment proposed by Mr. Hislop: Add at the end of resolution, "Inasmuch as it is the longest line, but that the line *viâ* Dunstan opens the most country in proportion to its length.

Amendment negatived.

Resolved, That the route to Cromwell *viâ* Strath Taieri is unquestionably that which opens up the largest area of unsold land available for pastoral and agricultural settlement.

Resolution 2 struck out.

Resolved, That the respective County Councils of Taieri, Maniototo, and Vincent, failing the Colonial Government undertaking the work, are prepared to do so on condition of a given area of land being placed at their disposal, and to hand over the line when completed to the Government.

Resolution 4 struck out.

Amendment to resolution 5, proposed by Mr. Fisher, to leave out the words "it is the duty of the Government to construct this line," in order to add, "the Committee recommend the construction of this line to the favourable consideration of the Government, and, failing the Government undertaking its construction."

Amendment agreed to.

Resolved, That the Committee recommend the construction of this line to the favourable consideration of the Government, and, failing the Government undertaking its construction, it is absolutely necessary in the interest of settlement that the work shall be forthwith proceeded with, either by the counties concerned or by a private company; and that, in either case, with a view to accelerate the progress of the work, and of diffusing employment throughout the district, the work of construction should be commenced at each end of the line, and at one or more points in the centre, simultaneously.

The Chairman laid before the Committee a draft report, which was read.

Resolved, on motion of Mr. Carrington, That the report be adopted, and that the Chairman be instructed to present the same to the House at its next sitting, and to move, that the report and evidence taken be printed.

Read and approved.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, 29TH AUGUST, 1877.

Hon. D. REID being in attendance gave evidence.

- Hon. D. Reid.* 1. *The Chairman.*] You are Minister of Lands, Mr. Reid?—Yes.
- 29th Aug., 1877. 2. We sent for you to ask you to give us any information you can with respect to the projected lines of railway from the coast to the interior; there are seven altogether. I do not know how many of these you are acquainted with?—I do not know anything at all of the Oamaru branch, very little of the Macrae's or Shag Valley branches; I know a little of the one of Lawrence, and most of the line of Taieri.
3. And do you know the country between Kingston and Cromwell?—I have simply passed over it in the coach from Frankton to Cromwell. I have passed up the lake from Kingston to Frankton.
4. With regard to the Strath Taieri line. In the first place, do you know this country at the back of the Taieri?—Yes.
5. And up to Strath Taieri?—I have not been up the river side beyond Hindon.
6. And you do not know anything of the Strath Taieri?—Oh, yes; but not of the valley from Hindon to near Blair Taieri.
7. Is it difficult or easy for railway making?—It is apparently an easy country. My opinion is, that after you get above Hindon there are parts difficult, owing to bluffs, until you get to the open country near Blair Taieri.