

No. 23.

The ENGINEER, Otago Harbour Board, to the COLONIAL MARINE ENGINEER.

(Telegram.)

Dunedin, 23rd June, 1878.

Is there any ground for supposing that Sir John Coode intended by his report to mean that 500 feet for railway purposes was to be the outside limit of reclamation, or did he not mean that original plan sanctioned by Government was not to be altered so as to increase reclamation, and 500 feet of that to be reserved for railway purposes?

John Blackett, Esq.,
Colonial Marine Engineer, Wellington.

D. L. SIMPSON,
Engineer, Otago Harbour Board.

No. 24.

The SECRETARY, Otago Harbour Board, to the OFFICER in CHARGE, Marine Department.

SIR,—

Otago Harbour Board Office, Dunedin, 28th June, 1878.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your favour, No. 375-19, of 20th instant, also telegrams of 25th and 26th instant, and am instructed by the Works Committee of the Board to inform you that they will be laid before the Board at its first meeting.

I have, &c.,

The Officer in Charge, Marine Department.

JOHN L. GILLIES,
Secretary.

No. 25.

The SECRETARY, Otago Harbour Board, to the OFFICER in CHARGE, Marine Department.

SIR,—

Otago Harbour Board Office, Dunedin, 4th July, 1878.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your favour, number and date as in margin, and, by direction of the Board, to forward you the following reply:—

The Board desires to point out that its statement of what Sir John Coode said when here was, in reference to the plan of 20th February, that he saw no difficulty in arranging for the railway station where proposed, but that he had hesitancy in regard to extended reclamation. Consequently, when Sir John says that "a reclamation to the extent contemplated" would be injurious, the Board submits that a fair reading of his report, taken in connection with the question submitted to him by the Board, must be that he refers to the extended reclamation proposed by that plan. Indeed, the Board cannot understand by what process of reasoning his report can be made to mean anything else, for had he intended to condemn or limit the original plan already authorized, and referred to in No. 1 of the Board's questions as Drawing No. 1, he no doubt would have said distinctly that not only did he object to the reclamation "to the extent contemplated by the plan of the 20th February" (referred to in the questions as Drawing No. 2), but also to the extent contemplated by the original or authorized plans.

To render the Marine Engineer's interpretation of Sir John Coode's report intelligible and consistent, it will be observed from the telegrams, copies of which are attached, that, on his attention being drawn to one anomaly in his statement, he requested a portion of that statement to be cancelled, and that, on its being further pointed out that, even after cancelling the words, still there would be an anomaly, no satisfactory answer was received, but simply "it is considered that cancellation of words mentioned makes Sir John Coode's meaning clear," a conclusion which the Board cannot comprehend, as facts militate against it.

The Board would now further point out that the last paragraph of Sir John Coode's report cannot be made to coincide with the interpretation put upon the report by the Government and its departmental officers; as, after referring to the site for the railway station as 500 feet, he says, "The question of the position, extent, and character of the basins and wharves on the harbour side of the railway, &c.," would be dealt with in his "general report." The conclusion from this must be that there will be reclamation to some extent outside the 500 feet.

The Board, on the other hand, wishes to point out that by the Board's interpretation—viz., that Sir John Coode is opposed to increased reclamation (using his own words) "to the extent contemplated by the plan of 20th February last;" but that taking this qualified statement, together with his silence in regard to the original or authorized plans, and that works were in progress involving reclamation beyond the 500 feet line while he was here (and he took no exception to them), and now, as the Marine Engineer points out in making mention of the site he does as being most suitable for the railway, he merely did so because he supposed that it was wished that the station should be somewhere in the locality shown by the plan of 20th February—it is fair to conclude that he saw nothing to object to in the authorized plans.

Considering that Sir John Coode's written report is not in itself a clear answer to the questions submitted to him by the Board, which questions had been previously seen and framed to meet the views of the Hon. the Attorney-General, the Board regrets that there should be any conflict of opinion between the verbal language of Sir John as used to the Chairman of the Board and the Chairman of the Works Committee in presence of the Secretary, the gentlemen who together formed a Committee to wait upon Sir John during his stay in Dunedin, and as understood by the Marine Engineer. The Board is quite satisfied the language as stated by its letter of the 12th June was used, and that too not incidentally or casually, but in reply to questions definitely put to Sir John Coode, which does not seem to have been the case with the Marine Engineer; and it appears to the Board that, if the Marine Engineer's statement of what Sir John expressed to him be applied only to what Sir John refers to as "a reclamation to the extent contemplated by the plan of 20th February last," there is not neces-