

RAILWAY GAUGE COMMITTEE.

REPORT.

YOUR Committee having taken all the engineering evidence at present within their reach, also having examined Dr. Hector upon the topographical features of the Middle Island, beg to report that, however desirable it may be to establish one uniform gauge, the evidence before your Committee is not of such a conclusive character as to warrant them in recommending any particular gauge, and that therefore it would not be desirable, under the present circumstances of the Colony, to insist upon uniformity in this respect.

They are also of opinion that one trunk line of railway will not be applicable to the present requirements, nor suited for developing the resources of the country, with its present scattered population. As regards the present wants of the Colony, a narrow gauge appears calculated to carry all the traffic for many years, and would possess the advantage of greater cheapness in construction; for this reason railways of this character should be encouraged.

The question of gauge cannot, as it appears to your Committee, be satisfactorily settled, except by a Commission appointed specially to inquire into the whole subject, whose duty it should be to report, not only upon the best gauge, but also upon the direction of the main trunk lines of railway throughout both the North and Middle Island, and to recommend the necessary reservation of land for this purpose.

A. J. BURNS,
Chairman.
