

Sir F. D. Bell.
5th Sept., 1877.

245. Then the line which you think would give an immediate return is that between Palmerston and Waihemo?—Yes. Whatever is the traffic that has to come down from the interior comes down now by dray, and as you made a section of five or ten miles of the Shag Valley line, you would tap so much of that traffic, and shorten the dray road.

246. You would do the same with the Strath Taieri line?—When you reached Strath Taieri, but not before.

247. What would be the traffic on this line which the Palmerston line would have in comparison with the Strath Taieri line; it would simply be that arising from the cultivated land in the vicinity of Palmerston?—Yes; but you must not take it simply in that way. You must take it that the line which would go by Palmerston, with the exception of fifteen miles, would go through land which is or would be immediately brought into cultivation. If the line went up through Shag Valley this land would be cultivated at once.

248. What is the immediate return of which you speak on the one line as compared with the other, if both lines tap the traffic from the interior?—I repeat that all the traffic there is from the interior will get to Dunedin by either line, which ever of the two is made; but, inasmuch as the dray road from which the traffic now comes is one that goes by Palmerston, every section you made upwards from Palmerston would tap all the existing or growing traffic; whereas if the railway were made by Strath Taieri, you must make the railway to Strath Taieri before it would tap any traffic whatever from the interior.

249. Supposing the line is commenced simultaneously at the middle and at both ends?—I do not think there would be a single pound of traffic on the middle section. If the line were commenced at the middle and at both ends, that would not affect the question of traffic from the Taieri Plain to Dunedin one bit.

250. Mr. Macandrew.] Is there no dray road now along the Strath Taieri plain?—No, not through.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

TO THE HONORABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COLONY OF NEW ZEALAND.

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED RESIDENTS IN THE PROVINCIAL DISTRICT OF OTAGO, IN THE SAID COLONY.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

That your petitioners are strongly impressed with the urgent necessity that exists for taking immediate steps for the construction of a line of railway which will open up the interior of this part of the country; leaving the Southern trunk line in the neighbourhood of Mosgiel, proceeding through the extensive and fertile plains of Strath Taieri, Maniototo, Ida Valley, and Manuhirikia, thence up the valley of the Clutha towards Clyde and Cromwell.

That such a railway, your petitioners are advised, presents no engineering difficulties; it could be cheaply and easily constructed, and would open up for settlement at least 500,000 acres of Crown lands, all comparatively level and fit for the plough. These lands are capable of settling and supporting a large population, and their judicious disposal would, after the construction of the railway, realize more than the cost of the whole work.

Your petitioners believe that the importance of the proposed railway can scarcely be overrated. Apart from the large and favourable field for settlement it will open up, the line will develop an extensive traffic in agricultural produce, wool, stock, general merchandise, building materials, and passengers, besides largely increasing the prosperity of the inland towns, and extending around and beyond them the sphere of settlement and enterprise.

From statistics and information which have been collected, your petitioners are satisfied that the proposed line will immediately on completion pay working expenses and interest on cost, and that there is no part of the colony where a railway is more urgently required. No other projected branch line would develop so much material prosperity, or be the means of indirectly adding so much to the public revenue.

Your petitioners, therefore, very respectfully but earnestly beg to express the hope that such measures may be adopted during the present sitting of Parliament towards the attainment of the above object as to your honorable House may seem fit.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

R. H. LEARY, Mayor of Dunedin.
And 3,149 Others.

APPENDIX B.

Mr. C. HEUSTON, Town Clerk, Clyde, to V. PYKE, Esq., M.H.R.

SIR,—

Town Clerk's Office, Clyde, 21st July, 1877.

I have the honor to forward a copy of resolution passed at a meeting of this Council held on Tuesday, the 3rd day of July, 1877:—

That it was unanimously agreed that every exertion should be used to procure a railway to Clyde and Cromwell *via* Strath Taieri, and to request that you will accord your co-operation and support thereto at the next General Assembly.

I have, &c.,
CHARLES HEUSTON,
Town Clerk.