

On the motion of Mr. Barron, *Resolved*, That the Chairman ascertain, through the officers of the Public Works Department, under what Act or authority the Peninsular and Ocean Beach Railway was constructed, and whether all the conditions under which the railway was authorized have been and are being complied with as to construction, maintenance, and running of trains.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Bastings attended and gave evidence.

Moved by Mr. Wilson, That the Committee recommends the Government to take over the Nightcaps Coal Company's Railway on the terms proposed by them.

Amendment by Mr. Peacock: To strike out all the words after the word "That," and to insert the following: "the question of deciding on the report be deferred till to-morrow."

And the question being put, "That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the question," the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

Ayes: Mr. Cowan, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Wilson.

Noes: Mr. Barron, Mr. Gore, Dr. Newman, Mr. Peacock.

So it passed in the negative.

The amendment was then put and carried.

The Committee adjourned till Tuesday, the 10th August, at 11 o'clock.

TUESDAY, 10TH AUGUST, 1886.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present: Mr. Moss (Chairman), Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Barron, Mr. Cowan, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Gore, Dr. Newman, Mr. Peacock, Mr. Wilson.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Chairman read a letter from Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, Under Secretary for Public Works.

Moved by Mr. Peacock, That the Committee find in the case of the four railways constructed for coal purposes that the Government are under no obligation to purchase these lines, and the question with regard to them resolves itself into a matter of policy as to assisting the development of the resources of the colony, upon which the Committee does not feel itself called upon to express an opinion.

Amendment by Mr. Wilson: To strike out all the words after the word "That," and to insert the following: "the list of railways referred to the Committee be considered seriatim."

And the question being put, "That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the question," it passed in the negative.

And the amendment being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

Ayes: Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Barron, Mr. Cowan, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Wilson.

Noes: Mr. Gore, Dr. Newman, Mr. Peacock.

Amendment carried.

Moved by Mr. Wilson: That the Committee recommends the Government to take over the Nightcaps Coal Company's Railway on the terms proposed by them.

Amendment by Dr. Newman: To strike out all the words after the word "That," and to insert the following: "the Government be asked whether it is their intention to purchase these lines, provided the Committee recommend the prices as suitable."

And the question being put, "That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the question," the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

Ayes: Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Cowan, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Wilson.

Noes: Mr. Barron, Mr. Gore, Dr. Newman, Mr. Peacock.

The votes being equal, the Chairman gave his casting vote with the noes.

So it passed in the negative.

The amendment was then put and carried.

The Committee adjourned till Wednesday, the 11th August, at 11 o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 11TH AUGUST, 1886.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present: Mr. Moss (Chairman), Hon. Mr. Ballance, Mr. Barron, Mr. Cowan, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Montgomery, Dr. Newman, Mr. Wilson.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

On the motion of Mr. Montgomery, *Resolved*, That the consideration of the purchase of these lines by the Government can be delayed till next session without injury to the public service.

Mr. Barron moved, That as regards the Ocean Beach Railway the Government should take such action as will ensure the completion of the line to St. Clair, and the regular running of trains.

And the question being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

Aye: Mr. Barron.

Noes: Hon. Mr. Ballance, Mr. Cowan, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Wilson.

So it passed in the negative.

On the motion of the Hon. Mr. Ballance, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, a unanimous vote of thanks was given to the Chairman.