

1852.

VICTORIA.

MELBOURNE AND HOBSON'S BAY RAILWAY.

Ordered by the Council to be Printed, 7th December, 1852.

C. J. LA TROBE,

Message No. 45.

Lieutenant Governor.

The Lieutenant Governor takes the opportunity of submitting to the consideration of the Legislative Council the enclosed Copy of a Letter, with the accompanying Plan, received from the Provisional Committee of a Company now being formed for the purpose of securing Railroad communication with the Beach.

It will be seen that, beyond other facilities, it is requested that aid, in the shape of a loan of £50,000 from the Public Revenue, should be given to the Company.

The object, so far as it promises to secure the advantages of prompt and safe communication with Hobson's Bay, is of too great moment not to command the most favorable attention; and the Lieutenant Governor has expressed himself in favor of the establishment of a Railway communication, in preference to any other scheme, and willing to forward this object as far as may lie in his power. At the same time, as it appears that so much difference of opinion exists, even among practical scientific men, as to the particular mode in which the object should be secured—the Lieutenant Governor considers that the most satisfactory course will be for him to seek the concurrence of the Council to an appropriation of funds, whether temporary, or otherwise, which, even if drawn with the consent of Her Majesty's Government, from the unappropriated moiety of the Territorial Revenue and applicable to purposes of internal improvement, would not be so applied, he conceives, under the circumstances, without the advice of the Legislature.

Government Offices,

Melbourne, 7th December, 1852.

[COPY.]

*Temporary Office of the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company,
74, Collins-street, Melbourne, 12th November, 1852.*

SIR,

Referring to interviews with which His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor honoured a Deputation from the Projectors of this Company on the 11th August last, and subsequently the late Auditor General, accompanied by J. P. Fawkner, Esq., M. C., and the intimation given to the latter gentleman that a statement in writing of the position of the Company, and of the aid desired from the Government, should be sent in for His Excellency's consideration, I am instructed to forward to you, Sir, the following *precis* for His Excellency's information. Compliance with His Excellency's desire has been deferred, until the Company should be in a position to shew that it is efficiently formed, and has a *bona fide* purpose to carry out the Works with energy and promptitude. Upwards of 1,000 shares of £50 each, (the number required by the Prospectus to form the Company), were appropriated before the Share List was closed by only 120 parties, amongst whom are a large proportion of the Merchants and Traders in the City, who have generally subscribed to an amount between £500 and £1000 each—£9080 has been paid into the Company's Bank by Shareholders, as Deposits, and the remaining £920 is due from parties who are prevented from paying their Deposits until an Act of Council has been obtained, limiting the liability of Shareholders.

The Company have engaged the services of an Engineer highly recommended, and who appears competent to the undertaking, by whom Surveys have been made and Plans drawn, which have received the approbation of the Provisional Committee; a Ground Plan of the proposed line with its Pier and Town Terminus is transmitted herewith for His Excellency's use.

The cost of this undertaking carried out in an efficient manner with Locomotive Power, a sufficient Town Terminus, and a Pier, at which the largest Ships may discharge their cargoes, with Yards, Sheds and Warehouses, requisite for depositing Goods which cannot be got rid of immediately on being landed, from their Owners being unknown or other causes, is estimated at £100,000,—exclusive of any outlay for Land; of this amount large in itself, but small compared with the benefits to result to the Colony from its expenditure, it has been above stated that one-half—£50,000,—has been subscribed for by private enterprize within the short space of Three Months, a fact that affords conclusive evidence of the estimation in which this project is held, and the acknowledged advantage of its being carried into operation immediately. The Provisional Committee trust that His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor will see in these particulars, full cause for continuing to entertain towards the Company the favourable sentiments expressed at the interview referred to, and will make to the Company a Free Grant of the Land laid down in the Plan as requisite for the Railway purposes, with a Loan for a few years of the remaining half of the Capital estimated to be required, namely—the sum of £50,000 from the Public Funds of the Colony; for it is evident the whole Community must be benefitted to an incalculable amount by the completion of this, the most direct possible communication with the Shipping in Hobson's Bay, the Port of the Metropolis.

The Committee confiding in the expressed approbation of His Excellency, and the feeling of the Legislative Council which is believed to be nearly unanimous in favour of this project; aware that the Public are looking to them for energetic action, and that even a few days lost at this period of the year may delay the completion of the Work for a whole season, and being empowered by Deed to enter into the necessary Contracts, are now in treaty with parties to furnish the required Timber, and only await the favourable reply of His Excellency to this application, to conclude their engagements and proceed with the works. The site for the proposed Town Terminus being upon Land granted to the Corporation of Melbourne for Public purposes, the City Council has been applied to and has consented to its being occupied by this Company for the use of the Railway.

The precise terms and mode of occupation are not quite agreed upon, but the Provisional Committee are prepared to meet every difficulty that can arise from this source, and the arrangements will be completed while the Bill of incorporating the Company, is passing through the Legislative Council.

W. S. Chauncy, Esq., the Engineer to the Company, or myself, will have pleasure in attending upon the Lieutenant Governor at any time when summoned, to afford any further information that may desired; and requesting the favor from you to bring this application under His Excellency's notice at the earliest opportunity,

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

J. B. WATSON,

Secretary and Treasurer to the Provisional Committee.

The Honorable
the COLONIAL SECRETARY,
of Victoria,
Melbourne.