

1853.

VICTORIA.

GAUGE FOR RAILWAYS.

*LAI*D upon THE COUNCIL TABLE by THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, and ordered by THE COUNCIL to be printed, 25th October, 1853.

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Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sydney, New South Wales,
10th October, 1853.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th July last, on the subject of the width of railways, in which you state that having given his particular attention to the reports elicited from the several Railway Companies incorporated in Victoria, and from other sources, His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor cannot advocate the adoption of the narrow gauge.

2. In reply I am desired to remind you of the instruction contained in the Secretary of State's Despatch of the 30th June, 1848, No. 106, (a copy of which is enclosed for more easy reference) on the subject of a uniform railway gauge for the Australian Colonies, and to inform you that as an inter-Colonial question of great importance it will be the duty of His Excellency Sir Charles Fitz Roy, as Governor General, to bring the matter under the notice of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

E. DEAS THOMSON.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary,
Melbourne.

No. 106.

Downing-street,
30th June, 1848.

SIR,

With reference to Mr. Gladstone's Circular Despatch of the 15th January, 1846, transmitting the Standing Orders of the Houses of Parliament for the information of your Legislature in framing laws and regulations for the construction of railways, I have to acquaint you that it has appeared to me to be highly desirable, in the event of railways being established in the Colony of New South Wales, that one uniform gauge should be established, with a view to the probability of the meeting, at some future, though probably distant, period, of the lines, not only in the same settlement but by a junction of those constructed in the adjacent Colonies.

I have communicated with the Commissioners of Railways in order to ascertain the width of gauge which might be best suited for general adoption, and I have been informed that in their opinion the most desirable gauge would be that which is prescribed by the Act 9 and 10 Vict., cap. 57, for railways in England, and which is the width of four feet eight and half inches. That gauge has already been adopted in the rules framed by the Government of South Australia for regulating the principle on which Railway Bills should be drawn in that Colony, and it will be desirable that the same gauge should be adopted at any future period in the construction of railways in the Colony under your Government.

I am, &c.,

(Signed)

GREY.