FOR WORKS RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT
07.161
Pet

To the Hon. Minister for Works,—

THE humble petition of the undersigned landowners and residents in the Districts of Cleveland, South Brisbane, Bulimba, Tingalpa, Capalaba, Mount Cotton, Redland Bay, Belmont, and Coorparoo sheweth :—

That your Petitioners have heard with much pleasure that you have expressed yourself in favour of a Direct Route for the South Brisbane and Cleveland Railway, and that the line should run in as nearly a straight line as possible.

That inasmuch as certain persons interested in carrying out this line in a Circuitous Route, have laid their arguments before you, we have deemed it advisable to give you and the Cabinet of which you are a prominent member, some of the many reasons why your original decision should be adhered to. We therefore beg permission to submit the following facts :—

1st.—The direct or straight line has far less engineering difficulties to overcome, will be from six to eight miles shorter and will consequently cost a much smaller sum in construction and maintenance; more trains can also be run, and less time being occupied than by the long route.

2nd.—It will pass through and render valuable the town of Tingalpa, which is well situated, and is yet almost all unalienated, besides about ten thousand acres of Crown lands. It is believed that the purchase money of these lands, which could be at once available for sale and will be eagerly sought after, would go far to cover the cost of construction.

3rd.—That while the circuitous route is waterless in a dry time, an ample supply is available on the direct route.

4th.—That the cost of land to be resumed on the straight line will be merely nominal, as much of it runs through Crown lands, and the major part of the landowners on the route have offered to give the requisite land, while on the circuitous route this would be a very heavy item.

5th.—That whereas the circuitous route would tend to reduce the value of land in the town of Cleveland and check its growth, making the journey thither more lengthy and tedious, the straight line would increase the value of property there, much of which is still in the hands of the Government.

6th.—That the main argument in favour of the circuitous route, viz., the larger population on that line, is fast losing its force, by reason of the much greater rapidity with which settlement is proceeding on the straight line, which will shortly have the larger population, in consequence of running through one of the most salubrious and beautiful districts around Brisbane. The growth of settlement in the district being more than four times as great as on any portion of the circuitous line, and would be rapidly augmented by the Direct Survey and early construction.

7th—That the traffic on the straight line would, in consequence of its tapping a district known to contain Coal, Ironstone, and Freestone, be a growing and profitable one, as these deposits now only await communication being established in order to attract capital and population for their development.

I made a careful analysis of the sample of coal given me, and found that it contained, in 100 parts :—

Volatile Substances, such as hydrocarbons, etc.	13·78	per cent.
Fixed Carbon	68·85	,,
Ashes	14·25	,,
Moisture	3·12	,,
Sulphur...	None	

The coal did not coke, and the ashes did not give any clinker; their color was nearly white, showing that scarcely any iron was present. Presence of iron in the ashes nearly always indicates presence of iron pyrites (sulphur) in the coal. The sample of coal was somewhat friable. This is due to its being a purely surface piece, and therefore exposed during ages to the influence of the atmospherilia. In my opinion there is not the slightest doubt that the sample of coal represents an outcrop of a most valuable and important deposit of coal, which, being free of sulphur, and containing, *for an outcrop*, a very small percentage of ashes, is of the highest commercial value. The ironstones shown me are also strong indications of a deposit of commercially valuable iron ore, which, in connection with the coal deposit, is sure to make the place in which these deposits are situated an industrial centre.

K. TH. STAIGER, F.L.S.

8th.—That experts pronounce these coals to be superior to any other in Queensland, while large quantities of land have been taken up for mining purposes since those valuable seams have been discovered.

9th.—That the straight line will be a great boon to the farmers of Belmont and Tingalpa Scrub, as also those of Upper Tingalpa and Mount Cotton, who would take the train at The Rocks, while a line nearer the coast would be of no use to them, and would attract very little or no traffic except from those places between it and the coast.

10th.—That in view of these facts, and to enable capital and labour to be at once brought to bear in the development of the rich mineral deposits of this district, and to establish the shortest possible communication between the City and Cleveland, your petitioners pray that you will at once order a survey of the straight line to Cleveland to be made.

11th.—That the Direct Route herein advocated, being in point of fact a Central Route, will confer larger benefits and means of transit on the residents of the district generally, than the roundabout route, which would, in consequence of its running, roughly, parallel with and near the Brisbane River, come more directly into competition with steamboats, which will be certain to keep pace with the increase of