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CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

PARLIAMENT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
EASTERN HARBOUR WORKS

REPORT

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CAPE OF GOOD HOPE, JULY 1 1861

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REPORT

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

TO CONSIDER AND REPORT UPON THE

EASTERN HARBOUR WORKS.

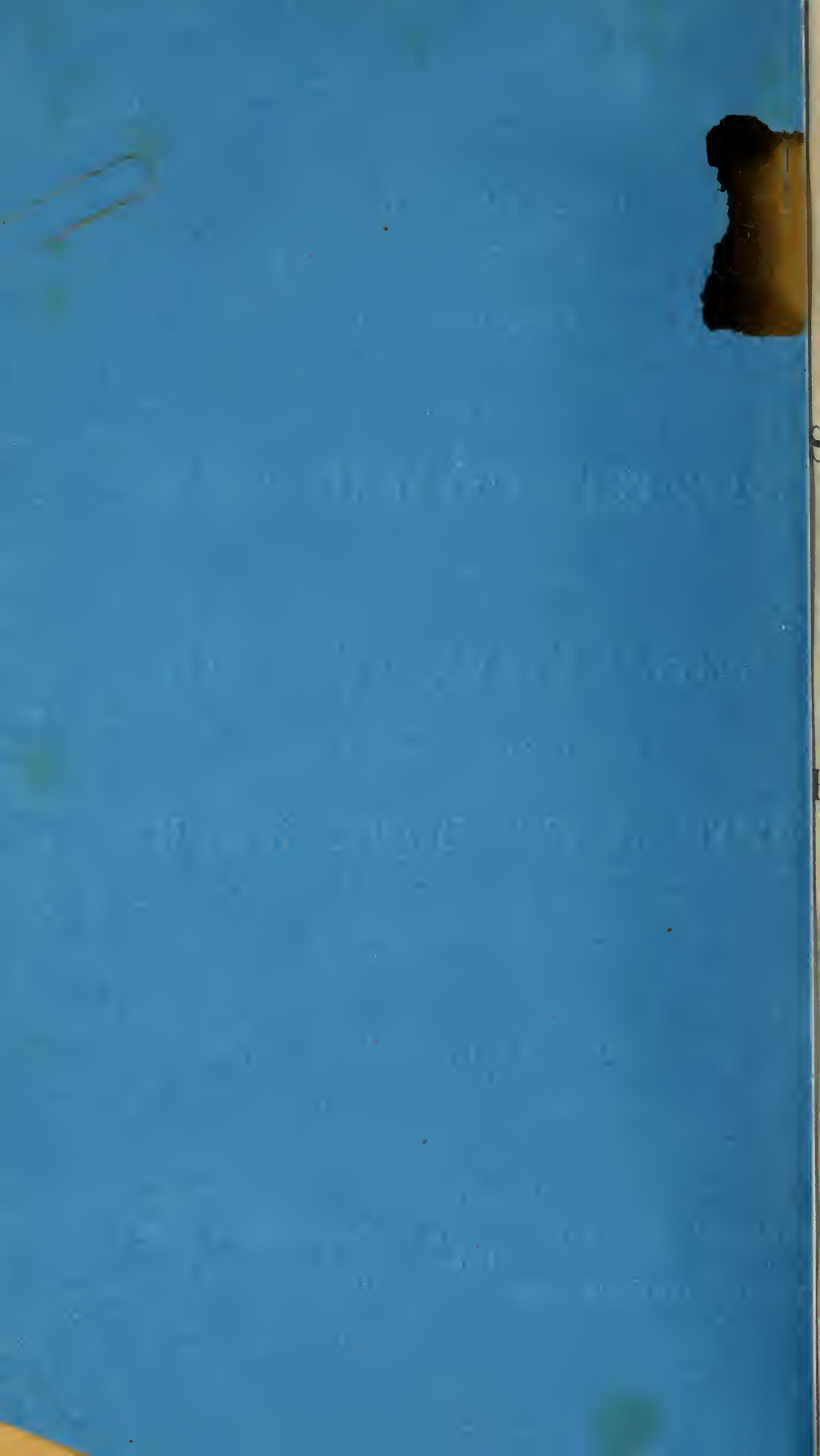


Published by order of the Legislative Council.
1867.

CAPE TOWN:

SAUL SOLOMON AND CO., STEAM PRINTING OFFICE.
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C. 2--'67, EASTERN HARBOUR WORKS.



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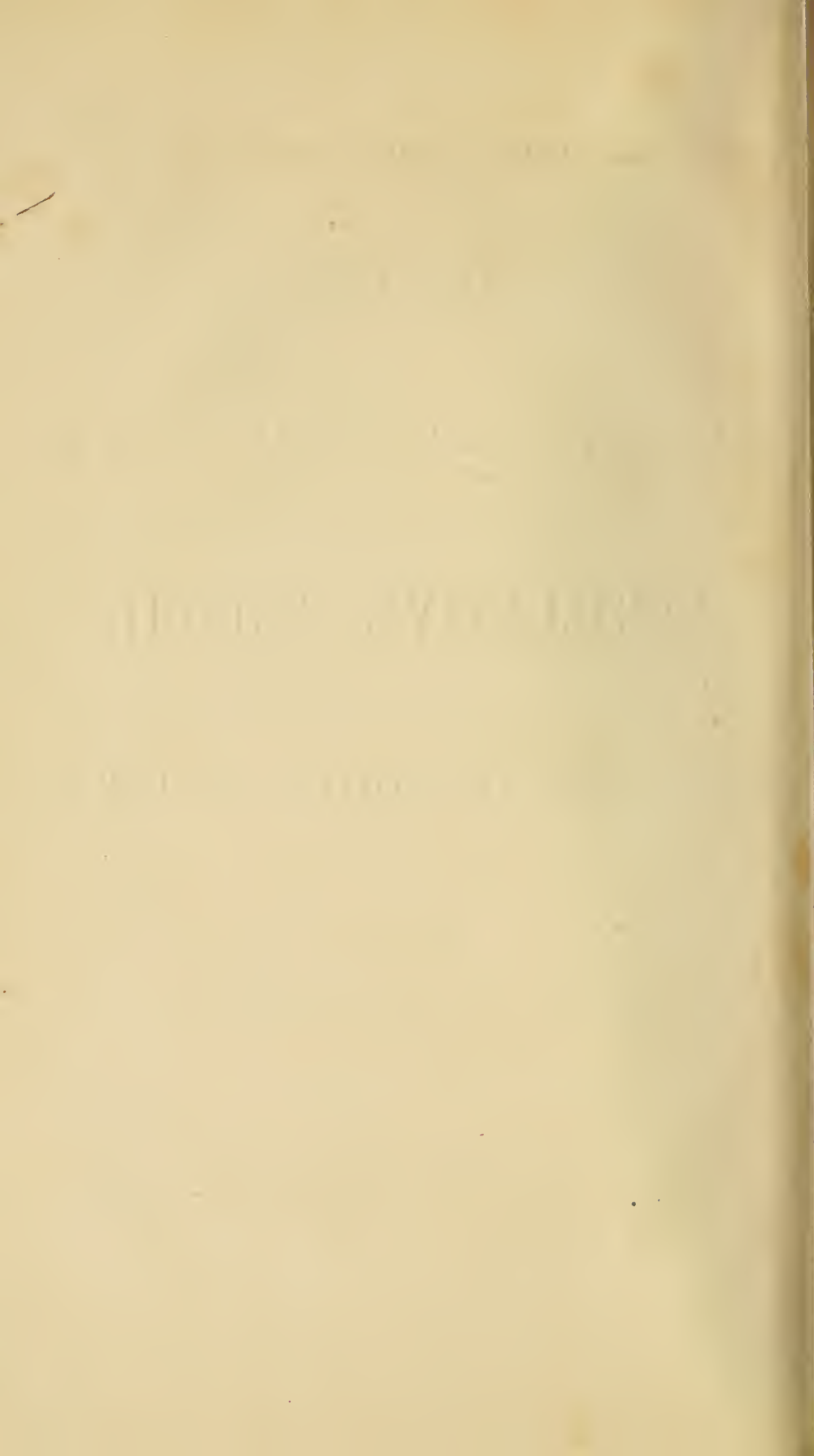
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REPORT

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE appointed by the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL on the 26th July, 1867, to whom was referred "the Message (No. 12) of His Excellency the Governor with reference to the HARBOUR WORKS of PORT ELIZABETH, EAST LONDON, and the KOWIE."

PRESENT:

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,

|

Mr. Chase.

1. Your Committee have to report that they concur with the Resolutions of the House of Assembly with regard to the proposed assistance to the Ports of Algoa Bay and East London.

2. Your Committee have directed their inquiries more especially to subjects connected with Port Alfred, with a view to ascertain,—1st, The progress of the works hitherto under the management of the Directors of the Harbour Company; 2ndly, Whether the proposed assistance of convict labour only would enable the Company to prosecute the undertaking with the vigour and expedition necessary to marine works; 3rdly, Whether it be expedient, or otherwise, that the Government should take over the works at once.

3. Your Committee are of opinion, judging from the evidence before them, that the works at Port Alfred have been, so far, economically and successfully carried out; and that, had funds sufficient been forthcoming, they might ere this have been completed; the outlay might have been, to a great extent, reimbursed by the sale of lands adjacent; and the trade of the Port would have given, in wharfage dues, a

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revenue to meet the interest on loans, which has hitherto been paid out of money voted for construction, whereby the operations of the Company have been seriously crippled.

4. Your Committee have taken the evidence of Mr. Andrews, Engineer of the Table Bay Harbour Works, on the sufficiency of convict labour alone, without pecuniary assistance, in the prosecution of the works at Port Alfred. He stated that if such a proposal were made to apply to the works under his supervision in Table Bay he would consider it tantamount to a stoppage of the works. Other evidence taken by your Committee is equally decisive on this point. Your Committee are, therefore, of opinion that, in the public interests, further and immediate assistance should be rendered to the Company.

5. Your Committee are of opinion that it would be desirable for the Government to open negotiations with the Company on the subject of taking over the works, for reason that applications for assistance are now met in a spirit not favourable to their speedy completion.

6. Your Committee are of opinion that the present liability of the Company must be regarded as a public liability, and that steps should be taken to liquidate the same, inasmuch as it entails the heavy charge of ten per cent. interest, while a public loan might be obtained at six per cent.

7. As most of the Directors of the Company are now in Cape Town, your Committee are of opinion that Government might with advantage at once confer with them as to the terms on which the shareholders would relinquish their rights altogether on behalf of the Government.

HENRY TUCKER, Chairman.

Committee Rooms, 5th August, 1867.

PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEE.

Monday, 29th July, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. Barry,		Mr. Chase,
„ Kennelly,		„ Tucker.

Resolved,—That Mr. Tucker take the chair.

Order of Council, dated 26th July, 1867, appointing the Committee, read.

Message of His Excellency the Governor (No. 12) read.

Report of Kowie Harbour Improvement Company for the year 1866 read, and accompanying statement of accounts examined.

Resolved,—That Mr. Andrews, Resident Engineer of the Table Bay Harbour Works, be requested to attend and give evidence at the next meeting.

Committee adjourned till Tuesday, the 30th instant, at half-past 10 o'clock.

Tuesday, 30th July, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,		Mr. Barry.
„ Chase,		

A. T. Andrews, Esq., Resident Engineer of Table Bay Harbour Works, examined.

Resolved,—That the Hon'ble Mr. Cawood and Captain Doane be requested to attend and give evidence at the next meeting.

Committee adjourns till Wednesday, 31st instant, at half-past 10 o'clock.

Wednesday, 31st July, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,
,, Chase,

Mr. Barry.

Captain Doane examined.

The Hon'ble S. Cawood, Member of Council, examined.

Resolved,—That Mr. G. Wood, jun., Member of the House of Assembly, be requested to attend and give evidence at the next meeting.

Committee adjourns till Thursday, the 1st August, at half-past 10 o'clock.

Thursday, 1st August, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,
,, Chase,

Mr. Barry.

George Wood, jun., Esq., Member of the House of Assembly, examined.

Committee adjourns.

Saturday, 3rd August, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,

Mr. Chase.

The Hon'ble Mr. Cock, Member of Council, examined.

The Chairman is requested to frame draft Report.

Committee adjourns till Monday, the 5th instant, at 10 o'clock.

Monday, 5th August, 1867.

PRESENT:

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,

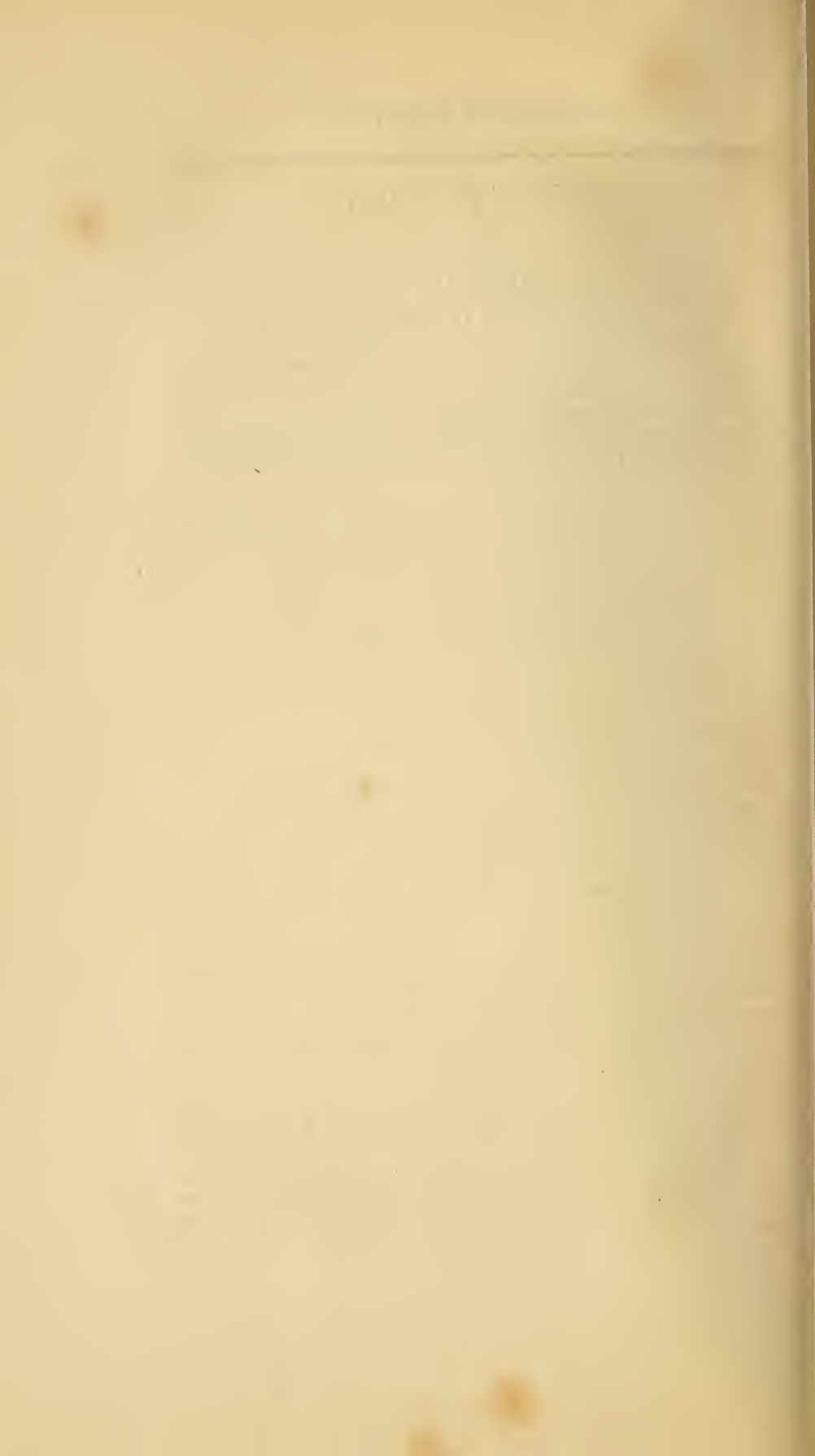
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Mr. Chase.

Chairman submits draft Report.

Committee in deliberation on Report.

After deliberation, Report adopted, and the Chairman is requested to report accordingly.



MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

COMMITTEE ON EASTERN HARBOUR WORKS.

Tuesday, 30th July, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,
,, Chase,

Mr. Barry.

A. T. Andrews, Esq., examined.

1. *Chairman.*] You are Resident Engineer of the Table Bay Harbour Works?—I am. *A. T. Andrews, Esq.*

2. Have you ever visited the Kowie?—I paid it a visit in 1862. July 30, 1867.

3. Did you inspect the plans on which it was proposed to carry out the works?—I inspected the works, and had all the plans and papers which, I believe, were before the Government at that time; and I reported to Government on the 30th September of the same year.

4. You have not visited the works since?—I have not had an opportunity since.

5. You suggested some alterations in the works?—Yes; certain alterations were, I considered, necessary, and these I specified in my reports.

6. Are you aware whether those recommendations have been carried out?—I have just been looking over Mr. Bourne's reports, and from what I see by them it appears that most of my recommendations have been carried out. Some small changes have been made, as found necessary in carrying on the work.

7. From what has come to your knowledge since, have you any reason to change the opinion you then expressed as

A. T. Andrews,
Esq.
 July 30, 1867. to the desirability of the work being carried out?—Very little information has reached me since; but, taking these reports as stating the facts,—and I have no doubt they do,—the works seem to have been successful so far.

8. You have not changed your opinion as to that?—I have not changed my opinion, nor seen any cause to do so from anything I have heard.

9. Should you think, from personal inspection or from what you have heard since, that it would be desirable for the Government to take over the works?—I can hardly give an opinion on that subject; but I am strongly of opinion that the works should not be abandoned, or allowed to fall out of repair. I think every means should be taken to complete them, as they are so near completion now.

10. Then, as far as you saw, you think the company have obtained good value for their outlay?—Yes; I have mentioned in my report that the works have been carried out in a satisfactory manner, and economy seems to have been studied in every respect.

11. From your opportunities of judging of the matter, do you think that the assistance of Parliament only with a view to keep the convicts employed would be sufficient to place the company in a position to carry on the works with advantage?—I think not. I think such a proceeding would be tantamount to abandonment; unless such works are carried on with spirit, the money already spent is likely to be all wasted, and what has been done will be lost.

12. The resolution of the House of Assembly states “that such expenditure only should be authorized on these works as may be necessary to employ effectively the convicts thereon engaged.” If such a resolution were sent to you, as engineer of the breakwater works, what would be the effect on your mind?—I would consider it as tantamount to a stoppage of the works.

13. And would you look upon it as waste of what had been granted?—I would look upon it as a waste of what had before been granted, and as a waste of the convicts’ labour. I should think they had much better be employed on some roads, or other works in the neighbourhood.

14. Mr. *Kennelly.*] Then, if the works were stopped, they would fall rapidly to decay, I presume, and a very

short time would render what has been done nugatory?—*A. T. Andrews, Esq.*
 That depends on the weather. They may not deteriorate rapidly, or, if bad weather occur, they may go to ruin immediately. Still the risk would be very great to run. *July 30, 1867.*

15. You have said that when you were there you made certain suggestions, some of which were carried out; but was there any material suggestion made by you that was not carried out, to your knowledge?—I cannot say. Mr. Bourne mentions certain suggestions I made that have been carried out; but I cannot say that those which he does not mention have not been carried out also. But with one exception he seems to fall in with all my ideas on the matter, and, therefore, I think there has been no material alteration.

16. *Chairman.*] Do you consider that the works would be carried out more economically or successfully by the company, or by the Government?—Looking at the outlay, and the amount of work done, to the present time, I think it would be better in the hands of the company.

17. Then you consider that the management of the works hitherto by the company entitles it to the liberal consideration of the country?—I think it entitles them to the confidence of the country.

18. *Mr. Barry.*] Your opinion is based upon what you saw in 1862, and what you have read since?—Yes. I must say, in regard to the employment of convicts, that if the Kowie Company have by them a large quantity of materials, that would affect my answer materially. They could go on using up those materials. But I doubt, from what I have read, whether they have any quantity.

19. *Chairman.*] And do you consider it a dangerous experiment, and not desirable, to limit the expenditure to the support of the convicts only?—I think so, as I understand the resolution, that only the expense of supporting the convicts be granted.

20. You consider, in a professional point of view, that a further grant of money is necessary to the completion of these works?—Yes; and also to test their value as an undertaking, because at present they are so incomplete that no certain opinion can be given as to their eventual success or failure.

Wednesday, 31st July, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,
„ Chase,

Mr. Barry.

Captain *Doane* examined.

Capt. *Doane*, July 31, 1867. 21. *Chairman.*]—You are captain and owner of the schooner *Flash*, now in Table Bay?—Yes.

22. Have you ever been at the Kowie?—Yes; I have been there four times.

23. What depth of water has there been when you crossed?—It has varied. For the first three trips the depth of water, at spring tides, was 11 feet 6 inches inside, and on the bar from 12 to 13 feet. On the last occasion, the trip from which I have just returned, there had been a succession of westerly gales, which prevented the sand from being got out of the harbour. The depth then was 10 feet 6 inches inside, and 11 feet 6 inches on the bar.

24. *Mr. Barry.*] What is your draft of water?—It was 9 feet 3 inches going in, and 8 feet 3 inches coming out. On the previous occasion I was drawing 11 feet 3 inches, and went in without touching.

25. *Chairman.*] As the owner of a vessel, should you desire to avoid the Kowie?—I should be glad to have continued employment there.

26. What is your tonnage?—She registers 111 tons, and carries 200 tons of general cargo.

27. *Mr. Barry.*] Do you sail in and out, or are you usually towed in and out?—Generally towed. This time I sailed in until I was inside the bar.

28. Without a tug, you would not consider it an advisable port to go to?—I think it an advisable port to go to, only that I would expect some detention from winds, and would require a tug to get out. It is not equally necessary in getting in.

29. Have you ever been to other ports on the coast?—I have been to the Knysna four times, and to East London five times.

30. Is there more difficulty in getting into the Kowie or in getting into the Knysna River?—About equal. At the Knysna there is plenty of water, and it would probably be the better harbour if it had a tug. Capt. Doane.
July 31, 1867.

31. Then you mean that, in consideration of their having a tug at the Kowie, you would prefer going there than to the other ports?—Yes.

32. Mr. *Kennelly*.] Was your vessel loaded in London?—No. I loaded in America for Algoa Bay, when I first came here. I have been two years and nine months on the coast.

33. Mr. *Barry*.] When did you first visit Port Alfred?—Not quite a year ago.

34. Since you first visited there, do you see the port improved?—I cannot say much improved. I think the works have got to the most dangerous point, and that point is to be passed to make much improvement in the port.

35. You know the works now being carried on?—Yes.

36. Do you think when they are completed they will be of great advantage?—Yes. Owing to rocks lying at the end of the western pier, as it now stands, and the eastern pier not being completed sufficiently to turn the current now setting from the eastward, that current is apt to carry a vessel on those rocks, so that the completion of the eastern pier will save vessels entering the harbour from the current which now carries them upon the rocks.

37. Then you do not consider it necessary to complete the western pier?—Yes. I should consider it necessary to run both piers out still further.

38. But if the completion of the eastern pier will save vessels from the rocks, it would appear unnecessary to carry out the western pier?—In order to smoothen the water inside the bar, to enable the dredger to work to keep the channel clear and enable vessels to run in and out with smooth water, it is desirable that the western pier should be also carried some distance further.

39. Mr. *Kennelly*.] And that would also deepen the channel?—Yes.

40. Mr. *Chase*.] If the eastern pier were run out forty-five feet, would it effect that smoothening of the water without reference to the western pier?—I think it would require about one hundred feet, in order to get the full length of the vessel into the current. The whole length of the vessel

Capt. *Doane*. must be in the current before you can enter safely. The
 July 31, 1867. current from the eastward catches her bows, and before she
 can recover her steerage way, her bow is swept against the
 rocks. The current comes by at the rate of three or four
 knots

41. Mr. *Barry*.] After you have loaded inside and are
 ready for sea, what has been your average detention in
 getting out?—I have only had one detention in three times
 going out. But this time the westerly gales detained us ten
 days; and once in the summer months I had three or four
 days' detention.

42. Mr. *Kennelly*.] Then this is the most disadvantageous
 portion of the year?—Yes.

43. What is the reason?—The continuation of westerly
 gales sends in such a sea.

44. Mr. *Barry*.] What detention have you had in going
 in?—I was detained this time ten days. The winter months
 are the worst.

45. Mr. *Kennelly*.] You consider the winter monsoon to
 be the worst season for entering and leaving the port; but
 when these works are completed, you do not contemplate this
 detention?—It will be avoided in a great measure.

46. Mr. *Barry*.] When you are once inside the bar, I
 suppose you are perfectly safe?—Perfectly.

47. What distance could you go up after having entered
 with your vessel?—I could go up two miles from the
 entrance.

The Hon. Mr. *Cawood*, Member of the Legislative Council,
 examined.

Hon.
 Mr. *Cawood*. 48. *Chairman*.] You are a director of the Kowie Har-
 bour Improvement Company?—Yes.

49. How long have you been so?—About six years.

50. You are aware that the company requires further
 assistance from the Government to carry on the works?—
 Yes.

51. Do you think the company would be able to prose-
 cute the works with the assistance proposed by the House of
 Assembly, namely convict labour alone?—No, not entirely.
 They would require some free labour, and money for
 materials.

52. The debt which has been incurred by the company the directors are now personally liable for?—Yes. That liability amounted in April last to £24,055 14s., and interest still going on.

53. What rate of interest do you pay?—Ten per cent. or more, for it is renewable every four months. It eats up everything.

54. Since then the debt will have increased?—Not much, excepting interest; because we have had some amount from the Government which had previously been in abeyance.

55. Do you think the proposal of the Colonial Secretary, to make a further grant of £30,000, would enable the directors to pay their liabilities and carry on the works for another year?—Yes.

56. And you think that, unless some such assistance is given, it will seriously embarrass the works?—It will embarrass the directors altogether. Of course, they cannot carry on without the means.

57. And you think there is a possibility of the works becoming deteriorated, if not ruined, if they are left in their present state?—Of course, the sea would affect the work that has been done if the stones are not properly secured and fixed.

58. Do you think it would be more desirable for the Government to take over the works at once, or to wait until the works are completed before they take them over?—I think it would be more advantageous to the public and more satisfactory, as far as the shareholders and directors are concerned, for the Government to take them over, and finish the works.

59. You consider that the directors, in coming to Parliament, do so in order to complete a public work?—Yes.

60. How is the board of directors constituted?—There are four unofficial members elected by the shareholders, and two nominated by Government. At present the two official members are Sir Walter Currie and the civil commissioner of Albany.

61. Mr. *Kennelly*.] The two Government nominees have not incurred any liability?—No.

62. *Chairman*.] Do you think that by Government taking over the works it would diminish some of the opposition shown to the undertaking?—Yes; there has always been so much opposition shown to the Kowie harbour works, that it

Hon.
Mr. *Cawood*.
July 31, 1867.

Hon.
Mr. Cawood.
July 31, 1867.

is difficult to imagine a reason, except that it is an Eastern Province question.

63. Mr. *Barry*.] You say that the £30,000 which the Colonial Secretary proposed to grant would be sufficient?—Yes; I think it would.

64. But in that is included the £24,000 debts?—Yes.

65. Would the remaining £6,000 enable you to carry on the works to completion?—I think so. Our present expenses are about £350 a month for free labour, &c.; so that £6,000 would carry us out pretty well for two years at that rate.

66. Do you know the length of the works on both sides of the river?—I think upwards of 2,000 yards on the eastern pier, and on the other nearly the same.

67. Can you give an idea of the quantity of ground belonging to the company that will be open for sale?—There are about 2,000 acres of Government land, on the banks of the river, vested in the board for the benefit of the company. We sold a very small quantity of it about four months ago, about four acres, which realized some £1,600; and the remainder of that land is measured in lots, for sale.

68. Then with regard to the company's land?—There were originally 1,000 acres, of which about fifty acres have been sold, realizing about £5,000, which has been all spent on the works.

69. Do you consider the ground sold to be the most valuable part, or are other parts equal to it?—There are only about six plots sold on the banks of the river. The most valuable part is yet to be sold.

70. With regard to the steam-tug, do you know the average expense for working it;—I should think about £30 a month, exclusive of fuel, which is easily obtainable, as we burn wood, and have only to pay the men for cutting it.

71. Do vessels entering the port pay for the tug?—Yes, on a regular scale; so much per ton, from £4 on small vessels to £7 10s. on large class vessels.

72. Are you a shareholder in the company?—I am.

73. Have you ever received any dividend?—Not a farthing.

74. How many shares are there?—There are 1,250 shares, of £20 each.

75. Mr. *Kennelly*.] Are they all sold?—Yes!

76. Mr. *Barry*.—Could you give me a quotation of the last shares sold?—They have been sold at different prices in various insolvent estates, but not lately. Some, I know, sold for £20, and some as low as £4. Six or nine months ago some were sold for about £7.

77. *Chairman*.] Who are the present directors of the company?—Mr. George Wood, jun., chairman, Mr. Cock, Mr. William Ogilvie, and myself, are the unofficial directors.

78. Do you think the board is favourable to the Government taking over the works?—Yes, I think so. There has been so much difficulty in getting the money to carry out the works, but they are willing to do it themselves if they could get the means to do it.

79. You conceive that there have been greater difficulties thrown in the way of the Kowie harbour works than of the Table Bay improvements?—I think so, indeed.

80. You think that if the Kowie Company were as liberally treated as the Harbour Board of Table Bay, the directors would not be so anxious to give it up, and would complete the work?—Yes; they would have completed it before this time, and a good income would now have been arising from the Kowie harbour.

81. Then you think the hindrances thrown in the way of the company have been hindrances to the work, and have really been a public loss?—I am certain of it.

82. Mr. *Kennelly*.] The harbour has been at work for some time; has any revenue been derived from it?—There are the wharfage dues.

83. Mr. *Barry*.] Any port dues?—No; it is a free port. The Parliament has raised the wharfage dues to double the rates of Port Elizabeth, in order to get an income.

84. How are the wharfage dues levied?—A certain percentage on the value of imports. It is a quarter per cent. at Port Elizabeth, and half per cent. at the Kowie.

85. Are you aware of any vessels loading for the Kowie now?—Yes; there are four now loading in London for the Kowie.

86. What cargo boats are available there, in case a vessel has to remain outside in the roads and cannot get in?—There is one of 50 tons.

Hon.
Mr. *Cuwood*.
July 31, 1867.

Hon.
Mr. Cawood.
July 31, 1867.

87. *Chairman.*] How far is the Kowie from Graham's Town?—About thirty-five miles. I think it might be shortened by taking a different route.

88. Is it a favourable country for transport?—Yes; a fine grassy country.

89. What is the average rate of transport?—I had an offer the other day to take loads down and up for 8d. per 100 lbs.

90. Mr. *Barry.*] Do you consider that high or low?—That is low. The average is about 9d.

91. From what you know of the position of the Kowie and Graham's Town, do you think there would be any difficulty in laying down a line of railroad between those places?—I am not myself competent to judge, but Mr. Bourne, when there, pointed out the line, and told me there would be no difficulty.

92. Mr. *Kennelly.*] Would not one great advantage from the opening of the Kowie be increasing the value of land in Lower Albany?—Yes; it is my impression that that part of the country would bear a large population. Many articles are raised from the soil there that will not bear a long overland carriage.

93. If the rust in the wheat could be overcome, Lower Albany would be a large corn exporting country, would it not?—I do not look upon Lower Albany as a wheat country, there being so much uncertainty on account of the rust; but a very large quantity of other produce could be raised.

94. Mr. *Barry.*] Would you state what is the average price of transport between Port Elizabeth and Graham's Town?—At present from Graham's Town to Port Elizabeth it is 1s. 6d. to 2s., and from Port Elizabeth to Graham's Town it is from 2s. 6d. to 3s.

95. Is there any present benefit that you can perceive has been derived to the surrounding neighbourhood from the opening of the Kowie?—Yes. There has been a great saving to the country on the imports; and it opens up a large tract of country, through Fort Beaufort, Alice, and Queen's Town.

96. *Chairman.*] Are you aware of any vessels proceeding from this port to the Kowie?—We are now about chartering a vessel of 340 tons, drawing ten feet water, for Port Alfred.

97. The reason you have not sold land to a greater extent and that you do not sell at present, is, that you consider that, when the works are completed, it will sell for a much larger amount?—There is no doubt of it.

Hon.
Mr. Cawood.
July 31, 1867.

98. Mr. *Barry*.] The ground on the east bank is sandy?—Yes.

99. Has any of that been sold?—Yes, some of the reclaimed land on the east side has been sold for about £100 a plot, of a quarter of an acre.

100. When did that sale take place?—About four months ago

101. *Chairman*.] Do you consider that, if the company had been supported liberally, the work might long since have been completed, and the Government outlay might have been reimbursed by an advantageous sale of lands?—Yes; I think the Government are standing in their own light in not prosecuting the works vigorously.

102. Mr. *Barry*.] What is the difference of freights from London, or any other place, to Port Elizabeth or Port Alfred?—From London there is very little difference. From colonial ports the difference is from 8s. to 10s.

103. What are your landing charges at the Kowie?—Landing, storing, and forwarding, about 4s. per ton; that is about 1s. for landing. At Port Elizabeth, for landing, storing, and forwarding, it is 11s. 3d.

104. Mr. *Kennelly*.] There are no difficulties in effecting insurances of goods to the Kowie?—No; neither in the Colony nor in London.

Thursday, 1st August, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,
,, Chase,

Mr. Barry.

Mr. *George Wood*, junior, examined.

105. *Chairman*.] You are a Member of the House of Assembly, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kowie Harbour Company?—Yes.

Mr.
G. Wood, Jun.
August 1, 1867.

Mr.
G. Wood, Jun.
August 1, 1867.

106. Can you inform the Committee what grants have been made by the Government, and under what circumstances, to the Kowie works?—After the original capital of the company, of £50,000, had been used, a proposal was made to advance a further sum of £15,000 by the sale of land in the division of Bathurst, where these works were commenced, and the Government approved of that course. The sanction of the divisional council was obtained to the selling of these lands; but in consequence of some outcry in the House of Assembly the proposition was never carried into effect for the sale of these lands; but a sum of £20,000 was advanced, a portion of which was used for the payment of Government debentures which were then due, and some of it for interest and discount. After that a proposition was made by the Government in 1864 for a grant of £40,000 for the purpose of completing the works. The Parliament voted £20,000, a portion of which was also devoted to the payment of interest and debentures. In 1865, the Parliament voted £20,000, of which some £12,500 was only received by the board, the balance having been kept by Government for the payment of debentures and interest. In 1866, Parliament refused any further vote of money for the works, but decided that funds sufficient should be granted for the purpose of keeping the convicts then at the station fully employed. The board of directors were consequently kept out of any funds until April this year, and but for their making themselves personally liable to the banks and others, the convicts would have been without employment, and the works entirely stopped.

107. Then there is now a heavy debt upon the works, for which the directors are personally liable?—Yes; they are personally liable, but the liability is no doubt a public one, from the fact that no engagements have been entered into without the full sanction and concurrence of the official directors appointed by Government. I may mention that for this overdrawn account we are paying a heavy rate of interest, 10 per cent.

108. And have the directors nominated by Government been averse to the raising of funds by the sale of land?—They were averse to selling any quantity of land, on the ground that to force it into the market would be to sacrifice it.

109. You mentioned that the company have only sold a

small portion of the land?—I do not think they have sold more than four acres. The highest rate was at about £1,000 per acre, and the lowest £360. The general average was about £500.

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110. Do you anticipate that if the works were pushed on to completion the sale of the land would in a great measure reimburse the outlay?—I fully anticipate that it would not only reimburse the outlay, but yield a very handsome profit, besides the benefit to the Colony of opening the port. I may mention that if the money voted by Parliament had been advanced to the directors in the full sums as the Bills passed they would have been enabled to push the works and finish them much sooner. But the money has always been doled out to us in such small sums that we never could do anything on a scale of any magnitude, or as such works should be carried out.

111. Would the proposed grant of sufficient money to keep the convicts at work enable the company to prosecute the works to advantage?—It might enable them to continue as at present, but the loss in the shape of interest and the sale of land would be much greater than the advances made for keeping the convicts at work. In my opinion, the granting of the full sum required for completing the works would be the means of saving a large amount of money.

112. Can you give us any information about the plant and stock of the company?—First, we have the tug, which is worth £5,000; we have a dredger which cost us over £5,000, said to be the best dredger in the Colony; we have barges and boats, worth about £1,000; we have our tramway and wagons, which I am not in a position to fix the value of; and we have oxen and horses worth £500. I may mention that, in addition to the plant, we have reclaimed land on the western side of the river, which would bring in a considerable amount of money; but there is a question yet to be decided between Mr. Cock and the directors on that subject.

113. What material have the company in hand to go on with, in case the grant of the Parliament is confined to merely keeping the convicts employed?—They have no materials. If the grant is confined to this, the Parliament will have to provide all the funds for materials to prosecute the works; otherwise the works must be stopped.

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114. Has the company been in the habit of supplying the convicts with tools at the Kowie works?—Always; and in addition to paying extra charges made by Government for the Kowie station, amounting to several thousand pounds, which the Government have stopped out of the sale of debentures granted by Parliament,—in addition to this, the company have spent at least £3,000 on buildings for the convict department, and have paid annually some £480 for rental for quarters and firewood for the officers.

115. Do you think it would be desirable for the Government to take over the works?—Yes. But the present position of the company is anomalous; and it is unfair towards the board of directors to compel them to become personally liable for what must be looked upon as a public work, originally promoted by private enterprise.

116. You think that the votes necessary for the completion of the work would then be more readily given?—Decidedly. That is one of our principal reasons. And besides, if it were a Government work, they would take greater interest in pushing not only the works but the trade of the place. I have no hesitation in saying that if Government had yielded to the wishes of the directors, the trade of the place would have been double what it is; but we have always been met with objections and difficulties in any proposition we have made. I will instance one only,—their application, some two years ago, to allow the port to be a free warehousing port, which would have enabled merchants and others to conduct their business as at Port Elizabeth, or any other port in the Colony. This was refused, and is still objected to; so that merchandize upon which duties have to be paid, and which are usually kept in bond until required for consumption, cannot be brought to that port.

117. The Government will, under the present arrangement, eventually take over the work?—According to the Ordinance, they will.

118. It is only a question of time?—It is only a question of time, and interest. And if they do so now they will be able to do so to greater advantage than after the works are completed.

119. Has the Government, during the present session, made any proposal to Parliament to assist the company?—Yes. It would be a breach of privilege for me to state what

occurred there, but the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly will indicate to the Committee what that proposition was.

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[The Committee having referred to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly, found there the following Minute (No. 36, page 288):—"The Colonial Secretary moved: That as it appears by the report of the Kowie Harbour Board that, in order to carry on the works up to the end of April last, liabilities to the extent of £24,055 14s. have been incurred, and the chairman of the company represents that an additional sum of between £6,000 and £7,000 will be required to carry on the works to completion, —this Committee is of opinion that a Bill should be introduced, authorizing the Board to raise and take up on loan, upon the same security as the previous loans, a sum not exceeding £30,000."]

120. And upon that proposition the resolutions of the House of Assembly were adopted which have been transmitted to the Legislative Council?—Yes, as an amendment.

121. During the last six months what number of vessels have been in the Kowie?—Twenty-four; most of them with cargoes from Table Bay, four with direct cargoes from England, and others from Port Elizabeth and Natal.

Saturday, 3rd August, 1867.

PRESENT :

Mr. TUCKER (Chairman),

Mr. Kennelly,

| Mr. Chase.

The Hon. Mr. *Cock* examined.

122. *Chairman.*] You are a director of the Kowie Harbour Company, and were originator of the Kowie Works?—Yes.

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123. Are you not the largest shareholder in the Company?—Yes, very large. And I believe that the holders of more than one fourth of the shares are now in Cape Town.

124. Are you favourable to the Government taking over those works?—Decidedly.

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125. On what grounds?—Simply for the want of means of the company to carry them on with that spirit that they should be. That is the chief reason. At the same time it would give the general public greater confidence if the Government were undertaking the work than in the hands of private individuals, and consequently less difficulty would be raised to assistance being rendered. I may state that when the works were first entered upon the Government desired that persons living on the frontier, or in the vicinity of the harbour, should take an interest in the undertaking. This was expressed by the Attorney-General at the time, who stated, and has since repeated the same in the Assembly, that this was a public undertaking, but the object of the Government in getting individuals to take shares was simply to give confidence to Government that those who were most immediately interested had faith in the undertaking.

126. Then you not only think that the Government should take over the works, but that the sooner this can be done the better?—Evidently so. Because for some months we have been moving so slowly and have got on so little that it has been a waste of time, and, I may say, of public means, in consequence. No progress can be made while this state of things continues.

127. Are not the greater number of the directors now in town?—Yes, I believe all the unofficial members, excepting one.

128. Would it not be advisable for them to open negotiations with the Government at once, that being the case?—I see no objection to it.

129. You see your way clear to the partial reimbursement of the outlay on the completion of the works by the sale of Government lands vested in the company?—I am not prepared to answer that question fully, because I am not acquainted with the definite extent of that land; but it is very considerable, and would probably realize a large amount. And there is a considerable extent of Government land in the neighbourhood which is not vested in the company, but which, from being in the vicinity of the harbour, would be trebled in value by these works.

130. You think it desirable that these lands should be reserved until the completion of the works?—Decidedly.

131. Mr. *Kennelly*.] If speedy assistance be not afforded,

the works must very shortly come to a stand-still?—The course at present pursued is of such a character as must result in that; because we are obliged to incur an amount of expense that is not warranted by the work done. You may go on spending money, and wasting it, in fact, for want of the means of carrying on the work efficiently.

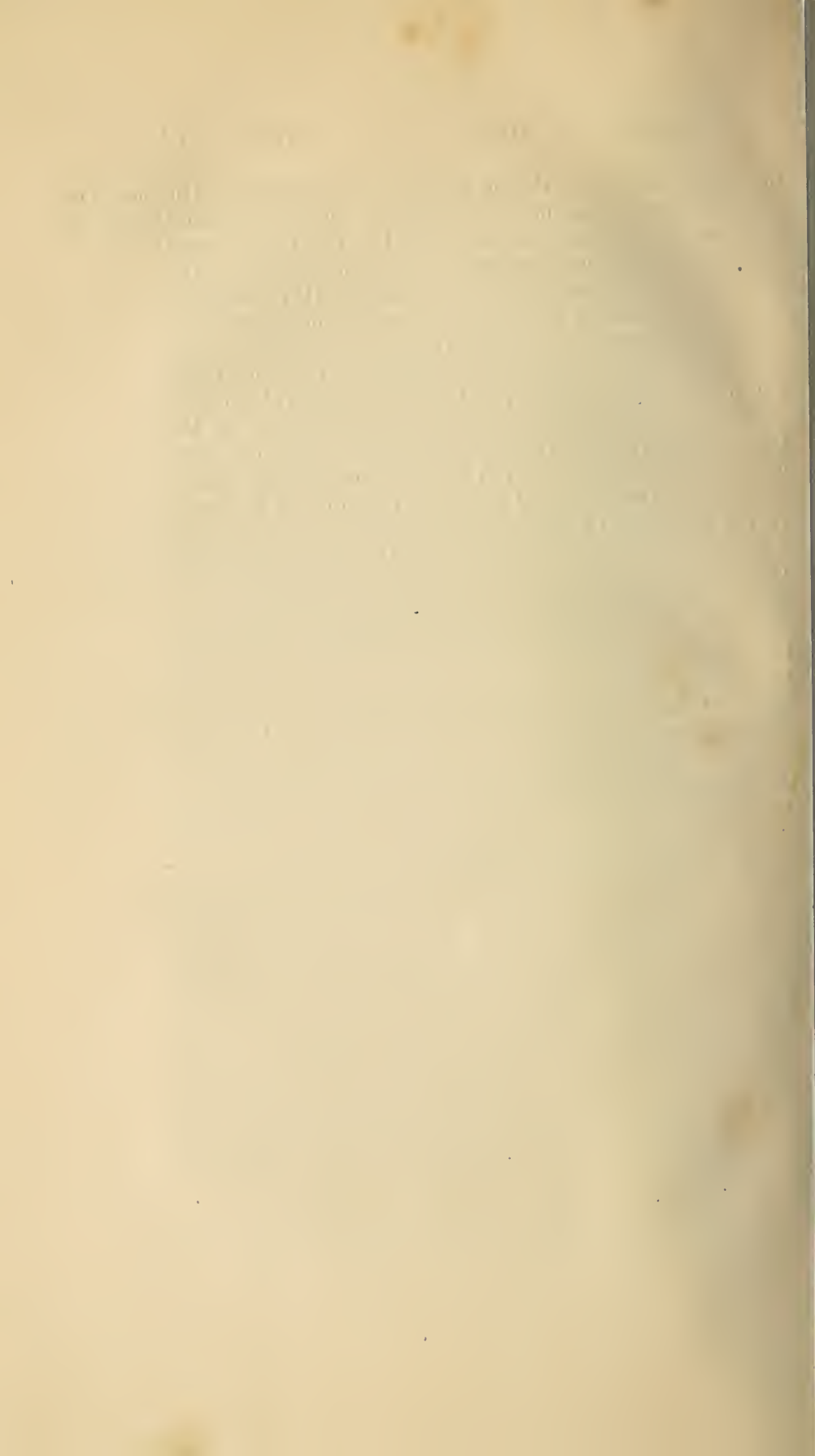
Hon. Mr. Cock.
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132. Then there are necessary expenses going on, not only in the shape of interest, but salaries?—Yes, and rents, and free labourers necessary to keep the convicts at work.

133. I presume the Government is well informed of the state of things at the Kowie, as they have their own two official directors, whose duty it is to learn everything that is going on?—Decidedly. I may state that during the early part of the present year the Government sent the resident magistrate of Bathurst to consult with the superintendent of convicts and engineer as to the amount required simply to keep the convicts employed, and what they decided on has, I presume, been approved by the Government. But that is not sufficient. It is not what is required to push the matter on with any spirit.

134. How have the works stood the influence or action of the late gales, which have been very boisterous and trying?—Some very slight injury has been done, but nothing serious. As far as my memory serves me, I have not known such a severe winter, or such continuous gales during my residence at the Kowie for the last twenty years.

135. Has there been no deposit of sand following these gales?—Nothing more than has transpired in all former heavy gales of wind. The action of the current along the eastern shore brings a certain amount of sand round the eastern pier; and with a flood tide the heavier particles lodge nearly outside the eastern pier. The finer portions of sand are carried in suspension a little higher up. This, I am advised, is the case with all the bar harbours on the coast, more or less. But it continues for a very short time after the gale ceases. The first fine weather, with a strong ebb-tide, takes it all out, and restores the usual depth. To the works themselves the injury has been very slight, and that chiefly to the back, not to the end of the work.





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