

*From the Register -
- July 5th 1882 -*

DEPUTATIONS.

BORDER TOWN AND UNIVERSITY BLOCK RAILWAY.

Mr. Hardy, M.P., accompanied by Mr. Fraser, M.P., waited on the Commissioner of Public Works (Hon. J. G. Ramsay) on Wednesday, July 5, for the purpose of presenting a memorial signed by twenty-nine influential residents in the Hundreds of Tatiara and Wirrega, in which they asked that a siding be put down on the Railway from Custon, University Block, to Border Town, between the south-eastern corner of Section 317 and the eastern corner of Section 318, Hundred of Tatiara, for the following reasons:—(1.) The site mentioned was the natural and most convenient for the farmers of the greater portion of Wirrega, and a large portion of Tatiara lying adjacent to it. (2.) By constructing the siding the Government would reap a benefit by the carriage of wheat and other goods which would otherwise be conveyed to the present terminus, viz., University Block. (3.) That if the siding be not constructed the memorialists did not doubt but that it would be necessary to construct and maintain a main road through the above hundreds to Custon, the present natural roads being quite unequal to the traffic which they would be obliged to carry.

Mr. HARDY said he went further than the memorialists, and said that somehow a breach of faith had been committed, not only as regards the people of the district, but as regards the members for the district. When the Railway Bill was brought forward by the Government the session before last, it was proposed to carry the line due north as far as the main road from Border Town to Lockhart's Gate, and this was so obviously unfair to the people to the westward that the Bill was opposed by the members for the district and thrown out. Next year the members for the district came forward with strong representations from all the people in the neighbourhood that the line that would best suit the country was a line from University Block to Border Town. It was then proposed by the Government to run as far north as the corner of Section 332, and to go direct from there to Border Town. He and his colleague pointed out that this line would not meet the wants of the settlers to the westward, and that the line should be carried to Sections 317 and 318, on the road from Mundulla, and then go to Border Town. This route was adopted, and it was clearly understood that a stopping-place would be made at Sections 317 and 318. To his surprise he heard in December last that instead of a stopping place being made as previously understood a station was to be erected at Section 332, and he afterwards found that the contract plans bore this out. He did complain that a breach of faith had been committed, and contend that the residents in the district had a right to a stopping-place at Section 317. They had no objection to a station at Section 332 if there was any traffic to accommodate. He would also call attention to another matter. In March last Mr. Henning and himself waited on the Commissioner to ask that a road should be cleared from Custon, University Block, direct to the Border, as it was thought that such a road would accommodate the wheat traffic from Victoria. This had been promised, but nothing had been done to clear the road referred to; on the contrary, preparations had been made to clear a road from Section 332 to Lockhart's Gate, and as the whole of the Victorian wheat country on the border was to the south of Lockhart's Gate, the traffic would have to go in a northern-westerly direction and then to the south-west, in order to reach the railway at a point much to the north of University Block. He hoped the Commissioner would see to this matter.

The COMMISSIONER said, in replying, that Mr. Hardy had put up an Aunt Sally in the alleged breach of faith; just, to have it knocked down again, because when the Railway Bill was being discussed no mention was

made at all about a station being made at the corners of Sections 317 and 318, whereas it was always understood that there must be a station on Section 332 or 345, and indeed he believed this was mentioned in the Bill. It was stated over and over again in the debate on the Bill that the station should be there to accommodate the traffic crossing over from Victoria by Lockhart's Gate, and it was never contemplated that there would be any necessity for another station between it and Border Town, a distance of only about seven miles. No faith had been broken, neither had any attempt been made to do so; but if it were shown on enquiry that a siding were necessary at Sections 317 and 318 to accommodate the traffic he would certainly be in favour of making it. The whole of the argument addressed to him had ignored the existence of Border Town, and from the good idea of the country which he possessed he thought the farming traffic would go to the best market with their wheat, and there were always more buyers centred about a town where there was a mill than to an outside station. With reference to the question of roads he had promised that there should be a road cleared from University Block to the border, but so many different routes had been proposed that he was not going to be led away by any individual representation. He had promised a certain road, and the clearing would be done. (Mr. Hardy—They are going the other way towards Lockhart's gate.) That road had also been promised to take the traffic from across the border, but it was no argument why the other work should be neglected. Orders had been given to get it done and he would see that it was done as soon as possible.

Mr. HARDY said that as some doubt had been thrown on his statement about the station at Sections 317 and 318 having been promised, he must reiterate emphatically that while he did not question what took place in the Legislative Council, it was distinctly understood in the Assembly that that should be the site. (The Commissioner, "It would be an absurd thing to do.") The plan he had shown the Commissioner was the very one he had shown the House when the compromise was made, and as regards the traffic going to Section 332 it always went to University Block.

The COMMISSIONER said that he had a map showing that the Victorian Government projected taking their line to the border still further north than Lockhart's-gate to get into good country.

Mr. HARDY replied that all the good country lay between the parallels of Lockhart's-gate and University Block and north of the Gate it was sandy both in South Australia and Victoria.

The interview then terminated.

Professor Tate's Report on the Northern Territory

For Report see page 149. Register

*28th June
1882*

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.—The report of Professor Tate on his recent visit to the Northern Territory, addressed to the Minister of Education, was laid before the House of Assembly yesterday. To call it a disappointing document would be unfair; but it reminds one of a chapter of a serial novel, which discloses sufficient of the plot to awaken curiosity as to what the end will be. We suppose no one was sanguine enough to hope that the Professor's hurried inspection of a small portion of the Territory would enable him to throw