

STEAM TRAMWAY IN KILDARE.

An influential public meeting was held at Dowling's Hotel, Robertstown, on Friday, to promote a project for connecting Robertstown and the Allen district with the Great Southern and Western Railway at the Curragh by a light branch railway or steam tramway. There was a large attendance of the local gentry and farmers. Mr Samuel G. Ireland, J.P., occupied the chair. The chairman explained the object and the serious disadvantages the people of the district laboured under by not having proper railway accommodation, and the great benefits the construction of a railway would confer upon the district, by securing to the farmer higher prices for his produce, besides expeditious and cheap carriage for all his goods to and from Dublin. Mr James Dillon, the engineer for the line, at the chairman's request, explained the nature of the project. He stated the problem he was called upon to solve was to construct a light branch railway similar in a respects to a steam tramway, excepting the rails, but at less than one-half the cost per mile of existing branch railways, and having examined the country, and prepared sections of same, he was prepared to construct the line for £3,000 per mile cash, on account of the absence of all engineering difficulties, and the small number of roads to be crossed. Owing to the late improvements effected in the construction of locomotives by Mr M'Donnell, of Inchicore, and others, Mr Dillon proposed to reduce the weight of the locomotive engines and their cost by one-half, this enabling him to reduce the weight and cost of the rails by one-half. Having convinced the meeting the line could be made at one-half the cost of other branch railways, he showed that by stopping the trains at the principal public roads for the accommodation of passengers, and allowing the guard to issue tickets, intermediate stations could be dispensed with; this saving, together with the additional saving of having to provide only one-half the quantity of coal and oils for the light locomotives, would reduce the working expenses to at least forty per cent. of the receipts, instead of the fifty and sixty per cent. they now reached to. It was stated that all the railways in the County Kerry were got by means of guarantees of 5 per cent. on the capital expended, and that the cesspayers had never been called on to pay sixpence of the guarantee. The whole of the county Waterford is now being opened up by a great trunk line, the whole of the money coming from London on the faith of the county guaranteeing 5 per cent for 35 years on the whole of the capital, to take effect from the commencement of the works. It was proposed by Mr W. J. Clyde, seconded by Mr J. W. Simmonds, and unanimously resolved—"That a provisional committee be appointed to consider the best means of connecting the Great Southern and Western Railway with the districts of Robertstown and Allen, and to take such steps for the purpose as they may think necessary, and to report thereon at their next meeting." The following gentlemen consented to act on the committee:—Messrs S. G. Ireland, R. M. Wilson, W. J. Clyde, J. W. Simmonds, and Dr Gregory Sale. Proposed by Mr Philip Strong, seconded by Mr Little, and resolved—"That the committee be authorised to apply to the grand jury at the coming assizes for a guarantee of 5 per cent. on a sum of £18,000 for 35 years." A vote of thanks having been passed to the chairman, the meeting adjourned.