

(No. 92.)



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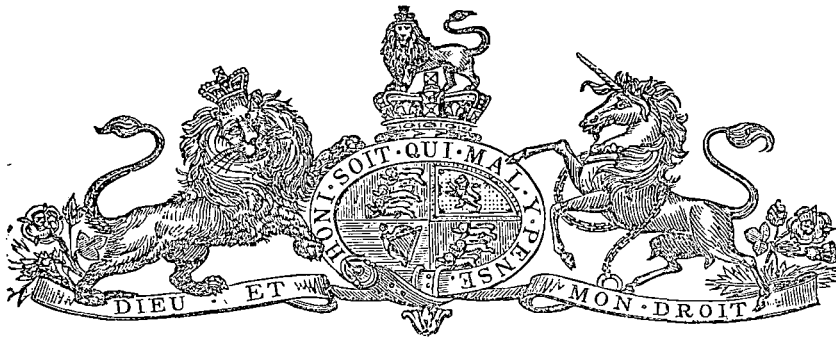
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

RETRENCHMENT :

GOVERNMENT RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Return to an Order of the House of Assembly. (Mr. Bird.)

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands and Works, October 20, 1892, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.



RETRENCHMENT, GOVERNMENT RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

29. *Ordered*, That a Return be laid on the Table of the House showing how the proposed retrenchments in the Railway Department under the heads of Wages and Stores, amounting to £12,300, are to be effected; indicating—(1) the several lines on which a saving is to be effected by a reduced train service; (2) the amount of the saving to be effected on each such line by such reduced train service; (3) the particular lines on which reductions are proposed in the matter of maintenance of the permanent way, &c.; (4) the amount of saving to be effected by reduced maintenance on each such line; and (5) any other general items which go to make up the total proposed retrenchment of £12,300.

Also, that the Return be accompanied by a Report from the General Manager of Railways stating—(1) whether the reduced train service is likely to result in more profitable working; (2) whether the whole service of the year 1893 is likely to be carried out in the way proposed for the sum provided in the Estimates; (3) whether the rolling stock and permanent way can be maintained in good order and efficient and safe condition for the sum provided, or whether the result will be a starving of the maintenance and a heavier charge in 1894 to cover the deficiencies of 1893. (*Mr. Bird.*)

Tasmanian Government Railways.
General Manager's Office, Hobart, 18th October, 1892.

SIR,

IN terms of your instructions I have the honor to report upon the reduction in the expenses of this Department.

I would preface my Report by remarking that the reductions being made are not the outcome of spasmodic administration, but rather the result of a very carefully matured scheme.

When the West Coast Lines were opened two trains per day barely coped with the traffic, and occasional special goods trains were required to keep goods traffic clear. In June last the late Minister of Lands and Works visited the coast, and upon going into the question we decided to reduce the train service in consequence of the falling off in traffic.

Reductions in train services on the Derwent Valley and Apsley Lines, for similar reasons, were likewise contemplated, and the Hon. Mr. Pillinger forecast this retrenchment in the statement he delivered in the House on the 2nd August.

Upon the completion of the purchase of the Main Line I pointed out to the Minister that if I could obtain the assistance of a competent engineer I could bring the lines generally into a more efficient state, and make a considerable annual saving. The Minister concurred, and appointed Mr. M'Cormick to the position.

I should here remark that new lines had been taken over in an incomplete condition, and large sums had to be charged to working expenses for widening banks, ballasting, and many other works.

With the unremitting attention devoted to these works by Mr. M'Cormick we have been able to place our lines in a satisfactory condition, and nothing more than normal repairs will be required. The lines most recently constructed also bear favourable comparison with the earlier works (excepting the Launceston-Deloraine section of the Western Line, which is one of the most substantially constructed works in the Colony.)

As some indication of the work performed during the last two years, I may add that we have relaid 152,436 sleepers, and have run out 40,302 yards of ballast, besides 29,786 yards of earth-works—this in addition to many waterways and other permanent improvements which will not be recurrent.

The completion of these works enables us to dispense with one man on an average of each five miles of railway.

In the Traffic branch the extraordinary depression has enabled us to dispense with clerks and porters to the number of twenty-four.

In the Locomotive department we have been able to make considerable reductions. Firstly, because we have completed the alterations and repairs to Main Line locomotives, carriages, and waggons, which last year cost in extraordinary repairs nearly £7000, and by reducing train services we save locomotives and the attending staff thereof; and secondly, owing to the completion of rolling-stock construction.

The saving in stores is effected by reduction of train mileage.

I am content to say that under the present careful supervision we can carry on with safety with the present staff. Should the traffic very materially increase, as we hope it may, additional train services and staff will be required; but I anticipate that the additional sum shown in the miscellaneous item of expenditure will meet requirements for the year 1893.

As to safety and efficiency, we shall keep the lines and stock in good running order.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

FRED. BACK, *General Manager.*

Hon. W. HARTNOLL, M.H.A., Minister of Railways.

RETURN showing approximately the manner in which Retrenchment has been effected in Railway Department, in reply to Question of the Honorable Mr. Bird.

1. West Coast, Derwent Valley, Apsley, and Main Lines.
2. { West Coast, £2000.
Derwent Valley and Apsley, £1500.
Main Line, £500.
3. All Lines.
4. All Lines averaging one man in Five miles, say £5000.
5. The balance of the saving is made up of reductions in Traffic and Locomotive Staff.