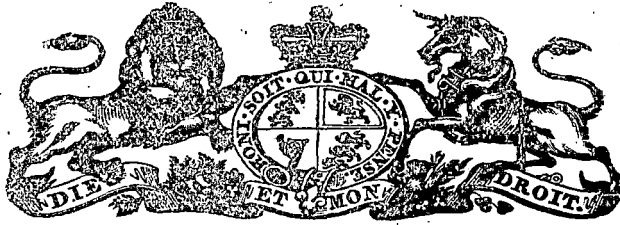


(No. 2.)



1883.

SESSION II.

TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

**COST OF CONVEYANCE OF COAL FROM
THE CORNERS STATION :**

**CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE MANAGER OF THE MAIN
LINE RAILWAY.**

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, and ordered by the House to be printed, December 14, 1883.



Lands and Works Office, Hobart, 20th November, 1883.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to address you on the subject of conveyance of coal from the Fingal District by railway.

It has been stated, but I am not aware whether by your express authority or not, that the Tasmanian Main Line Railway Company will undertake to convey coal from the Corners Station of the Main Line Railway to Launceston or to Hobart at a charge of $\frac{5}{8}$ ths (five-eighths) of a penny per ton per mile, on certain conditions as to quantity forwarded per week and as to loading and unloading of trucks, and use of same for any time beyond 24 hours.

Will you be good enough to state, for the information of the Government, whether your Company is prepared to undertake to carry coal at the above-mentioned charge, and if so, on what conditions? Also, at what charge your Company will convey coal without any conditions as to quantity forwarded?

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

NICHOLAS J. BROWN,

Minister of Lands and Works.

C. H. GRANT, *Esq.*,

Manager Tasmanian Main Line Railway Company.

*Tasmanian Main Line Railway Company, Limited,
General Manager's Office, Hobart, 22nd November, 1883.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 20th instant, in which you desire to be informed whether the Tasmanian Main Line Railway Company would undertake to convey coal from the Corners Station of the Main Line Railway to Launceston or to Hobart at a charge of $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a penny per ton per mile, on certain conditions as to the quantity forwarded per week and as to the loading and unloading of trucks, and the use of same for any time beyond 24 hours.

In reply, I have to state that the quotation I made was solely on the consideration that the Main Line Railway Company would be entrusted with the working of the Fingal branch as a part of the Main Line Railway system, and that the management of the coal traffic throughout would be wholly in their hands; also, that the Government (or the coal-owners) would, in the first instance, provide all necessary facilities for the loading of trucks at the coal-pits and delivering to the shipping at deep water; that the coal-owners would defray the cost of loading and unloading and all risk of transport, and agree to pay a demurrage of 7s. per day for any detention of trucks; further, that they would guarantee a minimum quantity of 1000 tons per week (2000 tons having in the first instance been stipulated).

On these conditions I estimated that the Main Line Railway Company would provide their proportion of haulage power and a supply of trucks corresponding with the distance traversed by the Main and the Branch lines respectively (the Government providing the branch line with their mileage proportion), and would allow the Government the full proportion of the mileage traffic out of a charge of $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a penny per ton per mile.

In this case special engines, wagons, and staff would be provided for the coal traffic exclusively, thus allowing the cost to be minimised.

In the event of no minimum quantity being agreed upon, and the coal proving much less than above estimated, I mentioned that the charge of 1d. per ton per mile should be made, with a demurrage of 10s. per truck per day after 24 hours. In this case it would be necessary to reserve

the right of carrying the coal at the convenience of the Railway authorities; and such quotation would necessarily be subject to the quantity of coal offered for transport, and the conveniences to deal with it that were mutually arranged.

I am not able to make you any offer for the carriage of coal from the Corners Station of the Main Line Railway to Launceston or Hobart without having a specification of the conditions under which you wish such to be carried; whether the trucks would be wholly provided by the Government or you would look to the Main Railway Company to furnish a portion; whether the haulage power would be provided by the Government or the Company: for the sake of economy it would be desirable that the same engines should run the whole journey with their respective trains. The freight charges would also necessarily depend upon whether the Government or the coal-owners on one hand, or the Main Line Company on the other, provide the facilities for marshalling the trucks at the Corners Station, and all requisite terminal arrangements and storage at Hobart and Launceston.

In closing this reply, I take the opportunity of again stating that, although a doubt has been expressed in some quarters as to the proof of the quality of the Fingal coal, a further acquaintance with it has only served to convince me that on the whole it is a purer and better coal than the best Newcastle; and that one of the seams, which is called the 8-foot seam, at Mount Nicholas, and the 6-foot seam at Mount Malcolm, is of the very best description of coal for all purposes that it is possible to obtain.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

C. H. GRANT.

*The Hon. N. J. BROWN, M.H.A.,
Minister of Lands and Works.*