

(No. 146.)



1885.

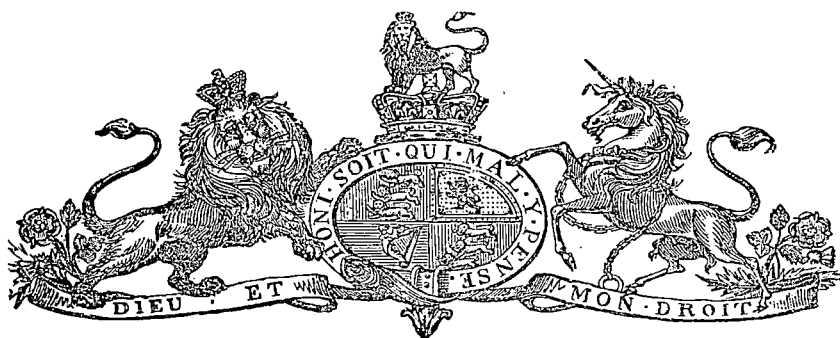
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

GOVERNMENT GEOLOGIST:

**CORRESPONDENCE FOR RECONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL
TO ABOLISH THE OFFICE.**

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

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, October 30, and ordered by the
House of Assembly to be printed, November 6, 1885.



Launceston Stock Exchange, 8th September, 1885.

SIR,

IN accordance with a Resolution passed at the last meeting of the Committee of the Launceston Stock Exchange, I have the honor to request you to reconsider the proposal to abolish the office of Government Geologist, to dispense with the services of Mr. G. Thureau as Government Geologist and Inspector of Mines, and to appoint a successor of admittedly inferior attainments to undertake one portion only of the duties now being performed by Mr. Thureau, viz., the inspection of mines.

We respectfully submit that, in view of the importance of the mining industry, and of the indications that it will soon assume more extensive proportions, it is essential that the Colony should possess an officer capable of reporting on mineral-bearing districts, new discoveries, &c.; also that the Colony can well afford the expense, when the large sum annually received by the Government in the shape of rents, fees, dividend tax, &c. is taken into consideration, to say nothing of the indirect taxation paid by the mining community.

So far as we know there has been no complaint against Mr. Thureau, either of neglect of duty or of incompetence. On the contrary, several of our members can testify to the high opinion in which he is held professionally by men of intelligence and of well-known scientific attainments in this island. We can further vouch that in mining circles on this side of the island the proposal to abolish the office of Government Geologist is viewed with great disfavour.

Trusting that the Government will favourably consider this matter,

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WM. AIKENHEAD,

Chairman Launceston Stock Exchange.

Hon. N. J. BROWN, Minister of Lands and Works, Hobart.

Lands and Works Office, Hobart, 10th September, 1885.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, requesting, in accordance with a Resolution passed at a meeting of the Committee of the Launceston Stock Exchange, that the Government "reconsider the proposal to abolish the office of Government Geologist, to dispense with the services of Mr. G. Thureau as Government Geologist and Inspector of Mines, &c."

In reply, I have the honor to inform you that your letter will be submitted for the consideration of the Cabinet at an early opportunity.

I must, however, point out that you are in error in referring to the office held by Mr. Thureau as that of "Government Geologist." No appointment of Government Geologist has ever been made, and Mr. Thureau's only official title, as shown in the Estimates, is that of "Inspector of Mines."

I have, &c.

N. J. BROWN, *Minister of Lands and Works.*

W. AIKENHEAD, *Esq., Chairman Stock Exchange, Launceston.*

Launceston Stock Exchange, Launceston, 11th September, 1885.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge your favour of 10th instant, intimating that my letter of 8th instant will be submitted for the consideration of the Cabinet at an early opportunity.

With reference to the concluding paragraph of your letter, stating that I am "in error in referring to the office held by Mr. Thureau as that of 'Government Geologist,'" and that "No appointment of Government Geologist has ever been made, and Mr. Thureau's only official title, as shown in the Estimates, is that of 'Inspector of Mines,'"—I admit that I may, at the present time, be technically in error in styling Mr. Thureau as "Government Geologist." But I may explain that in mining circles he is spoken of as Government Geologist and Inspector of Mines, and is so regarded by the public generally. And for this there seem to be good reasons. If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Thureau, who is a Fellow of the Geological Society of London, was first engaged by your predecessor (the Hon. C. O'Reilly), in the middle part of the year 1881, to furnish Reports on the geological features of various localities, his remuneration being fixed, I think, at £2 2s. per diem, and 18s. per diem for travelling expenses. Towards the close of that year an arrangement was made to give him a fixed salary at a reduced rate of remuneration, he undertaking, in addition to geological work, the duties of Inspector of Mines under the Act 45 Vict. No. 8, passed on 8th November, 1881. In the Estimates for 1883 passed by Parliament (see page 34 of Paper 65, House of Assembly Journals, Vol. XLIII.), his office is styled "Inspector of Mines and Geological Surveyor." In the Statistics for 1883, published in 1884, he is so designated, and he has signed Reports as such. In the Estimates for 1884 and 1885 the words "and Geological Surveyor" are omitted, though *primá facie* there seems to be no reason for so doing, as the nature of Mr. Thureau's duties have in no wise been changed. He has continued to report geologically on mineral and metalliferous deposits, &c., thus practically combining the functions of a Government Geologist with the duties of an Inspector of Mines.

However, what the Committee of the Launceston Stock Exchange wish to impress upon the Government is this, that in the interests of mining in Tasmania it is essential that the Colony should continue to possess an officer capable not merely of performing the duties of an Inspector under the "Act to provide for the Regulation and Inspection of Mines," (45 Vict. No. 8), but also capable of reporting geologically upon mineral-bearing country, new discoveries, indications, &c. The prosperity and progress of the Colony depend so much upon the development of our mineral and metalliferous resources that everything calculated to legitimately aid in that development ought, in our opinion, to be secured. Consequently, as we regard the assistance which a mining geologist, possessed of varied experience like Mr. Thureau, may afford in examining and reporting on mineral lands, &c. as of great importance, we respectfully, but strongly, urge the Government to retain his services.

I have, &c.

WM. AIKENHEAD,

Chairman Launceston Stock Exchange.

Hon. N. J. BROWN, Minister of Lands and Works, Hobart.