

(No. 101.)



1885.

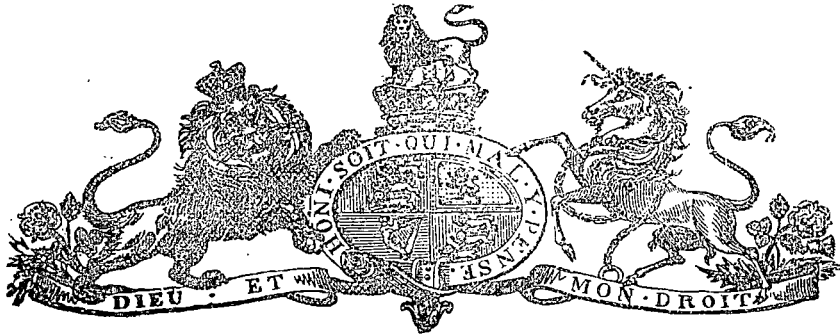
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

MR. G. THUREAU, F.G.S.:

CORRESPONDENCE WITH MINISTER OF LANDS AND
WORKS.

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

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, August 20, 1885, and ordered by
the House to be printed.



Inspector of Mines Office, Launceston, 10th August, 1883.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to draw your attention to matters connected with my Surveys and Reports upon the mineral and metalliferous resources of the Districts I have already visited, and the others I hope also to examine under the auspices of the Government.

When the Hon. C. O'Reilly gave me his first instructions for the West Coast, and subsequently for other mining centres, I explained to him that if a regular Geological Survey was required I would require a large and permanent staff of assistants, and to examine minutely every yard of ground within the limits of what I was sent to survey; and that such would cost a large sum of money for principally information of a scientific and probably unpractical a nature.

If the Government would accept my services the same as I had carried to successful conclusions in South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and in California and Nevada (N.S.A.), *i.e.* single-handed, doing all the professional work myself, and being provided only with a guide or packers; I could move quickly, and report only on such deposits as really were deserving of notice, at very much less expense than the former work would require; that I would work as accurately as possible with my aneroid barometer and prismatic compass, with which instruments I have, during the many years I used same on the surface or to a depth of 2750 feet underground, become so familiar that no serious errors were ever reported to me.

The above explanations were then accepted, and that is the manner in which I perform, at present, my duties; and as it is possible that this may not be generally known, I deem it my duty to give the above explanation.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

G. THUREAU, *F.G.S., I.M. & G.S.*

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

Lands and Works Office, Hobart, 15th August, 1883.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Hon. the Minister to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, drawing his attention to matters connected with your surveys and reports upon the mineral and metalliferous resources of the districts that you have already visited, and those which you will probably examine in the future under the auspices of the Government.

The Minister is glad to have your explanations, which he will avail himself of whenever occasion may require. It is quite possible that during the discussions in Parliament it may be necessary to explain the economical manner in which your reports have been prepared.

I am further directed to acknowledge the receipt of your report on the Fingal and Mount Nicholas coal deposits, also the report on the Hamilton and Ouse coal deposits; a printed proof of the former I herewith forward to you for revision, together with the original.

I have, &c.

T. R. ATKINSON, *Ministerial Clerk.*

G. THUREAU, *Esq., F.G.S., Inspector of Mines, Launceston.*

Lands and Works Office, Hobart, 21st July, 1885.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform you that the Cabinet having decided to reduce the staff of the Mines Branch of the Department, no provision for your salary has been made in the Estimates for 1886.

In conveying this intimation to you, I desire to state that the Cabinet have been influenced in arriving at this decision by the consideration that the duties of the office of Inspector of Mines can be efficiently carried out by an officer whose attainments will not justify his receiving so high a salary as that now provided for you.

I have, &c.

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

G. THUREAU, *Esq., F.G.S., Inspector of Mines, Launceston.*

Inspector of Mines Office, Launceston, 31st July, 1885.

SIR,

WITH regard to your letter of the 21st instant, I have the honor to avail myself of your permission to address you direct upon any special matter requiring your personal consideration. That letter conveys an intimation that "the Cabinet having decided to reduce the staff of the Mines Branch of the Department, no provision for my salary has been made in the Estimates for 1886, as an officer of lesser attainments could be secured at a lower rate." The delay that has occurred between the receipt of that letter and the date of this communication is due partly to a very severe cold, and partly to the necessity for overcoming the feelings which so unexpected and curt an intimation naturally evoked.

In imagination, Sir, place yourself in my position for a moment. Nearly five years ago I entered the service of the Government of Tasmania, charged with the organisation of a new Department and with the conduct of mining geological surveys wherever required. I was led to believe that I could look upon that appointment as, under the usual conditions, a permanent one, and I have done my best to give satisfaction. My multifarious office duties have long since been organised, so that this branch of the Department is working smoothly; beneficial results have followed my labours; no complaint has been made against the work I have submitted from time to time to the Government; and from the tenor of all my intercourse and correspondence with my official superiors I had a right to believe that they were satisfied with my work. At times my work has been very arduous,—inspecting and reporting upon mining districts on the East and West Coasts in winter and wet weather, being more than once laid up by the wettings and fatigues I had to go through; but so long as my labours met with approval I thought little of such hardships, and, though unpleasant, undertook them cheerfully.

On the strength of what I surely had a right to believe an assured position, and to make provision for my wife and family, I insured my life in two offices,—viz., ordinary, and as against accidents or accidental death; I also bought land; and these transactions involving regular payments by instalments for the benefits sought to secure to my wife and family in the event of my death are lost, to say nothing of the payments already made. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, I receive a verbal intimation from the Secretary for Mines, who was sent to Launceston to break the news gently,—“That the Cabinet has decided to dispense with my services,” followed by a curt, cold letter from yourself, confirming the intimation. I trust you will not consider me wanting in respect when I say that I feel such unwelcome news—an intimation that meant ruin to my hopes and prospects—might have been conveyed in kinder phrase. I have served the Government faithfully,

and have believed my work was approved of, but I receive notice of dismissal without one word of regret—without a single expression of opinion as to my past services, or a kind word for my future. Pardon me, Sir, if I feel that such treatment is not alone harsh, but undeserved.

A dismissal in such a manner, in such terms, cannot fail to cast a stigma on my professional reputation, and I feel assured that you never intended it to have that effect. I respectfully beseech you to reflect upon this aspect of the case, and also upon the position in which your decision would place me. I am advancing in years, and have a wife and family looking to me for support, and after the lapse of years how can I succeed in forming new professional connections in a private capacity? The old connections have been filled up by my successors, and how can I now start afresh with the additional handicap of having been dismissed from the service of the Tasmanian Government in a manner that will be regarded as a reflection upon my professional ability? It is not as if my office were abolished. A successor is to be appointed, of admittedly lower attainments, to do one portion only of my duties; and when it becomes known that, though slight reductions of salary may have been made in other cases, I am the only officer of any standing whose services have been dispensed with, what construction will the general public place upon the matter? Will not that construction be ruinous to my future prospects? And is it right or just, even unintentionally, to cast such an undeserved and unmerited stigma upon me? I must crave your pardon if my language seems strong, but the matter is a most serious one to me, and has, perhaps, never been looked at by you from my point of view. I am not in a position to say whether the manner I have been dealt with is that customary in the Civil Service of Tasmania or not, but I most respectfully submit that, if the sole reason for my dismissal be, as stated, a desire to economise in the Mines Department, it would have been kinder towards me, and not have influenced the ultimate decision of the Cabinet, had I been in some way consulted before a decision was arrived at. I would have been and am prepared to meet the wishes of the Cabinet in a satisfactory manner, without impairing the value of the services rendered by me; and I would now most respectfully appeal for a reconsideration of your *fiat*, the consequences of which must prove most disastrous to myself and my wife and family, and submit the following scheme of reduction for your consideration:—

1885.— <i>Present Cost.</i>		1886.— <i>Proposed Reductions.</i>	
	£		£
Inspector of Mines, Salary	400	Inspector of Mines, Salary	400
Clerk to ditto, ditto	60	<i>Nil.</i>	
Travelling Expenses, say	200	Travelling Expenses, say	60
			460
		Less "earnings" as Mining Geologist from mining companies and private individuals, say	80
	660	Leaves	£380
TOTAL	660		£380

This would effect a reduction of £280, and the sum set down as "earnings" is probably considerably below the mark, as, despite the depression in mining, and that the fact of my services being available is not generally known, during the last seven months over £40 has been paid into the Treasury from this source.

So far as I can judge, the mining industry will receive a considerable impetus during the coming year, when my services would be in greater request, as reports from an authorised Government officer are always preferred to any from other experts.

The sum of £60, charged to travelling expenses in the proposed reductions for the year 1886, is intended for the Inspector of Mines' movements exclusively; all other expenses must come out of the "earnings."

In conclusion, Sir, I have endeavoured to place before you the position in which the fulfilment of the instructions contained in your letter of the 21st instant would place me; and I most respectfully appeal through you to the Cabinet for a reconsideration of the matter, for I have not in any way overstated the disastrous results it will entail upon myself and wife and family.

I have, &c.

G. THUREAU, *F.G.S.*, *Inspector of Mines.*

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