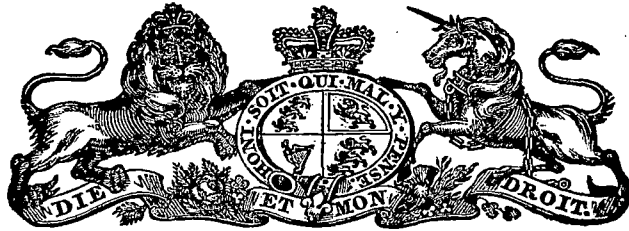


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1878.

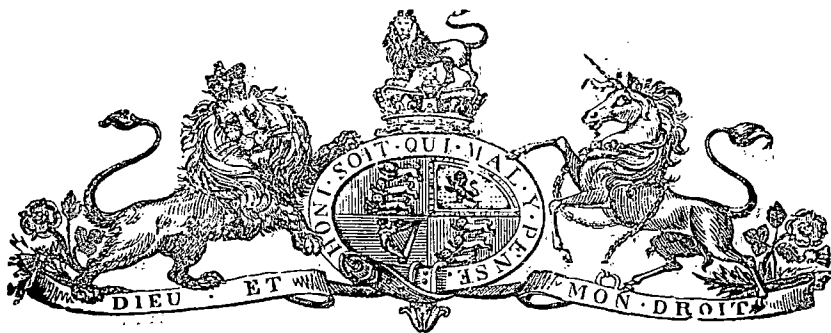
T A S M A N I A.
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

COLONIAL AUDITOR:

REMUNERATION FOR AUDITING MAIN LINE RAILWAY
ACCOUNTS.

Return to an Order of the Council dated April 24, 1879. (Mr. Innes.)

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Crowther, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
April 29, 1879.



Audit Office, 7th February, 1879.

SIR,

HAVING completed the audit of the Main Line Railway accounts in accordance with instructions, to the 30th September, 1878, I have the honor to remind you that no arrangement has yet been made by the Government for the continuance of the work beyond that date.

I gather from the report of a recent debate in the Legislative Council that it is considered that the examination of the books and accounts of the Main Line Railway Company forms part of the duty of the Colonial Auditor: but I quite disagree with this view; and a reference to Section 11 of the Contract with the Company, and a knowledge of all the circumstances connected with this audit, will, I think, prove that I am correct.

I wish it to be distinctly understood that I do not seek this work or the remuneration that may be fairly attached to it; and to point out that it is competent for the Governor in Council to appoint any person or persons to perform the same.

I have, &c.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

W. LOVETT

Colonial Secretary's Office, 7th February, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to forward herewith for your perusal copy of a communication received from the Colonial Auditor, in which he requests that an explanation may be sought of the conversation between yourself and the Auditor when the arrangement for the auditing of the Main Line Railway accounts was made.

Leaving the Auditor's request in your hands,

I have, &c.

THOS. REIBEY.

The Hon. WILLIAM ROBERT GIBLIN, M.H.A., Macquarie-street.

(Copy.)

Audit Office, 6th February, 1879.

SIR,

REFERRING to a report in the *Mercury* of this morning of the debate in the Legislative Council of last evening on the subject of the audit of the Tasmanian Main Line Railway accounts, I have the honor to request that the Honorable the Premier of the late Administration may be asked to explain the conversation referred to when the arrangement for the audit of these accounts was made, as the debate has evidently taken place under inaccurate inferences, and is calculated to create a wrong impression unless such arrangement is fully explained.

Wishing to guard against any appearance of attempting to influence such explanation, I defer making any remark on the subject until the receipt of a reply from the Honorable Mr. Giblin.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

W. LOVETT.

Hobart Town, 8th February, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, enclosing for my perusal copy of a letter from the Auditor as to the remuneration paid to him by the late Government for auditing the Main Line Railway accounts.

I cannot recall the particulars of the conversations I have had with Mr. Lovett on the subject; but, speaking generally, I remember consulting him as to the audit of the accounts for a period of six years and a half (March, 1872, to September, 1878), and agreeing that these arrears could hardly be considered as work to be done by his department without extra assistance, and finally my arranging with the Auditor that these arrears, which required to be audited at the Railway Offices, should be audited by himself, out of office hours, when alone he could be spared from the Audit Office; and I voluntarily informed him that this extra labour would be considered and remunerated by the Government when the amount of time and trouble involved became known.

Mr. Lovett's letter of the 16th December, if I remember rightly, was written at my request, as a change of Government being imminent I desired to complete the matter before quitting office; and the sum (£50) awarded to Mr. Lovett was fixed by myself, after consultation with my colleagues, and without any bargaining with Mr. Lovett.

I can only record my opinion that the arrangement was a most desirable, satisfactory, and economical one, and that the Government of which I was the Premier felt pleasure in being able to get this difficult and important work so satisfactorily performed at so light a cost.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

W. R. GIBLIN.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 12th February, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, and in accordance with the request therein contained I communicated with the Honorable the Premier of the late Administration, and now forward to you a copy of his reply.

I have, &c.

The Colonial Auditor.

THOS. REIBÉY.

Audit Office, 14th February, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 12th instant in reply to mine of the 6th, and covering copy of a letter from the Honorable W. R. Giblin.

In thanking you for the opportunity thus afforded of giving an explanation of the circumstances connected with the arrangements made with me for the audit of the Main Line Railway accounts, I may be allowed to remark that had these particulars, easily obtainable, been sought before the debate referred to in my previous letter was originated, the introduction therein of uncalled for and offensive insinuations would have been avoided.

The arguments used in the debate having been based upon fallacies instead of facts it is unnecessary to attempt to refute them, and the necessity for noticing the matter at all only arises in consequence of my position in the Public Service; but, as a certain amount of odium has been undeservedly cast upon me through the publication of the same in the public press, I hope the Government will see that it would be only fair to likewise publish this correspondence.

The foregoing remarks are made upon the assumption that the report of the debate published in the *Mercury* of the 6th February is a correct report.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

W. LOVETT.

Audit Office, 20th February, 1879.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to solicit your attention to my letter of the 14th instant respecting the arrangements made for the audit of the Railway Accounts, to which I have not received any reply.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

W. LOVETT.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 21st February, 1879.

SIR,

IN reply to your letter of yesterday's date, I have the honor, by direction of the Colonial Secretary, to inform you that there will be no objection to the publication of the recent correspondence respecting the arrangements made for the audit of the Railway accounts. A copy thereof has this day been forwarded to the Editors of the two Hobart Town and the two Launceston daily newspapers.

I have, &c.

The Colonial Auditor.

B. TRAVERS SOLLY.