

(No. 47.)



1876.

T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

M A I N L I N E R A I L W A Y .

P E T I T I O N F R O M C . H . G R A N T , E S Q .

Presented by Dr. Butler, and ordered by the House to be printed, 15 September,
1876.



*To the Honorable the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly
in Tasmania, in Parliament assembled.*

The humble Petition of the Tasmanian Main Line Railway Company, Limited.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

1st. That your Petitioners have constructed a Railway from Hobart Town to join the Launceston and Western Railway, which they believe entirely fulfils all the conditions of the Contract entered into between the Government of Tasmania and your Petitioners.

2nd. That the Contract date for the completion of the Railway was the 15th day of March last, but a through passenger service to Launceston was commenced early in October last, and has been regularly continued up to the present time ; while since the 13th March last the Contract train service has been most safely and efficiently performed, the express train running exactly to time, and the freight trains formerly exceeding sixteen, and now fourteen, miles per hour in speed, instead of the ten miles per hour as specified.

3rd. That, in addition to the train service required by the Contract, a night train was put on for the purpose of carrying the Mails, also through passengers and freight, and was continued running for nearly four months, in the hope that the Mail Service would be transferred to your Petitioners as required by the Contract ; but, since this was not done, it has been replaced by one or more *extra* freight trains, running daily, and conveying to market, at almost nominal charges, very large quantities of agricultural and other country produce.

4th. That on the 30th June last the amount of guaranteed interest due to your Petitioners was £10,553 6s. 0d. ; and on the 30th instant they will be entitled to £18,678 6s. 0d., less the sum of £3000 received from the Honorable the Colonial Treasurer under an agreement dated the 3rd of June last.

5th. That the Government, in refusing to pay the guaranteed interest actually earned to the 30th June last, did not inform your Petitioners sufficiently in detail as to the errors of Contract on which they grounded their refusal ; your Petitioners have, therefore, been unable to justify themselves, or to attempt to meet requirements not made known to them.

6th. Although your Petitioners have, by making great sacrifices, been able to keep the line open until the present time, their means of doing so will be shortly exhausted ; and they could not in any case incur the great loss of continuing to work the Railway unless the matters in dispute are immediately brought to an issue, and your Petitioners are paid for the train service while efficiently and satisfactorily performed.

7th. Your Petitioners are aware that, although much greater benefits than stipulated for in the Contract have been given to the Colony for the past six months, the public distrust, inseparable from the commencement of all such new undertakings, has prevented the Railway from being made so much use of as it might have been : they however believe that the approaching summer season would enable it to show such traffic results as should be in the highest degree satisfactory to the Colony, and its visitors, and confer upon the Railway a deserved popularity.

8th. Since closing the line under present circumstances implies its virtual destruction, your Petitioners would deeply regret to be forced into such a course, and have therefore endeavoured in every possible manner to arrange terms with the Government ; but failing in this, they now humbly petition your Honorable House to take the matter into early consideration in order that justice may be done.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

THE TASMANIAN MAIN LINE RAILWAY COMPANY, LIMITED,

Per their Attorney,

C. H. GRANT.