

(No. 17.)



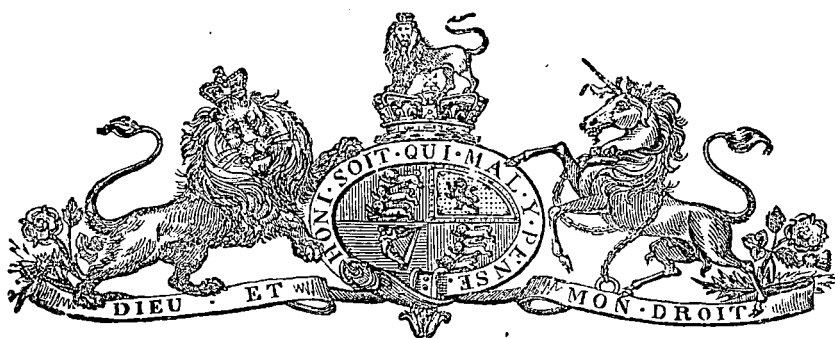
1861.

T A S M A N I A.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E.

P O L I C E O F F I C E S A N D W A T C H - H O U S E S , C L A R E N C E.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Innes, and ordered by the House to be printed,
22 August, 1861.



Bellerive, 27th December, 1860.

SIR,

I HAVE to bring under your notice, the state of the Police Offices and Watch-houses in this Municipality on the Council taking charge of the same, on the 14th of last month.

The Police Office and Watch-houses at Kangaroo Point were in a very indifferent state: the plastering of the large room was torn in several places. The water enters from the roof in two different places, which require the leads of the guttering to be repaired. The roof wants repairs done to the shingles in various parts, the locks are out of order, and there are several panes of glass that require to be mended. Some of the flagging requires amendment, and the entire place wants lime-washing and colouring. The constables' hut is in the same bad state of repair. Three panes of glass are patched up by unseemly wooden boards, there is a large rent in the stonework, the fireplace is in need of repairs, and the stone steps at the door are broken to pieces, and the place requires lime-washing.

Both places require the fencing repaired, and fastenings to the gates. Similar repairs are needed at the Watch-house and Police Office at Rokeby. The place smokes so insufferably that a fire cannot be lit in the general room.

The doors and windows are out of order, and the whole building wants to be renovated and lime-washed. Added to these general repairs, the various cells opening into the public room at Bellerive require to be pulled down, as they are unsuitable to the present state of things under a free Government, and are now no longer needed, as convictism is at an end.

I deferentially submit to you, that the general Government should have handed these buildings over to the Municipality in a good and efficient state of repair, as large sums have been voted from year to year for repairs of the buildings in various parts of the Colony, and as the General Revenue will be in future relieved from this burthen, which will hereafter fall on the various Municipalities; at any rate, it is only just and proper that we should receive them in a fit state for our occupation. If my recollection serves me right, the Municipal Council of Glamorgan received at once, for its Public Buildings, some £850 for their construction.

I would also bring under your notice, that the inhabitants of Rokeby subscribed the greater part of the money for the erection of the Police Office and Watch-house there, and which has not had a penny expended on it since its construction, a period now of some years past. On behalf of the Municipality I make no claims for new buildings; I only urge that the present ones should be placed at the onset of local self-government in a reasonable and fair state of repair, a proposition so reasonable and just that I do hope it will meet with the ready assent of the Executive Government, as I am confident that it would that of the Local Parliament.

In the Estimates for the ensuing year there are sums voted; viz.—£750 for repairs of Police Buildings, and a further sum of £3000 for Watch-houses. There are also large sums of money voted for a similar purpose for the present year, from which the Executive could appropriate a moderate amount either to the Municipality for this specific purpose, or the Public Works Department could make the necessary repairs and alterations, on the same being pointed out by the Municipal Council.

I may be permitted to state that, in my humble judgment, it would require the sum of £200 or £280 for the purposes I have mentioned; and I beg that you will be so good as to bring this request—which I confidently submit to you is an equitable one—under the notice of your Colleagues, so that the necessary repairs may be completed before the buildings suffer further dilapidation, and previous to the commencement of the winter.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

EDWARD ABBOTT, *Warden, Clarence.*

The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer.

29th December, 1860.

WILL the Inspector of Police be good enough to acquaint me, as expeditiously as he can, whether Rokeby was comprehended among the Watch-houses for the repair, &c., of which a sum was provided last Session of Parliament, or the previous one, and if the latter, whether any appropriation was made for it?

FRED. M. INNES.

The Inspector of Police.

29th December, 1860.

NONE of the Police Buildings in the District of Clarence were comprehended in those for which special sums were voted in the last two Sessions of Parliament. The repairs required at Kangaroo Point, Rokeby, and Muddy Plains, were considered so trivial that what was necessary to be done was provided for out of the sum voted for Petty Repairs, a sum of £21 5s. having been so expended; viz.—

	1860, April to June.	£	s.	d.
Rokeby		1	10	0
Kangaroo Point		1	15	0
Muddy Plains		18	0	0
		<hr/>		
		£21	5	0
		<hr/>		

J. FORSTER.

The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer.

Colonial Treasury, 4th January, 1861.

SIR,

IN answer to your letter of the 27th ultimo, referring to the state of the Police Offices, &c., of Clarence, at the date of the formation of the Rural Municipality of that District, I have the honor to state, that the Law has not enjoined on the Government to hand over such buildings in a state of repair. But, with every desire that the Municipality in which you preside should have the benefit of its share of any funds that might have been provided by Parliament for repairs to Watch-houses, &c., generally throughout the Territory, I have instigated enquiries, from which I find, that, of the vote taken for 1861, no appropriation in the Clarence District was contemplated; and that as regards the past year, a sum of £21 5s. was expended on them there, that being the due proportion to their requirements out of the total sum available.

In these circumstances it is not in my power to comply with your request.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

FRED. M. INNES.

The Warden, Clarence.

Bellerive, 5th January, 1861.

SIR,

I HAVE had the honor of receiving your letter of yesterday, in which you inform me, that the Law has not enjoined on the Government to hand over the Police Buildings in a state of repair. That you desire that the Municipality of Clarence should have the benefit of its share of the funds voted by Parliament, but that no vote in the Clarence District was contemplated. I submit to you, with much confidence,—Firstly, that the liberality of Parliament never could contemplate that the General Government would hand over the Watch-houses in such a deficient state of repair that a large part of the Municipal Fund should be forthwith absorbed to render these buildings even water-proof, seeing that hereafter, that the General Government will be entirely relieved from any disbursement for such a purpose; and Secondly, I may remark that the vote taken for 1861 was for Watch-houses generally throughout the Colony. Clarence was not excluded; and surely, under the circumstances I have detailed, it would be positively unfair, nay, unjust, to deprive the buildings in this Municipality of greatly needed repairs, solely because the District took upon itself the onerous duties of local self-government.

With respect to the disbursements of £21 5s., which you state has been expended in the past

year, I may say that the only apparent outlay for that sum appears to me to be a wooden water-but, when for a less amount an iron tank could have been purchased.

Considering that my respectful request is a proper and reasonable one, it will only remain for me, in my position as a Member of the Legislature, to bring under the consideration of the House of Assembly the claims of this Municipality to have its public buildings placed in an efficient state of repair before they were handed over to us by the General Government; and in making this announcement to you, I desire most earnestly to assure you, that such a resolve is not intended in any way to coerce the Government into a compliance with my request, but simply to assert an act of fairness, what I consider this Municipality is entitled to from the justice of the Parliament.

I assure you most emphatically that my letter to you, of the 27th ultimo, was penned in the hope that the requirements pointed out by me were reasonable and fair,—and I indulged the idea that they would have been immediately acceded to; for the fact of the General Government foisting on any Municipality the Public Buildings in a dilapidated state of repair, is quite at variance with the liberality expressed by the Ministry—of doing that which was just and proper to encourage and aid the principle of Municipal action in this Territory.

You will not have failed to observe that I have not noticed the observation made,—that the technicality of the Law has not provided for the buildings being handed over to the Municipality in a fit state of repair,—for the reason that if such an assertion is intended as argument, it is both puerile and illogical, and I think, on consideration, that you will so consider it.

I have deemed it my duty—an official one, considering the position I occupy—to put forth this claim on the irrefragable grounds, that money has been voted by Parliament for the specific purpose of repairing Watch-houses, and that the rights of this Municipality, under the especial *res questæ* of the case, are paramount, and not to be controverted.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

EDWARD ABBOTT, *Warden, Clarence.*

The Colonial Treasurer.

Colonial Treasury, 8th January, 1861.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt this day of your letter, dated 5th instant, in reference to the state of the Police Buildings in the Clarence District, and the claims of the Municipality to have them handed over to it in a state of repair.

In reply, I think it unnecessary to offer any assurance that the Government is prepared to do all that lies in its power to relieve or assist the Municipality represented by you, in so far as it has had funds voted which it can consistently and legally apply to such a purpose.

But, as respects the provision made in the last Session of Parliament for Police Buildings throughout the Territory, the Inspector of Police was examined before the Legislative Council as to the specific appropriation contemplated of the sum voted, and I find that repairs in the Municipal District of Clarence was not included.

In reference to the intimation conveyed in your letter that you will, as a Member of the Legislature, bring under the consideration of the House of Assembly the claims of your Municipality, I have nothing to say on the part of the Government, still less to object.

I have, &c.,

FRED. M. INNES.

The Warden, Clarence.

Bellerive, 9th January, 1861.

SIR,

I HAVE had the honor of receiving your letter of yesterday's date, and without commenting on the arguments used in reference to the claim of this Municipality to have its Watch-houses placed in an effective state of repair from the funds voted by the Parliament; which are available, I must protest against the extraordinary assumption dwelt on by you, that because the Inspector of Police was examined before the Legislative Council, and no reference was made to the Clarence Watch-houses, that such an omission is fatal to the claim I have made.

I submit to you again, that in Law, in reason, and in common sense, nothing but the predominance of might over right can prevent the Municipality of Clarence from sharing in the vote passed last Session—not for any particular and specified Watch-house, but for those throughout the Colony—and I take my stand and make my claim accordingly; and if it is refused by the Executive Government there is no alternative left for me but to appeal to the Parliament against the palpable fact that we are justly and fairly entitled to a proportion of the funds voted for a specific purpose, and that it is monstrous that our Police Buildings should be handed over to us, like *Jack Straw's house*, neither wind or water tight.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

EDWD. ABBOTT, *Warden, Clarence.*

The Colonial Treasurer.

Bellerive, 18th January, 1861.

SIR,

ADVERTING to my letter to you of the 9th instant, on the subject of the dilapidated state in which the Watch-houses were handed over to this Municipality by the General Government, and to the fact that money has been voted by the Parliament last Session for the repair of such buildings, I should be thankful if my communication was acknowledged, as I presume that its receipt will close this correspondence.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

EDWARD ABBOTT, *Warden Clarence.*

The Colonial Treasurer.

Colonial Treasury, 19th January, 1861.

SIR,

IN compliance with the wish expressed in your letter of the 18th instant, I beg now to acknowledge your letter of the 9th. But inasmuch as this letter contained nothing but a repetition of the substance of a previous communication which had been definitely answered I was not of opinion that it required a rejoinder.

I have, &c,

F. M. INNES.

The Warden, Clarence.