

1878.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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## ESTABLISHMENT OF A RAILWAY WAGON COMPANY

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE).

*Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Macandrew, with the leave of the House.*

No. 1.

Mr. DAVIDSON to the Hon. J. MACANDREW.

SIR,—

Dunedin, 2nd May, 1878.

In view of the extended traffic to be expected in consequence of the opening of the main trunk line between the Bluff and Amberley, as also the increased traffic to be derived from the many branch lines projected and in course of construction, it has been suggested to myself and several friends that there must be an opening in this Island for a Railway Wagon Company similar to those in Great Britain and America.

The objects proposed by such a Company would, briefly stated, be as follow :—

The Company would purchase the necessary workshops, and immediately begin to build a number of high-sided, low-sided, and platform wagons and timber-trucks. These wagons should be made exactly to Government pattern, subject to inspection. They would be leased to coal and mineral companies, grain merchants, and others who might require them. A small rebate might be allowed by the Government on goods carried in these wagons, say one farthing ( $\frac{1}{4}$ d.) per ton per mile.

In the matter of leasing wagons the first cost of same would be calculated at that of the Government ones of the latest design now employed upon the railways, and a small charge would be made for their use, which, with the rebate allowed by the Government, would give the Company sufficient interest on the capital invested.

Before anything can be done by myself or friends it will of course be necessary that the railway authorities should give their sanction, subject to the approval of Government, to the scheme, and also state the amount of rebate it may be possible to allow us. Taking the average life of railway wagons, the rebate I have ventured to suggest would not be excessive.

Should the Government be of opinion at any time that the traffic must be carried on in their wagons alone, it could be so arranged that they retain the power to purchase the proposed Company's rolling-stock at prices based on the cost of their own, less deductions for wear and tear.

The Company should, however, be allowed some fixed term before being compelled to sell, so that encouragement enough be afforded them.

It would also be an object of the Company to tender for the construction of carriages and all rolling-stock required by the Government from time to time; and the workshops would be of such a character that, with the exception of the wheels, all the ironwork besides the woodwork might be constructed in the Colony. Without such works it would be impossible to compete with the Home builders; and in all countries where railways are in use such companies will be found.

It is hoped, therefore, that the scheme proposed will find such favour with the Government that sufficient encouragement may be given to allow of the Company being at once formed and its operations speedily begun.

Trusting, therefore, for a favourable reply,

The Hon. J. Macandrew,  
Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
JAMES DAVIDSON.

No. 2.

The UNDER SECRETARY for PUBLIC WORKS to J. DAVIDSON, Esq.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 6th May, 1878.

I am directed by the Hon. the Minister for Public Works to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd inst., relative to the manufacture of wagon rolling-stock for the purposes therein