

vested in the Commissioners, was constructed for the public use and convenience, and the special provision in the Government Railways Act, section 20, that in fixing the scale of rates the Commissioners shall give due consideration to the encouragement of industries in the vicinity of such railways applies thereto. In obeying this statutory instruction, the Commissioners have felt it their duty to limit their action so as to avoid in any way embarrassing the Government finances, and this obligation includes the consideration of the position of the Harbour Board, to whom the Government pays the net revenue of the Greymouth line. The railway revenues available for the Harbour Board during the past three financial years have been arrived at, thus:—

	1890. £	1891. £	1892. £
Revenue	25,085	25,197	27,145
Expenses	16,797	15,522	15,579
Net revenue	£8,288	£9,675	£11,566

An average of £9,839 per year

This average revenue, the Commissioners considered, would be increased during the current financial year sufficiently to allow of some reductions in rates to assist the local coal industries against the very keen foreign competition which now prevails, it may not be within your knowledge that Newcastle coals have been recently retailed in Wellington 6s. or 7s. a ton cheaper than West Coast coals can be obtained for, and it is a matter for regret that the Commissioners could not see their way to make a greater reduction. The Commissioners would suggest that if the Harbour Board can see its way to restrict its expenses so as to be able to dispense with so much revenue, it would be a judicious proceeding to make a further slight concession.

The Hon. Minister for Public Works.

JAMES MCKERROW,
Chief Commissioner

No. 4.

The UNDER-SECRETARY for PUBLIC WORKS to the CHAIRMAN, Greymouth Harbour Board.
Public Works Office, Wellington, 12th July, 1892.

Re Greymouth-Brunner Railway, Reduction in Rates for the Carriage of Coal and Coke.

SIR,—

In reply to your letter of the 15th ultimo, forwarding copy of a resolution of your Board, drawing the attention of the Government to the reductions made by the Railway Commissioners in the rates for the carriage of coal and coke on the above-mentioned railway, I am now directed by the Minister for Public Works to state that the matter has been duly brought under the notice of the Commissioners, and to forward to you herewith a copy of the memorandum which has been received from them on the subject.

I have, &c.,

H. J. H. BLOW,

Under-Secretary for Public Works.

The Chairman, Greymouth Harbour Board, Greymouth.

No. 5.

The SECRETARY to the Greymouth Harbour Board to the NEW ZEALAND RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

Greymouth Harbour Board, Greymouth, 6th November, 1891.

In re Greymouth Harbour-works, Completing the Decking on Wharf below Johnston Street.

GENTLEMEN,—

By direction of the Greymouth Harbour Board, I have the honour to inform you that the Board request your permission to allow them to complete the decking on the wharf below Johnston Street. The work is urgently necessary in order to facilitate the loading and discharging of vessels and generally to increase the wharf-accommodation. The Board's engineer estimates that the work will cost £400.

Trusting that the above proposal will meet with your approval, and requesting a reply at your earliest convenience,

The Railway Commissioners, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS ALLEN, Secretary

No. 6.

The SECRETARY to the Railway Commissioners to the SECRETARY to the Greymouth Harbour Board.

SIR,—

Railway Department, Head Office, Wellington, 11th December, 1891.

With reference to your letter of the 6th November, the receipt of which I had the honour to acknowledge on the 12th ultimo, respecting the Greymouth wharf, I am now directed by the Commissioners to state, regarding your desire to see this wharf extended, that they think you must be under some misapprehension as to the necessity therefor.

The working of the railway and wharf being in the Commissioners' hands, they desire me to say that they will see to the provision of such accommodation as may be necessary from time to time.

The Secretary, Harbour Board, Greymouth.

I have, &c.,

E. G. PILCHER, Secretary