

surveying the confiscated lands at Patea, in the Ngatiruanui country. The second cause is, that the surveyors have been delayed by the hostile attitude assumed by the Ngatiruanui Natives in the vicinity of Hawera, which has rendered the completion of the survey of the Patea District up to this time a matter of impossibility.

The Committee are of opinion that prompt measures should be at once taken by the Government to put down the opposition offered by the abovenamed Natives to the completion of the survey, and that the Petitioners should be then placed on their lands in the manner contemplated by the Defence Minister—that is to say, each company being located in blocks extending backwards to a distance of seven miles from the sea, with a proportionate amount of frontage on the sea beach.

J. CRACROFT WILSON, C.B.,
Chairman.

No. 36.

INHABITANTS OF THE GOLD FIELDS OF OTAGO.

THE Committee direct me to report that the Petition is signed by 161 persons, and that it does not contain any interlineation or erasure, but that there is an erasure among the signatures affixed to the Petition.

The Petitioners complain that the administration of the Gold Fields by the Provincial Government of Otago has been grievously inefficient and burdensome; that the revenues derived from the Gold Fields have been misappropriated and diverted from the purposes to which they should have been applied; that fees of an unjust and burdensome character have been imposed upon all business transactions connected with mining; that incompetent officers have been appointed and promoted through favoritism, regardless of the public good; that crude and unsuitable bye-laws have been framed; that the sales of Gold Fields townships have been unnecessarily delayed; that grave mistakes have been committed in the selection of the sites for the said towns; that the expenditure on public works has been injudicious, and part of it recklessly wasted; and they pray that the House will provide such remedies for the evils complained of as may appear best.

The Committee entertain the same opinion in the matter of this Petition as was expressed in their Report upon the Petition of two hundred electors and settlers of the districts of Gladstone and Timaru, namely, that they do not think it comes within their province to offer any suggestions to the House with reference to the complaints contained in this Petition.

30th August, 1866.

J. CRACROFT WILSON, C.B.,
Chairman.

No. 37.

ELECTORS AND INHABITANTS OF PORT CHALMERS.

THE Petition is in accordance with Standing Orders, and is signed with 231 signatures. The Petitioners demand three-eighths of the Customs Revenue and the full share of the Surplus Revenue, and they repudiate any indebtedness to the General Government. The Committee direct me to report that they do not deem it necessary to offer any opinion upon the contents of this Petition.

18th September, 1866.

J. CRACROFT WILSON, C.B.,
Chairman.

No. 38.

INHABITANTS OF WAITAHUNA.

THE Petition is in accordance with Standing Orders, and it is signed by 250 persons, inhabitants of Waitahuna, in the Otago Gold Fields. The Petition is a protest against the transfer of the administration of the Gold Fields from the Provincial Government of Otago to the General Government, as proposed in the Petition of 161 inhabitants of the Otago Gold Fields, recently reported upon by the Committee; and the prayer is, that the House will not sanction the said transfer, and if any change is contemplated that more extended powers be granted to the Provincial Legislature. The Committee direct me to report that they do not deem it falls within their province to offer any suggestion upon the subject matter of the Petition.

18th September, 1866.

J. CRACROFT WILSON, C.B.,
Chairman.

No. 39.

ELECTORS OF CHRISTCHURCH AND LYTTTELTON.

THE Petition is in accordance with Standing Orders. It is signed by 400 citizens of Christchurch and Lyttelton, in the Province of Canterbury. The prayer of the Petition is that the House will take such steps as may be necessary to diminish the cost of Government, so that there may be no necessity for increasing the permanent debt of the Colony or imposing additional taxation, or depriving the Provinces of their accustomed share of the Customs Revenue. The Committee direct me to report that they do not deem it necessary for them to offer any opinion upon the prayer of the Petitioners.

19th September, 1866.

J. CRACROFT WILSON, C.B.,
Chairman.