

drawn through the first of the words; that the Petition is signed by 266 persons, many of whom add the word "elector" to their names, and that the prayer of the Petitioners is, that the Superintendent of the Province of Marlborough, a Province constituted under "The New Provinces Act, 1858," who has hitherto been elected by the Provincial Council, may in future be elected in the manner prescribed by the Constitution Act, that is to say by the whole body of electors. There can be no doubt as to the evil results which have accrued in the Province of Marlborough from the mode of electing Superintendents prescribed by "The New Provinces Act, 1858," but the Committee are of opinion that it is not within the scope of their duty to offer to the House any suggestions on the subject matter of the Petition.

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

No. 44.

JOHN WATSON.

I AM directed by the Committee to report that the Petition is in accordance with Standing Orders, and that the prayer of the Petitioner, who was a settler to whom land was assigned at South Waitara in 1843, and who was dispossessed in 1844 in consequence of Governor FitzRoy's reversal of Mr. Commissioner Spain's award respecting the lands of the Province of New Plymouth is, that his original sections which have now come into the possession of Government, having been assigned to the Military Settlers, his claim may be appraised on the basis provided by the New Zealand Company's Land Claimants Ordinance previous to its repeal by the Land Orders and Scrip Act.

The Committee are of opinion that the Petitioner has failed by his own act to avail himself of the provisions of the New Zealand Claimants Act, Session 11, No. 15, under which Ordinance claims similar to that of the Petitioner were provided for, and consequently they cannot recommend the case as one deserving of favorable consideration.

25th September, 1866.

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

No. 45.

RESIDENTS OF THE GOLD FIELDS, DISTRICT OF TUAPEKA.

THE Committee direct me to report that the Petition is in accordance with Standing Orders, that it is signed with 260 signatures of persons styling themselves residents of the Gold Field districts of Tuapeka; that the prayer of the Petition is almost the same as that of 250 persons inhabitants of Waitahuna, also on the gold fields of Otago, reported upon by the Committee on the 19th instant, viz., that the management of the gold fields be not transferred from the Provincial to the General Government, and the Petitioners also pray that the twenty-eighth clause of the Gold Fields Act be rescinded.

The prayer of the Petition seems to be in direct contradiction to that of 159 inhabitants of the same gold field, presented to the House on 30th August, which states that the Petitioners have lost all hopes of any redress of grievances through the Provincial Government, and of any reduction of the oppressive taxation under which the Petitioners labor through the misgovernment of the Provincial authorities. They state in particular that the administration of the gold fields by the Provincial Government has been grievously inefficient and burdensome.

The Committee do not presume to offer any opinion as to whether the contents of the Petition of the 30th August are correct, or whether the present Petition contains a true state of the case; but they consider that it is not within the scope of their duty to offer any suggestions to the House on the subject matter of the Petition.

26th September, 1866.

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

No. 46.

SETTLERS OF TARANAKI.

THE Committee direct me to report that the Petition is in accordance with Standing Orders, and that it is signed by 250 persons styling themselves Inhabitants of the Province of Taranaki. The Petitioners state that they have learnt that the surveyors have been instructed by the Government to lay off 600 acres of land at Patea, in the Province of Taranaki, for Dr. Mouat, the principal Medical Officer of the Imperial Forces serving in New Zealand; that the said Dr. Mouat, during the year 1860-61, while serving on the Staff under General Pratt, never lost an opportunity of charging the Petitioners and the Colonists of New Plymouth with having originated the war for the purpose of profiting by the Commissariat expenditure, and of robbing the Natives of their lands; and they urge that some violence would be done to the feelings of Dr. Mouat himself, by making him a participator in what that officer regarded as a spoil wrung from the Natives by the rapacious greed of the colonists. The prayer of the Petitioners is—"That if it be considered expedient that Dr. Mouat's services to the Colony should receive a special recognition, that recognition should be made in a manner more grateful to that officer's feelings than by a grant of land in Taranaki taken from the Natives, and that the Province in which the services may have been rendered should have the distinction of conferring the reward."

The Committee has learnt from the Hon. the Defence Minister that the grant of 600 acres proposed to be made to Dr. Mouat is authorized by Clause XVII. of "The New Zealand Settlements Amendment and Continuance Act, 1865," and is a reward for past services, and not "subject to conditions for the performance of any military or police duties."