

1873.

## NEW ZEALAND.

PETITION OF INHABITANTS OF WANGANUI, RANGITIKEI,  
WAITOTARA, AND WAIROA DISTRICTS.

*Presented 30th July, 1873, and ordered to be printed 31st July.*

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives  
of the Colony of New Zealand, in Parliament assembled.

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INHABITANTS OF THE PROVINCE OF WELLINGTON, HUMBLY  
SHOWETH,—

That your Petitioners reside in the Province of Wellington, but being inhabitants of the West Coast, including the Districts of Wanganui, Rangitikei, Waitotara, and Wairoa, the same having a coastal line of upwards of sixty miles, having little or no interests in common with the City of Wellington, or other parts of the Province.

That the population of the Wanganui and Rangitikei Electoral Districts, at the date of the last Census, in February, 1871, was 6,682, since which time a considerable increase has taken place. The exports of the districts, especially in regard to stock, have been large in proportion to the population and to the exports of the rest of the Province; the value of these for the year ending 23th February, 1873, being £171,349.

That your Petitioners have been for many years extremely dissatisfied with the administration of the Provincial Government at Wellington, in so far as these districts are concerned, believing that while fully responsible for their share of the Provincial debts and liabilities, commensurate advantages have not been received by way of expenditure.

That your Petitioners have made several attempts, by Petitions under the New Provinces Act, and by Petitions to your honourable House, to secure for themselves local self-government, independent of the Wellington Provincial Authorities, whose interests are diverse from those of your Petitioners, but that hitherto these attempts have failed.

That a Municipal Corporation exists in the Town of Wanganui, and the country districts possess throughout a system of Road Boards; that your Petitioners require an efficient and inexpensive mode of local administration to discharge the more general functions which pertain to a system of County Government.

That the interests of your Petitioners have been systematically neglected by the Provincial Government of Wellington, but especially the River and Port of Wanganui, the said river being in a worse condition at the present time than twenty years ago, when its management was first assumed by the Wellington Authorities. The following testimony of the late Mr. Balfour, embodied in a report to His Honor the Superintendent of Wellington in 1865, as an evidence of the importance of the Port and River of Wanganui, is worthy of the consideration of your honourable House. He says,—

“This (Wanganui) important river is one of the most improvable I have ever seen, and one which is destined to play an important part in the future of the Colony as the shipping port of a large and most valuable agricultural and wool-growing district.”

That your Petitioners have become truly alarmed at the recent action taken in the Provincial Council, in the introduction of a Bill authorizing the borrowing of £210,000, and believe that the greater portion thereof will ultimately fall as a debt on the Colony, and on your Petitioners as Colonists.

That your Petitioners, for these and other reasons, most earnestly pray that your honourable House will separate your Petitioners' districts from the Province of Wellington, thereby affording your Petitioners the most effectual protection against ruinous schemes of which they do not approve, and from which they can derive no advantage.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

[Here follow, 1,108 signatures.]

