

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The order of reference of 1st October was read.

Resolved, on motion of Hon. Mr. Stafford, That Mr. Rees do take the chair.

Resolved, on motion of Mr. Stout, That the Hon. Mr. Whitaker be requested to attend the Committee at 11 o'clock to-morrow, and to bring with him all papers referring to the matters mentioned in Mr. Rees's letter of 2nd October to the Hon. Mr. Whitaker. (*Vide* Appendix A.)

The Committee then adjourned until Friday, 5th October, at 11 o'clock a.m.

FRIDAY, 5TH OCTOBER, 1877.

The Committee met pursuant to adjournment at 11 o'clock a.m.

PRESENT :

Mr. Rees in the Chair.

Hon. Mr. Bowen,	Mr. Macandrew,
Mr. Button,	Hon. Mr. Stafford,
Hon. Mr. Gisborne,	Mr. Stout.
Mr. Harper,	

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Resolved, on motion of the Hon. Mr. Stafford, That the Chairman, at whose instance the charges were made against Mr. Whitaker, should first state to the Committee the character of the charges and all facts connected therewith which he desires the Committee should investigate.

The Chairman accordingly made a statement, which was taken down by the reporter present. (Appendix A.)

The Hon. F. Whitaker, being in attendance, was examined, his evidence being taken down by the reporter present.

The Committee then adjourned until Monday, 8th October, at 11.30 o'clock a.m.

MONDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 1877.

The Committee met pursuant to adjournment at 11.30 o'clock a.m.

PRESENT :

Mr. Rees in the Chair.

Hon. Mr. Bowen,	Mr. Harper,
Mr. Button,	Mr. Macandrew,
Hon. Mr. Gisborne,	Mr. Stout.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Resolved, on motion of Mr. Stout, That Dr. Giles, the Under Secretary for Crown Lands, be requested to reply to the following questions:—

1. Was any agreement entered into between the Secretary of Crown Lands and any person under or in pursuance of the regulations published on 12th June, 1876, page 406, in *New Zealand Gazette*?
2. Has any Crown grant been issued, and, if so, when?
3. When was purchase-money paid?

Resolved, on motion of Mr. Stout, That the opinion of Mr. B. C. Haggitt be taken on three questions to be submitted to him by telegram, as follows:—

Your opinion is immediately requested on these questions. Please let the answers be as full as you consider necessary. Reply by telegram.

1. Would a contract or agreement for the purchase of waste lands not in conformity with law, vitiate an election under "The Disqualification Act, 1870," or "The Disqualification Act, 1876"?
2. Suppose a person, disqualified at time of election under "Disqualification Act, 1870," be returned as elected, and the Act be repealed by Act of 1876, can a Committee or the House now, in 1877, say that person is disqualified and his election void?
3. Would a contract under Order in Council in *New Zealand Gazette*, dated 12th June, 1876, page 403, work a disqualification under "The Disqualification Act, 1870," or "The Disqualification Act, 1876"?

Resolved, on motion of Mr. Macandrew, That, in the absence of the Hon. Mr. Stafford from Wellington, the Chairman do move the House to discharge the Hon. Mr. Stafford from attendance at the Committee, and that another member be appointed to serve in his stead; and that, pending such appointment, the Committee do now adjourn. Further, that the Chairman be requested to make a *précis* of the various papers in possession of the Committee, with a view to enabling the Committee to examine Hon. Mr. Whitaker upon the various points at issue.

The Committee then adjourned until Wednesday, at 11 o'clock a.m.

WEDNESDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 1877.

The Committee met pursuant to adjournment at 11 o'clock a.m.

PRESENT :

Mr. Rees in the Chair.

Hon. Mr. Bowen,	Mr. Harper,
Mr. Button,	Mr. Macandrew,
Hon. Mr. Gisborne,	Mr. Stout.