

1877.

NEW ZEALAND.

PETITION OF JOHN ALEXANDER WILSON.

Presented to the House of Representatives 2nd August, and ordered to be printed 9th August, 1877.

To the Honorable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives.

THE PETITION OF JOHN ALEXANDER WILSON, LATE LAND PURCHASE OFFICER AT THE EAST COAST.

HUMBLY SHEWETH,—

THAT your petitioner, at the request of the Government, relinquished in exchange a remunerative engagement with them for permanent employ.

That your petitioner, having no personal ends to gain but much to lose, as the event has proved, did persistently uphold, as a Land Purchase Officer, the just rights of the public to its lands on the East Coast against certain speculators who seriously encroached upon said lands; also against the administration of certain officers and functionaries by whom the law was worked in a manner to facilitate and to protect said speculators so encroaching, and to the hindering your petitioner in the discharge of his manifest duty to the public. That your petitioner deemed it his duty very reluctantly to report the proceedings and transactions of the said officers and functionaries to the Government.

That your petitioner was, moreover, very reluctantly compelled to inform the Government of certain illegal and partial proceedings and transactions performed by the Native Land Court judicially, whereby certain of the said speculators were profited and the public lost to the value of many thousands of pounds. And your petitioner submits that if he erred at all in making this communication he erred in not reporting several of the most unfavourable features in the conduct of the Court, whereby the public interest, your petitioner's labour in connection therewith, and the Natives' sense of business morality were seriously and injuriously affected. That your petitioner further deems it his duty to report to the Government the publication by a Judge of the Native Land Court of a certain false and mischievous advertisement, by which the said Judge, unmindful of the essential nature and quality of his functions, did prejudice many hundreds of thousands of acres against the public and against your petitioner before the titles to the said land had been tried in his Court, and before their claims had been even called in his Court. And your petitioner represented that the said Judge had unfitted himself by the gratuitous publication of that advertisement to adjudicate upon any of the numerous claims mentioned in it.

That for upholding the rights of the public against the above-mentioned speculators, and for making the aforesaid reports and communications to the Government in the interest of the public and, as your petitioner verily believes and humbly submits, in performance of his duty, your petitioner unhappily incurred the displeasure of the Government. That your petitioner was thereupon unjustly deprived of his position, without cause, by the Hon. Mr. Ormond, on behalf of the Native Minister (the Hon. Dr. Pollen), to his very great injury pecuniarily, and to exposing his reputation to injury by abrupt dismissal. That such dismissal was wrongful, and a breach of the engagement made between the Government and your petitioner. That the alleged ground of your petitioner's dismissal was upon the report of a certain Royal Commission. That your petitioner has never seen the said report, nor had the opportunity to vindicate himself in respect to it in any way.

That the Commission, in its constitution, was not independent of the Government, and proved itself most partial and unfair in its mode of conducting the inquiry.

Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your honorable House will cause full inquiry to be made into his case, and such relief to be afforded him as may seem meet.

And your petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

J. A. WILSON.

