

1881.
NEW ZEALAND.

DISTRICT BETWEEN OKARITO AND JACKSON'S BAY

(LETTER POINTING OUT ADVANTAGES OF OPENING UP).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 16th August, 1881.

"That there be laid upon the table copy of a letter dated 17th June, 1881, from Mr. D. Macfarlane, of Jackson's Bay, pointing out public advantages resulting from opening up district between Okarito and Jackson's Bay, and thence into Otago by way of Haast Pass."—(*Hon. Mr. Gisborne.*)

Mr. D. MACFARLANE, Resident Agent, Jackson's Bay, to the Hon. JOHN HALL, Wellington.

SIR,—

Jackson's Bay, 17th June, 1881.

I have the honor to bring under your notice, and crave your favourable consideration of a matter of the gravest importance to the inhabitants of the southern part of the Provincial District of Westland, *i.e.*, the construction of a jetty at Jackson's Bay. During the last session of Parliament the Government were good enough to recognize our claim to have this work done, by placing the sum of £2,500 upon the estimates; plans were prepared and tenders called for the work, but, owing to a lack of funds, this, as well as many other works, was held over. The inhabitants of the riding have, by petition through their member, addressed the House on the subject, but, as there are points that could not very well be touched upon therein, I have taken the liberty of addressing you as head of the Government on the subject. In the first place I would point out that a considerable reduction can be made in the cost of construction by doing away with the muntz-metal sheathing and bolts specified in Mr. Blackett's plans. The object in using metal is to prevent the ravages of the *teredo novalis*, which has proved so destructive to the timber used in wharf and jetty construction in the more northern parts of the colony, but if it can be shown that through local causes their action here is nil, then this expensive item can be struck out; this would materially reduce the cost of the work, without in the least impairing its efficiency. It is a fact known to those who have studied the habits of this destructive worm that a mixture of fresh and salt water is inimical to its existence, and moreover, as we proceed south, the change of temperature has the effect of checking their ravages. The portion of the jetty built three years ago shows no signs of the action of the *teredo*, and I attribute this to the fresh-water creek discharging into the bay almost alongside the jetty, and to the waters of the River Arawata, which, after discharging into the bay, follow the trend of the coast into the bottom of the bay, whence they swing round and meet the tidal inside Jackson's Head, causing a tide rip across the bay. Since my last communication with the Government on this subject, I have found timber (black birch) more easily available than when tenders were called last year; this would also reduce the cost of the work, so that it could be done for £1,500, instead of £2,500, as voted last year. This sum, I hope you will be able to see your way to place on the estimates for the current year. The saw-mill, put up at great expense, and that promised to be a source of profit and employment both to proprietors and employés, has been lying idle two years, and every other industry labours under the same disadvantage. The country is being taken up wherever available for cattle and sheep runs, and in the settlement proper a good many are cultivating with marked success in the way of splendid root and grass crops. The mineral resources of the district are being utilized, but under great difficulties, from the want of facilities for shipping produce, and from the want of assured communication with other parts of the colony.

Waiting your answer,

I have, &c.,

D. MACFARLANE,

Resident Agent.

The Hon. John Hall, Wellington.