

1883.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

REPORTS ON LETTER OF THE CONTROLLER AND AUDITOR-GENERAL, DATED 3RD SEPTEMBER, 1883 (B.-15), RELATIVE TO APPROPRIATION BY NEW PLYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD OF £18,000 TO CONSTRUCTION OF A RAILWAY.

Reports brought up on 4th and 5th September, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

MONDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1883.

Ordered, "That the letter of the Controller and Auditor-General, laid on the table of the House on the 3rd September, be referred to the Public Accounts Committee, to report thereon forthwith."—(*Hon. Major Atkinson.*)

WEDNESDAY, THE 5TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1883.

Ordered, "That the report of this day of the Public Accounts Committee on the letter of the Controller and Auditor-General, presented to the House this day, be referred back to the Committee for reconsideration, and that the Committee be directed to meet at five of the clock this day."—(*Hon. Major Atkinson.*)

R E P O R T S.

THE Public Accounts Committee, to whom was referred the letter of the Controller and Auditor-General, laid on the table of the House on the 3rd September, have the honour to report,—

That the Controller seems to have acted with proper motives in sending the memorandum to the House.

That, in the opinion of the Committee, there was nothing in the minutes from the Controller and Auditor-General (which are attached, as is also the letter from the Chairman of the Harbour Board, intimating that he has lodged a sum to the credit of the Minister for Public Works at the Bank of New Zealand at New Plymouth) to make it apparent to the Treasury that a direction from the Treasurer to transfer the deposit to an account to be named was a matter of urgency.

That the Controller did not verbally inform the Secretary to the Treasury that, in his opinion, such a direction was a matter of urgency until yesterday morning.

That the Secretary had no opportunity of informing the Treasurer of this until 1 o'clock yesterday, when the Treasurer directed him to ascertain from the Controller what should be done under the circumstances.

That the Secretary thereupon asked the Controller and Auditor-General how, in his opinion, the money should properly be dealt with, and that the Controller and Auditor-General declined to give an opinion on the subject.

That it appears that, had the Controller and Auditor-General understood that the Secretary to the Treasury asked the question by direction of the Treasurer, in order that the Treasurer might give effect to the Controller's minute, the memorandum by the Controller and Auditor-General to the House would not have been sent.

That the money deposited is public money, but that no further action need be taken by the House, as it is the intention of the Minister for Public Works to immediately repay it to the Harbour Board, in accordance with the expressed wish of the House.

F. J. Moss,
Chairman.

4th September, 1883.