

1890.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS OF PUBLIC PETITIONS M TO Z COMMITTEE.
(MR. T. THOMPSON, CHAIRMAN.)

Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

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Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

FRIDAY, 20TH JUNE, 1890.

Ordered, "That a Public Petitions M to Z Committee, consisting of ten members, be appointed, to consider all petitions that may be referred to it by the Petitions Classification Committee, to classify and prepare abstracts of such petitions in such form and manner as shall appear to it best suited to convey to this House all requisite information respecting their contents, and to report the same from time to time to this House, and to have power to report its opinions and observations thereupon to this House; also to have power to call for persons and papers: three to be a quorum. The Committee to consist of Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Grimmond, Mr. Humphreys, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Taylor, Mr. T. Thompson, Mr. Ward, and the mover."—(Hon. Captain RUSSELL.)

No. 3.—Petition of FRANCIS ROIL, of Sydenham.

THE petitioner states that his wife has been confined in the Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum for five years. He alleges that she is now of sound mind, and prays for her release.

I am directed to report that the Committee cannot recommend that the prayer of the petitioner should be granted.

3rd July, 1890.

No. 18.—Petition of M. O'NEILL, of Wellington.

THE petitioner states that she has been employed as a charwoman at the Government Buildings since September, 1871, and alleges that she sustained an injury to her knee while fulfilling her duties which now prevents her following any occupation whereby she might obtain a livelihood. She prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

3rd July, 1890.

No. 26.—Petition of RICHARD YOUNG, of Auckland.

THE petitioner states that he was placed in the Whau Lunatic Asylum in October, 1884; that at the time of his incarceration he was possessed of property to the value of between £400 and £500; that his property was sold by order of the Public Trustee for £324 0s. 10d.; that he was detained in the Asylum for 292 weeks, and charged at the rate of £1 per week—he alleges that 14s. is the usual charge; that he was made to work in and about the Asylum during the last two years of his detention; that on his discharge only £4 7s. 8d. remained to his credit. Petitioner prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, having fully considered this petition, the Committee recommend the amount charged for maintenance at the Asylum in this case should be reduced from £1 per week to 14s.

4th July, 1890.

No. 39.—Petition of ALEXANDER MARSHALL, of Oamaru.

THE petitioner alleges that he and his wife were induced to leave England in 1876 by a promise that they would each receive a grant of 20 acres of land in this colony. Such land has not been granted, and petitioner prays for an equivalent to the value of the land which was stated to be available.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Waste Lands Committee.

4th July, 1890.

No. 46.—Petition of JOHN MARTIN and Others.

THE petitioners, members of the Manurewa and Papakura Road Boards, pray for a grant of at least £500, to assist in putting the Great South Road in a safe state of repair.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of this Committee, the petitioners have no claim against the colony.

4th July, 1890.

No. 25.—Petition of JOHN TAYLOR MARSHALL.

THE petitioner prays that some kind of employment may be found for him in consideration of his past long and faithful services to the Government.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government.

4th July, 1890.

No. 52.—Petition of ANDREW THOMPSON, of Hawkesbury, Otago.

THE petitioner states that in 1861 he bought six sections of land in the township of Hawkesbury, on the understanding that the Government would build a jetty in Waikouaiti Bay. He prays that he may be indemnified for losses sustained through the non-erection of the jetty.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

10th July, 1890.

No. 35.—Petition of JAMES NIGHTINGALE, of Hokitika.

THE petitioner states that he petitioned Parliament in 1879 for suitable employment, owing to his having been permanently injured while in the Government service; that the Public Petitions Committee reported favourably upon his petition, but that their recommendation has not been given effect to. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that the Committee find that a petition was presented to the House in 1879, and a report thereupon was made recommending the Government to give the petitioner employment when a suitable vacancy occurred; that the Committee also find, with the exception of nine months' employment, no effect was given to this recommendation, and they now strongly urge that the petitioner be the first to receive such employment on the West Coast as may be suitable for him when a vacancy occurs.

10th July, 1890.

No. 96.—Petition of H. ROGERS and Others, of Coromandel.

THE petitioners pray that the land known as Whangapoua may be thrown open for gold-mining purposes.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Goldfields Committee.

11th July, 1890.

No. 92.—Petition of ANNE JANE SCHNACKENBERG, of Auckland.

THE petitioner, on behalf of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of New Zealand, prays that the Contagious Diseases Act may be repealed.

I am directed to report that, as there is a Bill now before the House proposing to deal with the subject-matter of this petition, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

15th July, 1890.

No. 77.—Petition of WILLIAM TIMMS, of Wanganui.

THE petitioner prays for a grant of 40 acres of land, alleging that he is entitled to that amount as a discharged soldier who paid his own passage to New Zealand.

I am directed to report that, as the petitioner's application for a grant of land is already before the Commissioner appointed to inquire into such claims, this Committee has no recommendation to make.

22nd July, 1890.

Nos. 61 and 97.—Petitions of JOHN PETFORD and Others and A. S. THOMPSON and Others, of Auckland.

THE petitioners pray for repeal of "The Government Railways Act, 1887," and that an unconditional trial of the "stage" system may be made.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Committee appointed to inquire into the petition of W. C. Daldy and others.

24th July, 1890.

No. 118.—Petition of THOMAS HAWKINS SMITH, of Maketu.

THE petitioner alleges that he has sustained certain injuries in connection with the purchase of Native lands by the Government. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Native Affairs Committee.

24th July, 1890.

No. 59.—Petition of DANIEL MAHONEY, of Wellington (Interim Report).

I HAVE the honour to report that, at a meeting of the Public Petitions M to Z Committee held this day, the following resolution was passed: "That it is essential, in order for the Committee to come to a right conclusion, that certain documents in the hands of the Minister of Justice, and which were produced at the Supreme Court trial of this case, should be before this Committee; and, the Minister having declined to furnish the same for the information of the Committee, the Chairman be requested to move forthwith in the House for the production of these papers."

24th July, 1890.

Nos. 98 and 99.—Petitions of JOSEPH MANDL and Others and JESSE STEER and Others.

THE petitioners pray for the completion of the Greymouth-Hokitika Railway at once.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

29th July, 1890.

No. 119.—Petition of T. TYNE, of Coromandel.

THE petitioner, late a gaol-warder at Mount Eden, alleges that he was dismissed from the service of the Prisons Department without sufficient cause, and prays that he may be granted his compensation.

I am directed to report that the Committee cannot recommend that the prayer of the petitioner should be granted.

29th July, 1890.

No. 20.—Petition of Lieut.-Colonel STAPP, of New Plymouth.

THE petitioner states that he has served in the Imperial and colonial service for a period of over forty-eight years, and that now, having arrived at the age of sixty-five years, he is compelled to retire under the provisions of the Volunteer Regulations, 1889; that he has served as a colonial officer for thirty-two years; that he is now too old to start life anew, and has not sufficient means to keep him comfortably. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, while admitting that petitioner has rendered valuable services to the colony, the Committee cannot see its way to recommend that anything in the way of a pension should be granted, but would refer the petition to the Government for consideration.

30th July, 1890.

No. 34.—Petition of JOHN EDWIN MACDONALD, of Auckland.

THE petitioner states that in the year 1879 he was appointed Resident Magistrate and District Judge for Auckland; that in 1882 he was appointed a Judge of the Native Land Court, and that later on in the same year he was made Chief Judge of the said Court; that, owing to the strain of overwork, petitioner's health broke down, and he resigned the position of Chief Judge in 1889, was given leave of absence, with the understanding that on the re-establishment of his health he should be restored to the position of Resident Magistrate at Auckland; that he is still on leave, never having been well enough to take up the duties of Resident Magistrate. Petitioner prays that his case may be specially considered.

I am directed to report that, seeing that Judge Macdonald has already received the sum of £875, being salary for fifteen months' leave on full pay, and is further entitled to one month's pay for each year of service, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

30th July, 1890.

No. 75.—Petition of JOB PALMER, of Ashurst.

THE petitioner prays that the Government will pay him for certain materials supplied to the contractor for the Ashurst contract of the Napier-Palmerston Railway.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

30th July, 1890.

No. 68.—Petition of W. J. N. ROBINSON, of Wellington.

THE petitioner alleges that certain moneys belonging to him are retained by the Government. He prays that said moneys may be paid over to him.

I am directed to report that, as petitioner has not produced any evidence to substantiate the allegations contained in his petition, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

30th July, 1890.

Nos. 123 and 143.—Petition of ANDREW PRIMROSE, Chairman, Waikato Hospital and Charitable Aid Board; and J. TOWNLEY, Chairman, Cook District Hospital and Charitable Aid Board.

THE petitioners consider it unjust that they should be required to give aid to aboriginal natives unless their lands and property be rated and held liable respectively for such purpose, or a lien be taken by the Government thereon for such purpose. They pray that such alterations may be made in the Hospital and Charitable Aid Acts as will remove the injustice under which they now suffer.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioners have just cause of complaint, but, as the Government intend to bring in a Bill to deal with the question of hospital and charitable aid, this petition should be referred to them for consideration.

5th August, 1890.

No. 105.—Petition of SARAH CAROLINE MCGAVOCK, of Avenal.

THE petitioner prays for further compensation on account of her late husband's long services in the Railway Department.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no further claim against the colony.

5th August, 1890.

No. 14.—Petition of MARY JANE TOOMEY, of Lyttelton.

THE petitioner states that her father, William Bailey, was in the Railway service for nineteen years—viz., from March, 1870, until April, 1889—when he had to retire on account of ill-health. That eleven years ago, on the occasion of a general reduction, his wages were reduced by 2s. per

diem, and that although other workmen had their wages raised again his never were. Petitioner prays that some compassionate allowance may be granted to the widow of the said William Bailey.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

6th August, 1890.

No. 89.—Petition of GEORGE WELLS, of Wellington.

THE petitioner states that while crossing the railway at Rattray Street crossing, Dunedin, he was knocked down by a passing train and severely injured. He alleges that the accident was owing to neglect on the part of the railway officials.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

6th August, 1890.

No. 59.—Petition of DANIEL MAHONEY, of Wellington. (First Report.)

THE petitioner, who is an architect, states that for about six years he was engaged in the service of the Government as Inspector of Works at Mount Cook Prison; that whilst so engaged he was employed by the Inspector of Prisons to prepare plans for a prison at Wanganui, for which service he was paid a bonus of £25; that in August, 1888, he was again employed to prepare plans—viz., for prison and other buildings at Dunedin; that he prepared said plans, and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fergus) expressed his approval of them; that, as no remuneration had been agreed upon, petitioner states that he brought the matter before the notice of the Minister, and alleges that the Minister promised to treat him as if he had been a private architect instead of a Government employé; that the Minister denied that he had made any such promise, and offered him £100 or a hundred guineas, which he refused to accept; that in July, 1889, he brought an action against the Government to recover £825 for the work he had done; that the jury awarded him £495; that in March, 1890, his Honour Mr. Justice Richmond set aside the verdict of the jury, and gave judgment against him, with costs amounting to £137, on the ground that, as a Civil servant, he could not claim for extra remuneration beyond his salary; that subsequently to the verdict being set aside he was offered £105 by the Government, which he refused. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

7th August, 1890.

No. 179.—Petition of R. STEVENS and Others, of Taranaki.

THE petitioners pray that an Act may be passed to regulate the firing of felled bush.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

7th August, 1890.

No. 181.—Petition of W. PATERSON and Others.

THE petitioners pray that telephone communication may be extended from Port Molyneux to Puerua.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

7th August, 1890.

No. 117.—Petition of WILLIAM SIMS and Others, of Southland.

THE petitioners pray that the Forest Hill Tramway may be converted into a railway.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

12th August, 1890.

No. 90.—Petition of RICHARD MILLER, of Ashburton.

THE petitioner prays for a compassionate allowance on account of having lost his leg while in the service of the Public Works Department.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

12th August, 1890.

No. 164.—Petition of SAMUEL MORRISON.

THE petitioner, late a warder in Dunedin Gaol, prays for compensation for loss of office.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

12th August, 1890.

No. 59.—Petition of DANIEL MAHONEY, of Wellington. (Second Report.)

THIS petition having been referred back to the Committee by the House, to estimate the amount of compensation that ought to be allowed to the petitioner, I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner is entitled to the sum of £325, and the Committee recommend that that sum be paid to him, less any claims for law-costs.

12th August, 1890.

No. 199.—Petition of GEORGE MOOR and Others, of Auckland.

THE petitioners pray for the completion of the construction of the main road north of Auckland.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

13th August, 1890.

No. 67.—Petition of J. W. WHEELER and Others, of Sumner.

THE petitioners pray that the deaf-and-dumb institution at Sumner may not be removed elsewhere until the new Parliament has debated the question.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

13th August, 1890.

No. 154.—Petition of JAMES MEEHAN, of Cheltenham, Wellington.

THE petitioner states that he entered the Police Force in March, 1878, and resigned in March, 1890; that in July, 1884, while arresting a prisoner, he was severely bitten on the hand; that he has never recovered from this injury, but still suffers and is likely to suffer greatly from it. He prays for some compensation for injuries received.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

13th August, 1890.

No. 185.—Petition of JOHN MYNOTT, of New Plymouth.

THE petitioner states that last session he was accused of having been guilty of contempt of the House in connection with his petition. He now prays that his name may be erased from the parliamentary records, and that the House will express its satisfaction at the prompt and satisfactory way in which he cleared himself of the charge of contempt.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, effect should be given to the prayer of the petitioner to the extent that any record of his having been guilty of a breach of privilege in connection with a petition presented last session be expunged from the Journals of the House.

13th August, 1890.

No. 186.—Petition of the BISHOP OF WELLINGTON.

THE petitioner prays that the Private Schools Bill may be passed.

I am directed to report that, as this Bill is now before the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

13th August, 1890.

No. 155.—Petition of GEORGE M. SNELSON, Mayor of Palmerston North, and ROBERT N. KEELING, Town Clerk.

THE petitioners pray that the law may be so amended as to render the Railway Commissioners liable for rates on dwellings which they are letting to tenants.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

13th August, 1890.

No. 158.—Petition of ARCHBISHOP REDWOOD.

THE petitioner prays for the return of certain fees paid in respect of "The Roman Catholic Lands Act Extension Act, 1890."

I am directed to report that the Committee has no recommendation to make.

13th August, 1890.

No. 145.—Petition of J. D. MCKENZIE and Others.

THE petitioners, miners, leaseholders, and shareholders interested in the Puhipuhi Goldfields District, pray that the boundaries of the Whangarei County may be so altered as to include the whole of the Puhipuhi Block within the said county.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration. (*Vide* also Appendix I.—2A.)

19th August, 1890.

No. 178.—Petition of F. MACKENZIE and Others.

THE petitioners, members of the Bay of Islands County Council and settlers in the Bay of Islands County, pray that no alteration may be made in the boundaries of the said county.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration. (*Vide* also Appendix I.—2A.)

19th August, 1890.

No. 195.—Petition of the ODD FELLOWS FRIENDLY SOCIETY, of Hawke's Bay.

THE petitioners, members of the above-named society, pray that the House will take such steps as may be deemed necessary to remove the blemish and aspersions which they allege are cast upon the friendly societies in the colony by the statements of the Inspector of Hospitals in his report on the hospitals and charitable institutions.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the petitioners have petitioned

under a misapprehension as to the meaning of the Inspector's statement, which was not intended as a reflection on friendly societies generally; that the Inspector, whilst admitting the large amount of good effected by friendly societies, merely pointed out that in some instances—not necessarily including the Hawke's Bay District—"one of their least noticeable effects is to increase the number of our hospitals;" that the allegation that some of the largest societies admit honorary members, some of whom join merely for the sake of getting medical attendance at lodge rates, has been, in some instances, admitted by the representatives of such societies; that the allegations complained of, though substantiated to some extent before the Committee, do not necessarily contain any reflections upon the friendly societies generally.

21st August, 1890.

No. 235.—Petition of W. M. WILLIAMS and Others, of Christchurch.

THE petitioners pray that the labour Bills may be passed this session.

No. 223.—Petition of DANIEL MACPHERSON and Others.

THE petitioners petition against the Shop Hours Bill.

I am directed to report that, as the above-named Bills are now before the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

21st August, 1890.

No. 206.—Petition of ROBERT MATHESON and Others, of Waihemo.

THE petitioners pray that section 5 of clause 311 of "The Counties Act, 1886," may be amended in such a manner as will enable the Waihemo County Council to provide for the licensing and numbering of all vehicles carrying goods or passengers for hire within the County of Waihemo, whether the contract for such carriage was made within the County of Waihemo or not.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

21st August, 1890.

No. 58.—Petition of DAVID PANKHURST, of Greymouth.

THE petitioner alleges that certain mining property belonging to him was destroyed for the purposes of the construction of the Greymouth-Hokitika Railway. He prays for compensation.

I am directed to report that, as the Government has agreed to pay the petitioner the sum of £25 on account of the injury his property has sustained, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

27th August, 1890.

Nos. 240, 248, 251, 252, 253, and 249.—Petitions of A. W. WEBB and Others, F. W. ISITT and Others, H. TOMES and Others, JOHN SWAN and Others, JOHN McDONALD and Others, and JOHN ARMSTRONG and Others.

THE petitioners petition in favour of the labour Bills.

I am directed to report that, as these Bills are now before the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

27th August, 1890.

No. 257.—Petition of JAMES McDONALD, of Dunedin.

THE petitioner states that he was declared a bankrupt in the year 1888; that his estate was vested in the Official Assignee at Dunedin; that he has reason to be dissatisfied with the manner in which his estate was realised, as resulting in considerable loss to him. Petitioner prays that an inquiry may be made into his case.

I am directed to report that the Committee is of opinion that the allegations made by the petitioner against the Official Assignee as to the administration of his estate have not been refuted by Mr. Ashcroft's report submitted by the department; that petitioner has established a *prima facie* case for an inquiry. That the Committee therefore recommends that an inquiry be held in Dunedin accordingly.

27th August, 1890.

No. 42.—Petition of JOHN MCLEAN, of Redcastle, Oamaru. (First Report.)

THE petitioner states that, on the railway being taken through his property at Ashburton by a certain route, he agreed to give certain lands free of cost, on condition that a station and goods-shed were erected in a certain position; that the line was afterwards taken a different way—*i.e.*, through the centre of his property; that he objected to this course, and claimed compensation; that a Compensation Court was held at Ashburton, and during the proceedings a note was handed to him from the agent of the Government stating that the Government would pay £400 for the fencing; that, as he believed this was the compensation sued for, he agreed, and the Court rose; that he met the agent at the door of the Court, and found that the Government had no intention of paying compensation for the land; that he got the Court to reassemble, but was informed that the case would have to be gone into *de novo* in Christchurch; that the case was so gone into at Christchurch, and he was awarded £1,250; that the case was taken to the Court of Appeal and decided against him on technical grounds; that he was adjudged to pay back the compensation with costs and interest at the rate of 8 per cent. He prays for such compensation as the House may deem sufficient, or that the decision of the Compensation Court may be confirmed, or that the matter may be referred back for settlement to a fresh Compensation Court.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

29th August, 1890.

No. 211.—Petition of ROBERT McDUGALL and ROBERT STEWART, of Pembroke, Otago.

THE petitioners state that they signed a warrant for the committal of one F. A. Collins to prison for seven days; that the Clerk of the Court omitted to strike out the words "and there kept to hard labour," consequently prisoner suffered that punishment. That on his discharge he demanded compensation for wrongful punishment. That it cost them (petitioners) £65 13s. 8d. to settle this claim. They pray that this amount may be refunded to them.

I am directed to report that the Committee has no recommendation to make.
29th August, 1890.

No. 282.—Petition of ELIZABETH TURNER, of Wellington.

THE petitioner prays for a grant of land.

No. 284.—Petition of RICHARD SPAIN, of Wellington.

THE petitioner prays for consideration on account of military services.

No. 290.—Petition of CHRISTOPHER TAIT, of Kopuaranga.

THE petitioner prays for consideration on account of losses sustained through the faulty survey of his land.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of this Committee these petitions should be referred to the Waste Lands Committee.

3rd September, 1890.

No. 259.—Petition of JOHN MITCHELL and Others, of Greymouth.

THE petitioners petition in favour of deviation of the Midland Railway at Lake Brunner.

No. 277.—Petition of HENRY THOMPSON and Others, of Napier.

THE petitioners petition in favour of the Factories and Shops Bill.

No. 263.—Petition of P. MITCHELL and Others, of Dunedin.

THE petitioners petition against the Factories and Shops Bill.

I am directed to report that, as these Bills are now before the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

3rd September, 1890.

No. 276.—Petition of FREDERICK SUTTON, of Clive, Hawke's Bay.

THE petitioner prays for amendment of the Land Transfer Act.

No. 291.—Petition of S. ROBERTSON and Others, of Akaroa.

THE petitioners pray that the Akaroa County Council may be abolished.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government.

3rd September, 1890.

No. 166.—Petition of MULLINS, MARSHALL, and Co. and Others.

THE petitioners, residents in England, who are interested either personally or on behalf of clients in New Zealand securities, state that in the year 1879 an issue of £200,000 in 6-per-cent. debentures of the New Plymouth Harbour Board was raised in London; that the prospectus stated that the New Zealand Government had endowed the Board with one-fourth of the gross revenues arising from the sale, occupation, or other disposal of the waste lands of the Crown within the Provincial District of Taranaki, and it also showed security by way of a rate upon the district; that at the time the loan was raised the mode of selling waste lands was for cash or on deferred payment, and in the latter case the payment was 50 per cent. in advance of the cash price; that the rates of sale on deferred payment have since been reduced to the same figure as a cash purchase, and buyers allowed, after a single payment, to capitalise unpaid instalments for a series of years, and pay only 5 per cent. interest on such capitalisation during such period; that the system of letting lands on perpetual lease, which until 1887 had been limited in area to one-third of rural lands, was in that year extended to all the waste lands; that the effect of these alterations is to practically take away for present purposes the security upon which the lenders relied, and the result is that the Harbour Board were unable to meet the half-year's interest due in May, 1890, and will apparently be unable to do so in the future. Petitioners pray for redress, with a view to the holders of the debentures of the said loan being placed in as favourable a position as if the mode of selling waste lands had remained as it was in 1879.

I am directed to report that, having carefully considered all the evidence submitted to it, including the ordinance of the Provincial Council of Taranaki passed in 1875, under authority of an Act of the General Assembly of New Zealand entitled "The New Plymouth Harbour Board Endowment Act, 1874," and also the advertisement appearing in the London *Times* newspaper of the 6th September, 1879, which, after reciting the said ordinance, proceeds to state that "The Government, recognising the necessity and importance of this work from a national point of view, has endowed the New Plymouth Harbour Board with one-fourth of the gross revenues arising from the sale, occupation, or other disposal of the waste lands of the Crown within the Province of Taranaki," and seeing that one-fourth part of such gross revenues continues to be paid to the said Harbour Board, and the debenture-holders have been left in undisturbed possession of their original security, the Committee is of opinion that petitioners have no claim against the colony.

10th September, 1890.

No. 229.—Petition of the OAMARU HARBOUR BOARD.

THE petitioners state that they have spent over £300,000 in improving the Oamaru Harbour; that their revenues are being seriously diminished owing to the action of the Railway Commissioners in making such sweeping reductions in the carriage of goods by rail to Oamaru. They allege that special arrangements have been made by the Commissioners to take away the business from the port. They pray that this undue competition of the Railway Department may not be allowed, or for other relief.

I am directed to report that the alleged grievance set forth in the petition, as also the solution of the difficulty suggested in the departmental report thereon, opens up a large question of public policy, and the Committee therefore has no recommendation to make.

10th September, 1890.

No. 42.—Petition of JOHN McLEAN, of Redcastle, Oamaru. (Second Report.)

THIS petition was referred back to the Committee by the House on the 29th August for reconsideration.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

10th September, 1890.

No. 294.—Petition of G. M. SNELSON and Another, of Palmerston North.

THE petitioners pray that a sum of money may be placed on the estimates for road-making purposes.

No. 296.—Petition of JAMES TRAVIS, of Gibbston.

THE petitioner alleges that he has suffered great injustice at the hands of certain officials of the Government. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

10th September, 1890.

No. 280.—Petition of WILLIAM SCARLETT, of Sydenham.

THE petitioner, a brewer, prays for an inquiry into a conviction under the Beer Duty Act, and the return of certain fines imposed.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

16th September, 1890.

No. 299.—Petition of WILLIAM SIMPSON, of Seafield, Oamaru.

THE petitioner prays that an inquiry may be held into the conduct of the Resident Magistrate at Oamaru.

I am directed to report that the allegations contained in the petition are of such a nature as seem to demand a more thorough investigation than time will permit of at this stage of the session. The Committee therefore recommend that this petition should be referred to the Public Petitions Committee of next session, to be dealt with at an early date.

16th September, 1890.

No. 218.—Petition of JOSEPH WARD and Others, of Marlborough.

THE petitioners pray for assistance towards the erection of bridges.

I am directed to report that, as the evidence required by the Committee to enable it to deal with this case cannot be procured before the close of the session, the Committee is of opinion the petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

16th September, 1890.

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