

SESS. II.—1897.
NEW ZEALAND.

PRIVATE BENEFIT SOCIETIES

(REPORT AND EVIDENCE OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON).

Laid on the Table of both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency the Governor.

COMMISSION.

To all to whom these presents shall come, and to the Honourable WILLIAM JUKES STEWARD, of Waimate, Member of the House of Representatives, GEORGE FISHER, Esquire, of Wellington, Member of the House of Representatives, and EDWARD TREGEAR, Esquire, of Wellington, Secretary of the Department of Labour: Greeting.

WHEREAS in many cases employers have established or assisted in establishing societies which offer to their employés benefits beyond their ordinary wages, and to the funds whereof the employés contribute: And whereas such societies (hereinafter called "private benefit societies") are in many cases unregistered under any Act relating to the registration of friendly or other societies: And whereas it has been alleged that in many cases employés are coerced by their employers into joining private benefit societies, and have other grievances in connection therewith: And whereas in particular it was so alleged by one Henry McLachlan, of Auckland, in a petition presented by him to the Honourable the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives, in or about the month of July, 1896: And whereas, on the 8th day of October, 1896, the Public Petitions Committee of the said House, when reporting on the said petition, recommended that, as the matters contained therein were of an important nature, the petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration:

Now know ye that, in pursuance and exercise of all powers and authorities me enabling in this behalf, and acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the Colony of New Zealand, I, James Prendergast, Knight, the Administrator of the Government of the said colony, do hereby appoint you,

WILLIAM JUKES STEWARD,
GEORGE FISHER, and
EDWARD TREGEAR,

to be Commissioners for the purpose of inquiring into the matters set forth in the said petition, and also generally into the working of private benefit societies, the relations existing between employers and their employés in connection with such societies, and the expediency or otherwise of bringing such societies under legislative control.

And for the better enabling you to carry these presents into effect you are hereby authorised and empowered to make and conduct any inquiry hereunder at such places in the colony as you deem expedient, and also to call before you,