

1900.

NEW ZEALAND.

SPARKS FROM RAILWAY ENGINES

(INQUIRY INTO FIRES ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY).

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

COMMISSION.

To all to whom these presents shall come, and to JOSEPH WILLIAM POYNTON, Esquire, Stipendiary Magistrate: Greeting.

WHEREAS certain persons (whose names are set forth hereunder) in various parts of the colony have made claims against the New Zealand Government Railway Department for damage to their property by fire alleged to have been caused by sparks from railway engines:

And whereas it is expedient to make inquiry into the subject-matter of such claims, including the causes of the said fires, and the extent, if any, of the damage done thereby, and as to whether they were attributable to the negligence of any persons, and, if so, in what particulars and to what extent, and as to what precautions have been taken by the Government or the officers of the said department for preventing damage from sparks caused as aforesaid, and as to the sufficiency of such precautions and otherwise, and generally as to any matter or thing relating to the said several premises:

Now know ye that, in pursuance and in exercise of the powers and authorities enabling me in this behalf, and acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the Colony of New Zealand, I, Uchter John Mark, Earl of Ranfurly, Governor of the said colony, do hereby appoint you the said

JOSEPH WILLIAM POYNTON

to be a Commissioner for the purpose of inquiring into the several matters hereinbefore set forth:

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 and at such times as you deem expedient; and also to call before you and examine, on oath or otherwise, as may be allowed by law, such persons as you think capable of affording you any information in the premisses, and also to call for and examine all such books, documents, papers, or records as you think likely to afford you any information in the premisses; and generally to inquire therein by all lawful ways and means whatsoever:

And, using all diligence, you are hereby required to report to me, under your hand and seal, your opinion, resulting from the inquiry hereby directed, in respect of the several matters investigated by you under these presents, not later than the 14th day of March, 1900, or such extended date as may hereafter be appointed in that behalf:

And it is hereby declared that these presents are subject to the provisions of "The Commissioners' Powers Act, 1867," and its amendments: and also that these presents, and