

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

WELLINGTON.

THURSDAY, 17TH JANUARY, 1901.

The first meeting of the Commission took place at the Parliamentary Buildings, Wellington, on Thursday, 17th January, 1901, at 3 o'clock p.m.

Present: Hon. Colonel Pitt, M.L.C. (Chairman), Mr. H. Beauchamp, Hon. C. C. Bowen, M.L.C., Mr. T. W. Leys, Mr. C. M. Luke, Mr. J. A. Millar, M.H.R., Mr. W. S. Reid, Mr. J. Roberts, C.M.G., and Captain Russell, M.H.R.

The Secretary (Mr. Morris Fox) and the Reporter (Mr. W. H. Russell) were also in attendance. The Secretary read the Commission.

A telegram was read from Hon. Major Steward, M.H.R., saying that he would arrive in Wellington from Sydney the next day.

After some discussion as to whether the Press should be admitted,

Mr. Leys moved, That the Press be admitted to the ordinary meetings of the Commission.

A division was called for, and the names were taken down as follows:—

Ayes.—Mr. Bowen, Mr. Leys, Colonel Pitt.

Noes.—Mr. Beauchamp, Mr. Luke, Mr. Millar, Mr. Reid, Mr. Roberts, Captain Russell.

The motion was therefore lost; and it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Millar, that a summary of each day's proceedings should be prepared by the Secretary and handed to the Press.

The Chairman addressed the Commission in reference to the methods of procedure to be adopted.

After some discussion it was decided to meet for the purpose of taking evidence at Invercargill at 4 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, 5th February.

Messrs. Millar and Roberts were requested to supply the Chairman, before the next meeting of the Commission, with a list of the witnesses they considered should be called upon to give evidence at Invercargill.

The Chairman stated that he would authorise the necessary advertisements to appear in the Invercargill papers in due course.

A discussion took place as to what statistical and other information was desirable before proceeding to take evidence, after which it was

Resolved, That the Chairman write to the Colonial Secretary asking to be supplied with the financial (Railway, Postal, and Customs) statistics for the financial year as early as possible after the 31st March.

Various members of the Commission handed in lists of desirable statistics, and it was decided that the Chairman should write to the Government for such statistics and other documentary evidence as he might consider advisable.

The Commission then adjourned until Friday, 18th January, at 2 p.m.

FRIDAY, 18TH JANUARY, 1901

The Commission met at 2 p.m.

Present: Hon. Colonel Pitt, M.L.C. (in the chair), Mr. H. Beauchamp, Hon. C. C. Bowen, M.L.C., Mr. T. W. Leys, Mr. C. M. Luke, Mr. J. A. Millar, M.H.R., Mr. W. S. Reid, Mr. J. Roberts, C.M.G., and Hon. Major Steward, M.H.R.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Messrs. Millar and Roberts supplied the Chairman with a list of Southland firms whose evidence it would be desirable to take, and the Chairman agreed to ask the chairman of the Invercargill Chamber of Commerce to forward names of persons representing those firms who would be able to appear before the Commission.

It was decided to leave the selection of witnesses in other towns until the Commission met in Invercargill.

The Secretary was instructed to proceed to Invercargill two days before the Commissioners in order to make any necessary arrangements.

The Commission then adjourned at 3 p.m. until Tuesday, 5th February, at Invercargill.

INVERCARGILL.

TUESDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1901.

The Commission met at 4 p.m.

Present: Hon. Colonel Pitt, M.L.C. (in the chair), Mr. H. Beauchamp, Hon. C. C. Bowen, M.L.C., Mr. T. W. Leys, Mr. C. M. Luke, Mr. J. A. Millar, M.H.R., Mr. W. S. Reid, Mr. J. Roberts, C.M.G., Captain Russell, M.H.R., Hon. Major Steward, M.H.R.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed,