

*Correspondence.*

Apologies from Messrs. Jennings, Field, and Mander, M.P.s, for their unavoidable absence were received.

1. Letter, dated 17th March, 1909, from Mr. J. C. Thomson, M.P., Riverton, inquiring if the Commission can visit Longwood Forest and inspect the sawmills.

*Resolved*, That the Commission visit the forest the following day, Friday, 26th March, 1909.

2. Telegram, dated 16th March, from E. A. Wickes, secretary, Sawmillers' Association, Greymouth, suggesting that a representative of the association might be present at meetings of Commission to assist in eliciting information.

*Resolved*, That the Commission cannot see its way to accede to the request.

3. Telegram, dated 11th March, from E. A. Wickes, secretary, Greymouth, to the Premier, inquiring if matters regarding transit, railway, and steamer freights, or titles and areas under Mining Act come within the scope of the Commission.

Also reply by the Right Hon. the Prime Minister, dated 11th March, stating that all matters referred to come within the scope of the Commission, and will be dealt with by them.

Received.

4. Letter, dated 20th March, from D. H. Roberts, on behalf of Sawmillers' Committee, Greymouth, asking whether all balance-sheets and other statements of like nature will be treated as private and confidential by the Commission.

*Resolved*, That the Commission is willing to consider all matters of a confidential nature in committee.

*Admission of Public.*

At this stage the public were admitted, and the Chairman stated the objects of the Commission, and that evidence would not be taken until the 27th instant.

Moved by Mr. Arnold, and carried, That the Commission goes into committee.

The public then withdrew.

*Proposed Itinerary.*

The Secretary submitted a draft itinerary for the consideration of members.

The Commission then adjourned until 10 a.m. on Saturday, the 27th March, 1909.

On Friday, 26th March, the Commission inspected Longwood Forest, and Messrs. More, Traill, and Smythies' sawmills therein.

## INVERCARGILL, SATURDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1909.

The second meeting of the Commission was held in the Ministerial Room of the Post-office, Invercargill, on Saturday, the 27th March, 1909, at 9.30 a.m.

*Present*: The Hon. T. Y. Duncan (in the chair), and Messrs. Arnold, Barber, Clarke, Ell, Field, Hanan, Jennings, Leyland, Mander, Morris, and Stallworthy.

The minutes of the first meeting were read and confirmed.

An informal discussion took place until 10 a.m., when the public were admitted.

*Witnesses called.*

The first witness called was Mr. W. H. Brent (president of the Sawmillers' Association), who asked to be allowed to give his evidence on Monday instead, as he had been absent from Invercargill, and had only returned the previous night.

This was agreed to.

The next witness called was Mr. E. C. Leary (secretary of the Sawmillers' Association).

Mr. J. Hensley was then called, and after him Mr. H. A. Massey (sawmiller, Riverton).

The Commission adjourned at 1 p.m. and resumed at 2 p.m., when Mr. Massey's evidence was continued.

On the conclusion of Mr. Massey's evidence, the Chairman thanked him for the clear, full, and straightforward manner in which he had given his evidence.

The Commission then adjourned at 4.45 p.m.

## INVERCARGILL, MONDAY, 29TH MARCH, 1909.

The third meeting of the Commission was held in the Ministerial Room of the Post-office, Invercargill, on Monday, the 29th March, 1909, at 9.30 a.m.

*Present*: The Hon. T. Y. Duncan and all the members.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

An informal meeting was held until 10 a.m., when the public were admitted.