

Present value of eight years' rent, from 14th February, 1872, at £159 per annum	£	s.	d.
...	848	0	0
Present value of eleven years' rent; from 14th February, 1880, at £318 per annum	963	10	0
Three sons out of employment, two years, at £150	900	0	0
Loss of 75 head of cattle	562	10	0
Loss of improvements to have been left by Brissenden	4,000	0	0
Mr. Whitaker's charges, conducting case	26	5	0
John Foster, two days' attendance as witness, and travelling expenses	3	6	0
H. Warner, two days' attendance as witness, and travelling expenses	4	4	0
Messrs. Dalton, surveyors' account	32	13	6
	£15,311	5	4

When it is considered that the original value of the 148 acres of land, for being deprived of which the claim for compensation is based, is put down by the claimant at £74, it must be admitted that considerable ingenuity is shown in swelling up the consequential damages to £15,311 5s. 4d. It is worthy of remark that although Kelly's claim for loss of 148 acres of land, and clearing and laying down in grass 87 acres, is £2,687, and on improvement of Brissenden, £4,000; total, £6,687,—and which Mr. Beckham states he is entitled to,—yet O'Neill, the person to whom this land, together with these improvements, is awarded, offers to sell it to the Government for £1,480,—less than one-fourth of the amount awarded by Mr. Beckham on these two items of the claim. The amount claimed is preposterous, and the Committee cannot but express their regret that the Commissioner has to a large extent sanctioned it with his approval, especially as no counsel appeared to protect the interest of the Province or the Colony, and under these circumstances it was the duty of the Commissioner to make a searching inquiry into the matter, which does not appear to have been done.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that Mr. Kelly is entitled only to the cost of action in the Supreme Court, £344, and moderate allowance for loss of 148 acres of land, say, £592, being a total of £936.

24th October, 1872.

19.

Public Petitions Committee Final Report.

I AM directed to report that the Committee have taken into consideration all the petitions and matters referred to it by the House, and directed the Chairman to make reports thereon.

There have been referred to the Committee during the Session 205 Petitions, and 1 Report of Mr. Commissioner Beckham on the case of John Kelly, of Auckland. Those Petitions contained 38,543 signatures, and their consideration and the examination of 69 witnesses occupied the Committee fifty days.

The cost of conducting these proceedings and making inquiries in other parts of the Colony has been trifling, involving only the payment of a few telegrams.

The Committee desire me to suggest the propriety of limiting the time during the Session within which petitions will be received.

24th October, 1872.