

No. 45.—PETITION of BURGESSES of Kumara and Miners on Kumara Gold Fields.

I AM directed to report that the Committee recommend that the Government should inquire into the grievances alleged in this petition; and if, in its opinion, the statements of the petitioners are borne out in fact, should forthwith take such steps as may be necessary to cancel the reserve upon equitable terms.

25th September, 1878.

No. 193.—PETITION of GEORGE KEVEN, Auckland.

I AM directed to report that the Gold Fields Committee have no recommendation to make on the subject of the petition from George Keven, Auckland.

25th September, 1878.

THE MINING COMPANIES ACT 1872 AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Committee direct me to report its recommendations thereon, viz.:—

1. That the Bill intituled, "The Mining Companies Act 1872 Amendment Act, 1878," referred to them by order of reference from the House, dated 18th September, 1878, do not pass.

2. That the suggestions therein made be referred to the Law Officers of the Crown for careful consideration during the recess.

3. That no amendment of the existing law should be proposed without great care being taken that sudden remedy, however desirable, may not cause greater embarrassment to companies already incorporated than now exists from defects in the law which are clearly known and can to some extent be guarded against.

4. That legislation of the kind proposed should emanate from the Government.

25th September, 1878.

No. 219.—PETITION of HAUHAU TRAMWAY COMPANY, Hokitika.

THE Committee, having examined Mr. Paterson, the Chairman of the Hauhau Tramway Company, and Mr. G. S. Cooper, Under Secretary, Colonial Government, who was a member of a Royal Commission appointed in 1876 to inquire into the same and analogous claims; and having also had under consideration the evidence of Mr. Hoos, late County Chairman, Westland, and that of Mr. Button, then Member for Hokitika, tendered before the Public Petitions Committee in 1877, have agreed to the following resolutions, which I am directed to report to the House. The evidence taken will be attached to the Report.

"That the Provincial Council of Westland, in its last session, having had under consideration the whole circumstances of the claim of the Hauhau Tramway Company, and having recognized that claim to the extent of recommending 1,000 acres, in addition to the £500 received by that Company, this Committee is of opinion that the action of the Provincial Council of Westland constitutes a provincial liability which existed at the time of the abolition of the provinces, and which should, in good faith, be carried out by the colony.

"That 1,000 acres of land in the Provincial District of Westland be granted to the petitioners, said land to be selected in not more than four blocks—the petitioners, in the opinion of your Committee, having established a claim in equity."

2nd October, 1878.

No. 46.—PETITION of MINERS of NELSON CREEK, Grey Valley.

I AM directed to report that, as the subject-matter of the said petition, for which redress is sought, is under the consideration of the Government, the Committee have no recommendation to make.

8th October, 1878.

No. 119.—PETITION of WILLIAM SOWERBY GREENVILLE, of Thames Gold Field.

THE Committee having considered the petition of William Sowerby Greenville, miner, &c., of the Thames Gold Fields, Provincial District of Auckland, and having ascertained that the subject-matter of the petition is to be considered by Bill now before the House to amend "The Gold-Mining Districts Act, 1873,"—to be referred to them in usual course—have now no recommendation to make; and direct me to report the same to the House.

10th October, 1878.

THE GOLD-MINING DISTRICTS ACT 1873 AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Gold Fields Committee, to whom was referred "The Gold-Mining Districts Act 1873 Amendment Act, 1878," by order of reference dated 16th instant, have directed me to report that they have carefully considered the Bill, and recommend that it be passed as amended in the copy of the Bill attached to this report.

17th October, 1878.

No. 310.—PETITION of GEORGE ZANETTI and ANTONIO ZALA, of Lyell.

I AM directed to report that, the claim of the petitioners George Zanetti and Antonio Zala, of Lyell, having been recognized by two previous Gold Fields Committees of the House—the first instance in 1874, there then being a direct recommendation that a sum of two hundred and fifty pounds should be granted; the second instance in 1875, the claim being recognized, but referred to the Provincial Council of Nelson as a provincial responsibility—and the correspondence in the early part of this