

No. 6.

The Hon. the MINISTER for CROWN LANDS, Wellington, to the COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS, Invercargill.

SIR,— General Crown Lands Office, Wellington, 18th February, 1878.

I have the honor to transmit copy of report of Commissioners appointed on the recommendation of the Public Petitions Committee of the House of Representatives upon petition of James Mackintosh and Son, complaining of the action of your Board in reference to their deferred-payment application.

On this subject I desire to say that the Government fully recognize the absolute necessity of a strict enforcement of the letter as well as the spirit of the law in respect of the due fulfilment of the conditions under which land on deferred payment can be acquired. At the same time, as the case in question appears to be the first that has been dealt with so strictly, it is submitted that the Board might well reconsider its decision, and deal with the matter under the powers conferred by the 63rd section of "The Land Act, 1877."

I am the more disposed to suggest this course, inasmuch as it has been brought under the notice of the Government, from what appears to be reliable sources, that the Ranger on whose report the applications in question have been dealt with, has not been acting altogether impartially, and that, in fact, there were and are other deferred-payment sections in respect of which the non-fulfilment of the conditions have been winked at.

I need scarcely say that the Government is perfectly satisfied that your Board had no suspicion of such being the case. As it is, I am of opinion that it would be well to have a stranger to the district placed in the position of Ranger, and to remove the present Ranger to some other district.

I have, &c.,

The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Invercargill.

J. MACANDREW.

No. 7.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS, Invercargill to the UNDER SECRETARY for CROWN LANDS, Wellington.

SIR,— Crown Lands Office, Invercargill, 30th March, 1878.

I have the honor to forward extract from minutes of Waste Lands Board, Invercargill, of date 29th instant, in reference to the appointment of a stranger to the district as Crown Lands Ranger, and shall feel obliged if you will be good enough to take into favourable consideration the latter part of the resolution.

I have, &c.,

C. HOWARD,

Pro Commissioner of Crown Lands.

The Under Secretary for Crown Lands,
Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 7.

EXTRACT from Minutes of Meeting of Waste Lands Board, Invercargill, of date 29th March, 1878. IN reply to the Hon. the Minister of Lands' letter of 18th ultimo, L.78/270, covering the Commissioner's report *re* Mackintosh and Son, it was resolved,—

Having in view the desirableness of the Board's being duly and regularly informed as to the manner in which the conditions of occupation of lands sold on deferred payments are being complied with by the several selectors, and of such information being entirely free from bias, arising from local or personal feelings, this Board concurs with the Hon. the Minister of Lands in the opinion that it were better that the officer appointed to inspect such settlements should be a stranger to the district. At the same time the Board must express its belief that the officer employed in this district has aimed at giving fair and impartial reports in as far as he has been able to acquaint himself with the facts touching the compliance or non-compliance of the individual settlers with the requirements of the law, for the Board cannot forget that the means at that officer's command, in the shape of salary and travelling allowance, have hitherto been totally inadequate to enable him to fulfil his duties by more frequent visits to the several settlements. In consideration of the zeal displayed by the present Ranger, the Board expresses the hope that employment may be found for him by the Government in some other quarter.

C. H. (for C. C. L.)

No. 8.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS, Invercargill, to the UNDER SECRETARY for CROWN LANDS, Wellington.

SIR,— Crown Lands Office, Invercargill, 16th March, 1878.

I have the honor to forward extract from minutes of meeting of Waste Lands Board, Invercargill, of date 14th instant, in reference to the Forest Bailiff, Mr. Duncan Campbell, lately appointed Crown Lands Ranger; and shall feel obliged if you will be good enough to take into favourable consideration the request of the Board, the pecuniary position of the Ranger being very unsatisfactory.

I have, &c.,

The Under Secretary for Crown Lands,
Wellington.

W. H. PEARSON,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.