

of the inhabitants of Totara, forwarded by County Council with petitions; (6) Report of Warden Fitzgerald on petition of inhabitants of Totara; (7) Resolutions of public meetings and County Council; (8) District Engineer's report and estimate, 27th August, 1875; (9) Resolutions urging the construction of race; (10) District Engineer's report, 11th December, 1875; (11) Tenders for contracts, and contracts declined by the Government; (12) District Engineer's report, 15th February, 1877; (13) Resolutions of Westland County Council; (14) Tenders for Section 7, Mikonui Water-race; (15) Resolutions of Westland County Council; (16) Vesting water-races in Westland County Council; (17) Tenders for construction of race tunnel; (18) Public meeting at Ross; (19) District Engineer's report on petition for construction of race; (20) Formation of company, to be subsidized by Government; (21) Borough Council's agreement to construct race; (22) Tenders to be called for portion of race to extent of £3,000; (23) Urging the desirability of pushing on works in connection with the race; (24) Proposed purchase of Totara and Jones's Creek Water-race by the Government refused.

No. 191.—Petition of the BULLER COUNTY COUNCIL (No. 1).

THE Gold Fields Committee, to whom was referred the petition of the Buller County Council, praying for additional water-supply to the Charleston Gold Field, have the honor to report as follows: That the Committee recommend—(1.) That the Government repair the Argyle dam, and so construct the race as to prevent the present heavy maintenance-expenditure. (2.) That, after the works are completed, the property be handed over to the Buller County Council or a local Board of management, upon a guarantee being given indemnifying the colony in regard to interest and management, and all future maintenance and expenditure. (3.) That such County Council or local Board of management shall further give a guarantee that the present charges to miners who use the water shall not be increased.

29th July, 1881.

No. 111.—Petition of W J FLYNN and 59 Others.

THE Gold Fields Committee, to whom was referred the petition of W J. Flynn and 59 others, praying for the removal of Warden Robinson from Mount Ida, have the honor to report: That the petition itself does not allege any failure of justice under the administration of Mr. Warden Robinson; the action of the Warden in the case of Woodward and Raythe's application being supported by Mr. Haggitt, the law-adviser to the Land Board. It is in evidence also that, when the grant to these miners was finally made, the objection previously raised had been withdrawn. That its charges are rather of personal bias in favour of classes than persons, which is said to exist owing to the Warden's long residence in the district and his personal investments. That such charges are not supported by evidence of any kind.

Your Committee recognize that much may be said in favour of a periodical removal of Wardens, but are not aware that any arrangements exist in gold fields at the present time to enable this to be done. No general desire seems prevalent at Mount Ida at the present time for the removal of Mr. Robinson, as the Committee have had before it petitions to the Minister of Justice expressing confidence in that gentleman's administration, and signed by over 600 miners and others.

Your Committee take this opportunity of adding to their report the following suggestions in regard to petitions addressed to the House of Representatives against judicial officers: That no petition alleging charges of maladministration against Magistrates should be received by the House for consideration, unless such charges have been first represented to the Minister of Justice and been refused consideration, or have been dealt with by him unsatisfactorily to the petitioners; and that all petitions, to be in order, should distinctly allege that the representations they contain have been so referred to the Minister and refused consideration, or unsatisfactorily dealt with.

Your Committee add this recommendation believing that members of the House are made use of in many cases, by dissatisfied practitioners and disappointed suitors, to cast undeserved aspersions, under cover of petitions presented to the House, upon judicial officers.

29th July, 1881.

No. 241.—PETITION OF HUGH McILHONE.

THE petition of Hugh McIlhone sets forth that he was appointed Inspector of Miners' Rights for the Ohinemuri District in the year 1875; that no salary was fixed by the Government for the performance of the duties until 1879; and, though his services were dispensed with on the 30th June, 1880, that no payments have been made to him in connection with the said appointment.

Your Committee have taken the evidence of Hugh McIlhone (petitioner) W J Speight, M.H.R., T. W Lewis (Under-Secretary, Native Department), H. Dunbar Johnson (Clerk in Native Department), and J. Sheehan, M.H.R.

I am directed to report that the Committee consider the petitioner is entitled to travelling allowances incurred in visiting Ohinemuri four times a year between 1875 and 1879, at the rate of £25 per annum, in all £100, in addition to the sum of £51 13s. 4d. allowed by the late Native Minister (Mr. Bryce) as payable since his appointment in September, 1879.

9th August, 1881.

GOLD DUTIES ABOLITION BILL.

THE Committee to whom was referred the Gold Duties Abolition Bill, by order of reference dated the 5th August, have directed me to report that they consider the gold duty should be entirely abolished, and to bring up this resolution, together with the Bill as referred to them, for the consideration of the House.

9th August, 1881.