

No. 186.—Petition of PATRICK DONNELLY, of the Thames.

THE petitioner states that he purchased, at auction, from the Warden of the district, a gold-mining claim; that part of this holding has since been proved to be on private property, a fact of which he was entirely ignorant at the time of sale; and that he has therefore been prevented from working it to advantage. He prays the House to award him compensation.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Government for inquiry
25th August, 1881.

No. 287.—Petition of HAMIORA KEWA, of Auckland.

THE Gold Fields Committee, to whom was referred the petition of Hamiora Kewa, praying that a reward be given him for discovering gold at the Thames, have taken the evidence of Major Te Wheoro on the allegations contained in the petition, and have the honor to report that, as the matter is one which has been fully inquired into, and dealt with by the late Auckland Provincial Government, they have no recommendation to make.

26th August, 1881.

No. 319.—Petition of C. DAVEY and Others.

THE Gold Fields Committee, to whom was referred the petition of C. Davey and others, miners on Totara Gold Field, praying that certain water-rights be granted them from Donnelly's Creek, which at present are reserved by the Government for the Mikonui Water-race, have the honor to report that the Committee, after taking the evidence of the petitioner, are of opinion that the actual construction of petitioner's race as surveyed and applied for will not interfere with the Mikonui Race; that the petitioners were the first applicants for a water-right—ten heads—from Donnelly's Creek, and would, as against other miners, have a prior claim; that the Warden has, in his ministerial capacity, by the powers conferred upon him by "The Mines Act, 1877," and regulations thereunder, the right of deciding whether the Government should be exceptionally treated or otherwise; that the flood-waters of Donnelly's Creek would be of little use or profit to Government unless they had the means of conserving the same. Seeing that petitioners' application has been under consideration since January, 1879, the Committee are of opinion that the matter ought to be dealt with without further delay, and would therefore refer the petition to the Government.

5th September, 1881.

No. 236.—Petition of R. J HUDSON and Others, Kanieri, Westland.

THE petitioners state that a large extent of rich sluicing country has recently been discovered in a locality known as Humphrey's Gully and McDonald's Creek; that want of water is the only impediment to the working thereof; that a large permanent supply of water can be obtained by means of the old Caledonian Water-race, and by making an extension therefrom, and constructing one or two dams along the course of the race. They ask that assistance may be given to a public association or company to carry out the necessary works, believing that permanent and profitable employment will thereby be given to from 1,000 to 1,500 miners for many years.

Your Committee, having made full inquiry into the merits of the case, are of opinion that the work for which assistance is asked for by the petitioners is one which is deserving of encouragement at the hands of the Government, and that the granting of a subsidy, at the rate of £1 for £1, from the vote for "Tracks and minor works upon gold fields," would be of much advantage in the development of a new and promising locality. The Committee therefore recommend the prayer of the petitioners to the early and favourable consideration of the Government.

9th September, 1881.

No. 369.—Petition of JAMES BYRNE and Others.

THE petitioners state that they hold a prospecting claim at Mount Arthur, Collingwood. They complain that a lease for mining purposes has been granted to another company, Arkell and party, over a portion of the ground occupied by the petitioners under Certificate No. 10,742.

Your Committee have taken the evidence of James Byrne (petitioner), Captain Malcolm, Richard Parker (shareholder in the claim of Arkell and party), and A. Le Grande Campbell, late Warden of the Collingwood District, who granted certificate to petitioner and adjudicated on a suit to cancel the certificate for prospecting area granted to Byrne and party.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of your Committee, the petitioners have established the following facts in connection with their claim: 1. That on the 4th July, 1879, they applied for a prospecting area, in accordance with the provisions of the Mines Act and the regulations made thereunder, and subsequently obtained a certificate (No. 3,890) for the same. 2. That on the 18th August, 1879, Arkell and party applied for a portion of the land comprised in the prospecting area of the petitioners. 3. This application was informal, in so far as that portion was concerned which came within the prospecting area, seeing that clause 87 of the Mining Regulations provides that all ground under application is protected until such application has been finally dealt with. 4. That an attempt was made to cancel this certificate for the prospecting area. The Warden, however, upheld the defendants' (the petitioners') title, and refused to cancel their certificate. 5. That the petitioners drew in their pegs, and obtained a prospecting claim (Certificate No. 10,724). 6. That Arkell and party obtained a gold-mining lease, which included a portion of the land held by petitioners under Certificate No. 10,724.

After careful consideration of the matter, the Committee are of opinion that the petitioners have established their claim, and that Certificate No. 10,724 should be upheld; and that the Government take the necessary steps so to do.

17th September, 1881.