

1882.
NEW ZEALAND.

PETITION OF THOMAS TELFORD

(REPORT OF PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE ON), TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Report brought up on 20th July, 1882, and ordered to be printed.

No. 105.—THOMAS TELFORD, Wellington.

THE petitioner states that in July, 1868, he was appointed an Inspector of Sheep for Wairarapa, and continued to hold the appointment until the 30th September, 1881, at which date, without any previous notice, he was informed that Mr. Sutton would relieve him of his duties. He is not aware of anything that could justify such harshness. He elected to take compensation for loss of office, being under the impression that his Provincial service would count. He states that he has received compensation for his services under the General Government, and now prays that compensation may be granted for his Provincial service.

I am directed to report: Having inquired into and considered the case of the petitioner, the Committee are of opinion that he was rather harshly dealt with in being removed from office without any sufficient reason to justify such removal. The Committee cannot recommend that payment be made for loss of office for the time during which he was a Provincial officer, as it appears he continued in the Government service from 1875 to 1881, and thus virtually became a General Government officer, and entitled to the usual compensation authorized by law, which he received. The Committee desire to draw the attention of the Government to the organization of the Stock Branch of the Colonial Secretary's Department. It appears, from the evidence before the Committee, that this branch is not in a satisfactory state of organization; no permanent officer appears to be at the head of it; nominally, the Superintending Inspector is at the head, but practically he is not so, as the office work is under the control of another officer, who appears to have no defined official position, and is not responsible to the Superintending Inspector, or even to the permanent Under-Secretary. The appointment of Sheep Inspectors also appears to have been made in two cases without the recommendation or knowledge of the Superintending Inspector, who could therefore have no opportunity to ascertain their fitness for the special work that they had to perform. Considering the important interests involved in properly administering the Sheep Department, which now includes the administration of the Rabbit Nuisance Act, the Committee strongly recommend that it be placed forthwith under the control of one qualified officer, responsible to the Minister in charge, and that he be allowed such assistance as will enable him to conduct the business of the office when absent from Wellington.

THOMAS KELLY, Chairman.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

MONDAY, 12th JUNE, 1882. (Mr. T. KELLY, Chairman.)

BENJAMIN BAYLY, examined.

The Chairman.] What is your official designation?—Superintending Inspector under the Sheep Act.

2. What are your duties?—I have the general supervision of the department.

3. You have an office in Wellington?—I have.

4. And is it from that office that all instructions go to the Inspectors?—Not all, but as a rule they do emanate from that office.

5. Do all letters and telegrams to the Inspectors go through you?—If I am on the spot here they do, but there are very often matters of detail which are dealt with otherwise.

6. When you are absent who acts for you?—Mr. Cooper generally signs documents for me in my absence.

7. When were you appointed?—On 1st November, 1881.

8. When you are in Wellington all telegrams and correspondence come through you?—Yes.

9. From whom do you receive instructions?—The Colonial Secretary or the Under-Secretary, Mr. Cooper; but there are many matters about which I receive no instructions at all.

10. Your duties are defined by the Sheep Act?—Yes, and I act on my own authority as provided by the Act.

11. When you receive instructions from the Colonial Secretary do you receive them directly from the Minister or through Mr. Cooper?—Generally through Mr. Cooper.

12. To whom are you responsible?—To the Colonial Secretary, but the Under-Secretary acts for him if he is not on the spot. In connection with matters which are under my own supervision I sign all correspondence directly, but if a letter requires the approval of the Minister I submit it to him.

13. Do you send that correspondence to the Minister himself?—I address it to the Colonial Secretary's office, "Stock Branch."