

constitutional rights of British subjects. They therefore pray that the Legislature will not lend its sanction to a principle so dangerous, and they ask for inquiry and relief.

I am directed to report: That the Committee finds that the issue of the grant has been deferred pending the Public Works Department fixing the limits of the land required by it, and recommends that the attention of the Government be directed to the matter, with a view to that part of the reserve which is not required for railway purposes being conveyed to the Board. The Committee are of opinion that the Board has no claim for compensation against the Government, nor does it see how, under the provisions of "The Harbours Act, 1878," such claim could arise.

6th September, 1882.

No. 484.—Petition of the NEW PLYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD (referred back to the Committee).

THE petitioners state that certain land on the foreshore at New Plymouth and the Mount Eliot Reserve, were granted in trust as an endowment for harbour purposes, and a loan was obtained for harbour construction for which these endowments form part security. They complain that the Government, requiring the land for railway purposes, arbitrarily resumed possession of it, ignoring the public creditor whose security it had become; and that this action not only frustrated the plans of the Board in respect to its dealings with its endowments, but was, in principle, subversive of the constitutional rights of British subjects. They therefore pray that the Legislature will not lend its sanction to a principle so dangerous, and they ask for inquiry and relief.

I am directed to report: The previous report having been referred back to the Committee, the evidence of Mr. Kelly, M.H.R., has been taken and that of Mr. Elliott repeated. This evidence, which will be laid on the table, fully confirms the Committee in the conclusions previously arrived at. The Committee find that the issue of the grant has been postponed pending the Public Works Department fixing the limits of the land required by it; and recommends that the attention of the Government be directed to the matter, with a view to that part of the reserve which is not required for railway purposes being conveyed to the Board. The Committee are of opinion that the Board has no claim for compensation against the Government, nor do they see how, under the provisions of "The Harbours Act, 1878," such claim could arise.

8th September, 1882.

No. 351.—Petition of SAMUEL RILEY and Others (referred back to the Committee).

THE petitioners state that they are Crown tenants of the Colliery Reserve, Westport, and that in 1874 the Provincial Government of Nelson awarded them the lands they now hold as compensation for their former holdings having been swept away. In 1877 the General Government imposed conditions of tenure of a harsh character, but which they were compelled to accept, as they had already built upon their sections. They pray that they may be relieved from the covenants they have entered into, and be allowed to purchase their holdings, or that they may be granted a permanent tenure at reduced rents, equal to the value of their sections when they settled upon them.

I am directed to report: That the Committee, having taken additional evidence, is further strengthened in its opinion that the petitioners have been liberally and fairly dealt with in the past, and have no claim whatever against the Government. The Committee are also of opinion that, in view of the future requirements of the Government in respect of the use of the reserve in question for public purposes, it would be highly impolitic to allow the petitioners to acquire the freehold now sought by them.

8th September, 1882.

No. 456.—Petition of W. H. SKINNER (referred back to the Committee).

THE petitioner states that he joined the Taranaki Volunteers in 1859, and served throughout the Taranaki war, and that he lost his eyesight through exposure during service, for which he received a pension. He served over six years, and received the New Zealand war medal. Owing to the loss of eyesight he was unaware that scrip was granted instead of land. The Volunteer Land Commission rejected his claim on the ground that it was not sent in in time. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report: That the case of the petitioner having already been dealt with by the Naval and Military and Local Forces Land Claims Commission, this Committee see no reason to reopen the case.

8th September, 1882.