

1882.
NEW ZEALAND.

WESTPORT COAL COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF).

Report brought up on 18th July, 1882, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

WEDNESDAY, THE 7TH DAY OF JUNE, 1882.

Ordered, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report as to what action should be taken to improve the facilities for shipment at Westport, in order to fully develop the coal export trade of that port. The Committee to consist of the Hon. W. W. Johnston, Mr. Macandrew, Mr. Fergus, Mr. Fish, Mr. Allwright, Mr. Wright, Mr. Levestam, Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Levin, and the mover. Three to be a quorum, with power to call for persons and papers; and to report within a month."—(*Mr. Munro.*)

THURSDAY, THE 6TH DAY OF JULY, 1882.

Ordered, "That the Westport Coal Committee have leave to postpone the bringing-up of their report until Thursday next."—(*Mr. Munro.*)

REPORT.

I AM directed to report that, after due inquiry and consideration, your Committee is of opinion—

1. The one thing needed to ensure a large exportation of coal to foreign markets is the deepening of the entrance to the harbour at Westport.

2. The coal is admitted to be of a quality equal to that of the best steam-coal in the Australian Colonies, and the contents of the Buller Coal Field, as far as surveyed, are estimated by the Geological Department, at some 140,000,000 tons.

3. The two coal companies already in operation in the Buller District have a subscribed capital of £450,000, and have expended £100,000 in opening up their leaseholds. At present they are engaged in operations which, when completed, will enable them to put out 1,300 tons per day, if required, and which output may be indefinitely increased when the other leases available in the Waimangaroa are in working order.

4. The present depth of water at ordinary tides on the bar is 10 or 11 feet, and at spring tides 14 or 15 feet: had this been increased to $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet, the Westport Colliery Company could have this year entered into contracts to deliver 250,000 tons for shipment to the Australian Colonies, and could have completed arrangements for the establishment of copper-smelting works at Westport, on account of the Adelaide Copper Mines Company.

5. It is asserted on behalf of the colliery companies that an expenditure of £50,000 in the formation of a half-tide wall would secure a depth of $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and that such wall would constitute an initiatory portion of the work recommended by Sir John Coode as necessary to obtain 23 feet.