

No. 62, Sess. II.—Petition of THOMAS SHINE and Others, *re* Costello *v.* certain Miners of Croninville.

THE Gold Fields and Mines Committee, to whom this petition was referred, have the honour to report that the Committee are of opinion that the petitioners have acted somewhat injudiciously, but as they appear to have been pioneers of a new gold field, and could not have suspected the negligence of the Provincial Government of Nelson in not having caused the banks of the Totara River and its branches to be reserved prior to the granting of Costello's lease, in accordance with its expressed intention in the agricultural lease regulation; section 18, of the 11th August, 1873, the Committee recommend that half the amount of the taxed costs of the suit which the petitioners were compelled to pay should be refunded by the Government.

1st October, 1884.

No. 163, Sess. II.—Petition of HONI WERAHIKO and ADAM PORTER.

THE petitioners pray for a reward for the discovery of the Aroha Gold Field.

The Gold Fields and Mines Committee, to whom this petition was referred, have the honour to report that the Committee are of opinion that a good claim for a reward has been established for the discovery of the Aroha Gold Field by the late Honi Werahiko, and that such reward should be paid to his legal representative.

9th October, 1884.

No. 40, Sess. II.—Petition of JAMES BEGG and Others.

THE petitioners are residents at Kumara, Westbrook, Greenstone and the Teramakau Settlements, and that they pray that a certain track may be widened to give them access to market, and allow their children to attend school.

The Gold Fields and Mines Committee, to whom this petition was referred, have the honour to report that the Committee recommend that provision for widening the track be made out of the vote for opening up Crown lands for settlement.

9th October, 1884.

No. 92, Sess. I.; and No. 18, Sess. II.—Petitions of MAYOR and BURGESSES of KUMARA; and WILLIAM MORRIS and Others.

THE petitioners complain of the excessive charge made for water for sluicing purposes at the Government water-race, and pray that the price may be reduced.

The Gold Fields and Mines Committee, to whom these petitions were referred, have the honour to report that these petitions be referred to the Government in connection with the report adopted in the case of Petition No. 35, Sess. I., John White and Others, and recommend that the price charged for water should be reduced.

10th October, 1884.

No. 35, Sess. I.—Petition of JOHN WHITE and Others.

THIS is a petition from the miners using the Kumara Sludge-Channel.

The Gold Fields and Mines Committee, to whom this petition was referred, have the honour to report that the Committee, having heard evidence at great length, and taken the matter fully into consideration are of opinion that it is not desirable nor practicable to continue the management of the Kumara Sludge-channel and Water-race under Government authority as at present, and that the matters referred to in the petition before the Committee are of such a nature that they can only be dealt with by local administration. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the sludge-channel and race be vested in the Westland County Council and the Kumara Borough Council, and that, failing the acceptance of such trust by either or both of such local bodies, a trust similar to that of the Mount Ida Water-race and other public works of the same general character be substituted for the purpose of regulating the use, working, and management of the Kumara Sludge-channel Race, and that the disputes on which the petition is based should be referred to the local body or trust for settlement; that the sludge-channel and water-race should be put in thorough repair before being handed over to the local bodies or to a local trust; that, pending the handing over of the sludge-channel and water-race, your Committee are of opinion that those clauses of the new regulations which are objected to as unworkable should be suspended.

10th October, 1884.

No. 398, Sess. II.; No. 399, Sess. II.; and No. 400, Sess. II.—Petitions of PATRICK NEWMAN; J. POWELL and Others; and PARKER and Others.

PATRICK NEWMAN claims to be the pioneer of the West Coast Gold Fields, and begs for some consideration to be shown to him in his old age. The other petitioners are in support of his claim.

The Gold Fields and Mines Committee have the honour to report that Patrick Newman is one of the pioneers of the West Coast Gold Fields and has undoubted claims on the colony, and his petition is therefore referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

16th October, 1884.

No. 394, Sess. II.—Petition of WILLIAM ALEXANDER HUNT.

THE petitioner prays for reward for the discovery of the Thames Gold Field.

The Committee, having taken evidence in this case, indorse the report of the Gold Fields Committee of 1882, on the following grounds:—

(1.) That a thorough investigation was made into the claim of the petitioner by a special Commission of the Auckland Provincial Council (entitled the Gold Fields Reward Inquiry Commission) in 1870, which Commission reported unfavourably of petitioner's claim;