

THE LAND BOARDS BILL.

THE Waste Lands Committee, to whom the above Bill was referred, have the honour to report that, after careful consideration, they recommend that the Bill should be allowed to proceed, with the amendments as shown upon the copy of the Bill attached hereto.

6th July, 1886.

No. 287.—Petition of EDWARD CORBITT and Others.

THE petitioners state that they took up land in Forest Hill, Hokonui, Southland, under the deferred-payment system; that the land is of poor quality and unfit for farming. They desire that the Government should release them from paying instalments for five years, or reduce the price to 10s. per acre, or that, as alternative, the Government will extend the time for paying the whole price of the land to twenty years, allowing petitioners to capitalize, paying interest for that time, such interest to go towards purchasing the land. They pray for inquiry and relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: The Committee are unable, in the case of the petitioners, to make any recommendation for relief other than that provided for under the existing law, without committing themselves to what might be regarded as a precedent that might lead to the disturbance of every contract in respect of the occupation of Crown lands throughout the colony.

7th July, 1886.

No. 281.—Petition of JOHN BORRIE and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are deferred-payment settlers, living at Te Aroha. They state that they purchased land which was represented to be of good quality, but which has turned out, after repeated trials, to be very poor; that it is valued for the property-tax at £1 per acre, and the price they are paying for it is £2 per acre; that, relying on the published description, several settlers came up from Canterbury to take up the land. They ask for relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: The Committee are unable, in the case of the petitioners, to make any recommendation for relief other than that provided for under the existing law, without committing themselves to what might be regarded as a precedent that might lead to the disturbance of every contract in respect of the occupation of Crown lands throughout the colony.

7th July, 1886.

No. 231.—Petition of F. D. RICH (No. 1).

THE petitioner states that in 1884 he petitioned Parliament in respect of interest upon the cost of the construction of the Shag Point Branch Railway; that he has applied to the Hon. the Minister for Public Works to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee, but without success. He prays the House to obtain the relief recommended.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the reports of the Waste Lands Committee of 1880, and Session II., 1884, are hereby affirmed.

13th July, 1886.

No. 232.—Petition of F. D. RICH (No. 2).

THE petitioner states that he petitioned Parliament in respect of the action of the Government Inspector of Mines, which action led to the closing of his mine, the Shag Point Coal-mine; that he has applied to the Hon. the Minister of Mines to give effect to the recommendations of the Waste Lands Committee, but without success. He prays the House to obtain the relief recommended.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee are of opinion that the recommendation of the Waste Lands Committee on the petitioner's case in the session of 1884 be reaffirmed, such recommendation being that the Government contribute at the rate of £1 to £2 towards the cost of reopening the mine, provided that the total sum contributed by the Government shall in no case exceed £5,000.

13th July, 1886.

No. 297.—Petition of WILLIAM COWERN.

THE petitioner alleges that he signed a deed transferring land to the Government on the verbal condition that a small block included therein should be retransferred to him at 2s. 6d. per acre and a *pro rata* of expenses. This condition has not been fulfilled. The petitioner states that the Waste Lands Committee of 1885 reported favourably on his petition in reference to the same transaction, but the Government have not acted on the recommendation.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the recommendation of the Waste Lands Committee on the petitioner's case in 1885 be reaffirmed.

21st July, 1886.

No. 313.—Petition of GEORGE JENNINGS and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are deferred-payment settlers of the Otoru District. They ask for reduction of rents or a longer time to pay up arrears, or to be allowed to surrender with the right to repurchase.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee are unable, in the case of the petitioners, to make any recommendation for relief other than that provided for under the existing law without committing themselves to what might lead to the disturbance of every contract in respect of the occupation of Crown lands throughout the colony.

21st July, 1886.