

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE), ON THE PURCHASE OF STARK'S PROPERTY, NORTH SHORE, AUCKLAND, FOR DEFENCE PURPOSES; TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE, AND APPENDIX.

Report brought up 30th July, 1886, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

THURSDAY, THE 17TH DAY OF JUNE, 1886.

Ordered, "That the papers relative to the purchase of Stark's property, North Shore, Auckland, for defence purposes, laid upon the table this day, be referred to the Public Accounts Committee."—(MR. G. F. RICHARDSON.)

WEDNESDAY, THE 30TH DAY OF JUNE, 1886.

Ordered, "That power be granted to the Public Accounts Committee to call for persons and papers."—(MR. F. J. MOSS.)

REPORT.

THE Public Accounts Committee, having carefully considered the papers referred to them on the above subject, and taken the fullest evidence which they could obtain (appended hereto), have the honour to report—

1. That the Government were justified in paying for the property the price they did.
 2. That the weight of evidence goes to show that the property could not have been obtained for a less amount in the Compensation Court.
- 30th July, 1886.

F. J. Moss, Chairman.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, 24TH JUNE, 1886.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present: Mr. Moss (Chairman), Hon. Major Atkinson, Mr. Barron, Mr. Dargaville, Mr. Montgomery, Dr. Newman, Hon. Sir Julius Vogel, Mr. Wilson.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The order of reference dated the 17th day of June having been read,

On the motion of Dr. Newman, *Resolved*, That a sketch-map of the property and neighbourhood be obtained for the Committee; and that the property-tax valuation for the past four years, and the valuation for local rates for the same period, be also obtained.

Moved by Mr. Dargaville, That Mr. H. M. Brewer, Land Purchase Commissioner, and Mr. Seaman, Valuator, be called to give evidence before the Committee.

On the motion of the Hon. Major Atkinson, *Resolved*, That the consideration of the above motion *re* Messrs. Brewer and Seaman be deferred till after Mr. Sperrey has been examined.

On the motion of Mr. Barron, *Resolved*, That the Chairman requests Mr. Sperrey, Land-tax Commissioner, to ascertain, by telegraph, the name of the person who is referred to in Mr. Seaman's letter of the 13th January as having offered Stark £16,000 for his property, and, if possible, the date and particulars of such offer.

On the motion of Dr. Newman, *Resolved*, That Mr. Sperrey, Property-tax Commissioner, be called before the Committee for examination at the next meeting.

On the motion of Dr. Newman, *Resolved*, That the policies of insurance referred to in Mr. Brewer's report be produced to the Committee.

The Committee adjourned till Friday, the 25th June, at 12 o'clock.