

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORTS OF THE WASTE LANDS COMMITTEE.

(MR. O'CALLAGHAN, CHAIRMAN.)

Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

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No. 57.—Petition of CHARLES BROWN, of New Plymouth.

THE petitioner states that he selected 500 acres of rural land in the settlement of New Plymouth; that he made a road through the same, and afterwards the New Zealand Company took over the said road and continued it through other lands; that compensation was ordered to be paid to the petitioner upon completion of certain fences; that the petitioner was prevented from completing the said fences through Native disturbances. He prays for inquiry and relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee see no reason why they should interfere in this case.

3rd June, 1886.

No. 67.—Petition of ALFRED ROBERTS and 41 other Gum-diggers of the Bay of Islands.

THE petitioners request permission to dig for kauri-resin (gum) within the precincts of the Puhipuhi State Forest during the winter months.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee cannot recommend that the prayer of the petitioners be agreed to.

3rd June, 1886.

No. 39.—Petition of PATRICK KINNEY and JOHN J. RAMSAY.

THE petitioners state that they are deferred-payment settlers residing in the Rock and Pillar District of Otago; that they selected lands abandoned by the original holders, which was originally put up at £1 10s. per acre; that through technical error they had to pay £3 per acre. They pray for a reduction to same price as other selectors.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee cannot recommend the prayer of this petition.

9th June, 1886.

No. 430, 1885.—Petition of CATHERINE FRASER.

THE petitioner states that in 1863 she purchased Section 7, Block IV. (containing 37 acres 2 roods 14 perches), Peninsula District, Otago, from the Crown; that, through an error on the part of the Government surveyors, the road round the said block was not connected with any other road from 1863 to 1881; that the petitioner paid road rates during several years. She claims compensation for loss sustained through not having the use of the road.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee have no recommendation to make.

9th June, 1886.

No. 36.—Petition of BENJAMIN NAYLOR, Sen., and BENJAMIN NAYLOR, Jun.

THE petitioners state that they purchased lands under the deferred-payment system, and made improvements thereon; that the land was afterwards sold through their not having built homesteads thereon, and was repurchased by them at an advance on original price. They pray for inquiry and relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petitioners have no claim.

10th June, 1886.

VOLUNTEER LAND SCRIP.

IN the matter of claims made by Volunteers enrolled between the years 1873 and 1876, whose title to scrip was quashed by the 3rd section of "The Waste Land Administration Act, 1876," which cancelled the rights of all Volunteers who had not then completed three years' efficient service; and in the matter of the members of the Thames Scottish Rifle Corps;

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Legislature be invited to reconsider the matter, and, if practicable, restore their rights to all those men enrolled before the 31st October, 1876, who subsequently by continuous service completed their five years as efficient Volunteers.

10th June, 1886.

No. 106.—Petition of THOMAS HEMPTON.

THE petitioner states that he is Town Clerk of the Borough of New Plymouth. He states that the lands affected by "The New Plymouth Recreation Reserve Act, 1886," consist of a number of allotments and parts of streets shown on the original plan of the Town of New Plymouth, which were first reserved for public purposes in the year 1858. He prays that, before the Bill be proceeded with any further, the Borough Council and inhabitants of New Plymouth may be heard in relation thereto, and that for that purpose the said Bill may be referred to a Select Committee for consideration and report.

I have the honour to report as follows: That, the Bill having passed the House, the Committee have no recommendation to make.

15th June, 1886.

No. 72.—Petition of A. SUTHERLAND and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are leaseholders of portions of the West Coast Settlement Reserves. They allege that the rents payable by them are out of all proportion to the products of the land. They ask for inquiry, so that the rents may be adjudged equitably.

I have the honour to report as follows: That, inasmuch as the subject-matter of this petition can, if deemed desirable, be dealt with by the Board and the Government, by an alteration in the regulations under which these leases are held, without the intervention of the Legislature, this Committee have no recommendation to make.

15th June, 1886.

No. 131.—Petition of EDWARD O'CONNELL and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are Crown tenants in the District of Strath Taieri under the perpetual-lease system; that the rental of the land is too high, and that the railway has not been made as promised when they took the leases; that it is impossible for them to carry on. They pray to have the rents reduced, or inquiry to be made.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Government for their consideration.

22nd June, 1886.

CLAIMS OF OLD SOLDIERS.

THE Waste Lands Committee have the honour to report, with reference to the claims of old soldiers, that the Committee do not see reason to recommend the Legislature to reopen the case of the claims of the naval and military settlers; and are of opinion that such claims, if entertained at all, should, in the first instance, be inquired into and reported upon by the Government.

22nd June, 1886.

No. 90.—Petition of HONORA OAKES.

THE petitioner states that her husband in 1841 took up 950 acres of land situate on the River Thames, next the block known as the Maiharakeka Block; that the Government issued a Proclamation in the year 1848, agreeing to take over all lands acquired by Europeans from the Natives at £1 per acre; that petitioner agreed to the same, and she was paid £52 on account of the purchase-money, but has never received the balance thereof. She prays for inquiry and relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee are of opinion that the petitioner has no claim.

23rd June, 1886.

No. 31.—Petition of JOSEPH RICHARD CLEMENT.

THE petitioner prays for consideration for loss and damage sustained through not getting land, situate in the Waiho Forks, County of Waimate, he selected, by reason of errors in the Government plan, and through having no roadway, and through forced payment of rates and taxes whilst excluded from use of such land.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee, having reported on this petition in 1884 and 1885, have no further recommendation to make.

23rd June, 1886.

No. 59.—Petition of the Rev. WILLIAM COLENZO.

THE petitioner states that he owned Section 331, Town of Napier, abutting on Stamford Street; that the Government took over and closed Stamford Street. The petitioner prays for equitable relief in consequence of the deterioration of the said section 331 through such closing of Stamford Street.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Public Petitions Committee, as not coming within the scope of the order of reference of the Waste Lands Committee.

24th June, 1886.

No. 205.—Petition of WILLIAM MAUDE and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are residents, in Cook County, of the East Coast District of the North Island. They ask that the House will be pleased to afford assistance to Mr. W. L. Rees in his effort to promote colonization in New Zealand.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee cannot recommend the prayer of the petitioners.

24th June, 1886.

Nos. 38, 256, and 260, 1885.—Petitions of MARIA DOBLE, WILLIAM STEEN, and JOHN MOHR. The petitioners pray for military grants of land.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the report of Colonel Haultain relating to the above petitioners be referred to the Government, in connection with the report of the Waste Lands Committee relating to the claims of old soldiers, of the 22nd instant.

24th June, 1886.

No. 105.—Petition of DENIS MURPHY.

THE petitioner states that he applied to the Waste Lands Board of Auckland to purchase Section 15 of Block XII., Te Aroha Survey District, containing seventy-eight acres. There were three other applicants, who had also applied for other lands. The petitioner states that in consequence of the other applicants being allowed to bid he was forced to buy the said section at a premium of £105 on the upset price. The petitioner maintains his was the only proper application, and asks to be allowed to have the said land at the upset price.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petitioner has no claim.

29th June, 1886.

No. 152.—Petition of HENRY GARDINER.

THE petitioner states that a military grant was issued to him in 1861 at Wellington; that he lost the same; that he never took up land. He prays for another grant or other relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petitioner has no claim.

29th June, 1886.

No. 73.—Petition of JOHN BRYERS.

THE petitioner alleges that at a sitting of the Native Land Court held at Ohaeawai, Bay of Islands, on the 19th January, 1880, an order was made in favour of the petitioner and others for a block called Manurewa, containing 28 acres 2 roods 3 perches; that at a rehearing 8 acres 1 rood 28 perches was retained by the Government. He prays for inquiry.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Native Affairs Committee, as not coming within the scope of the order of reference of the Waste Lands Committee.

29th June, 1886.

No. 130.—Petition of JAMES POTIER and Sister.

THE petitioners, who are the only surviving children of their mother, state that she was an aboriginal native, and held 5,000 acres of land at Te Puna, near Tauranga; that such land was seized by the Government towards the close of the war; that they were requested by the late Sir Donald McLean to forward particulars of such land, so that he could lay the matter before Parliament; that Sir Donald McLean died soon after particulars were forwarded, and nothing further has been done. They pray for inquiry and relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Native Affairs Committee, as not coming within the scope of the order of reference of the Waste Lands Committee.

29th June, 1886.

No. 236.—Petition of MICHAEL STEVENS.

THE petitioner states that he was a member of the 70th Regiment of foot; that he served in the Maori war, and was afterwards appointed Drill Instructor for the Province of Otago; that he was badly injured when on duty in 1866, and subsequently in the following year; that he is unfit for further service through the said injuries, and on account of old age.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Public Petitions Committee, as not coming within the scope of the order of reference of the Waste Lands Committee.

30th June, 1886.

No. 217.—Petition of HENRY PEMBLE and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are settlers occupying perpetual-lease, deferred-payment, and cash sections on the education reserves and other Crown lands near Waikaka Township; that they were induced to take up the sections mainly through the hope given out by the Government that facilities for the transport of their produce would be placed within their reach by the construction of the Gore-Kelso Railway; that the railway has not been constructed; that the petitioners cannot make a living off the lands, as the impassability of the roads renders it impossible to transport their produce at the proper season. They pray for relief, either by a reduction of rent or by taking over the land and allowing a fair valuation for improvements.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

30th June, 1886.

No. 237.—Petition of W. G. GARRARD (No. 1).

THE petitioner prays to know why he cannot obtain his naval land grant, which was promised him in 1865.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee are of opinion that the petitioner has no claim.

1st July, 1886.

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.

No. 286.—Petition of JAMES ROBERTSON and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are perpetual leaseholders in the Windonside portion of the education reserves of Otago and Southland; that when they took up the land it was understood that the Riversdale and Waikaia Railway would be constructed; that only a portion of it was formed; that an Act of Parliament of a retrospective character was passed into law making the settlers liable for a special rate for a private railway, which means an increase of 3d. or 4d. per acre; that they have no outlet for their produce, and are unable to continue a profitable occupation at the present high rate of rental. They ask to have the rents reduced or other relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

21st July, 1886.

No. 375.—Petition of DAVID SMART and Others (New Zealand Land League Petition).

THE petitioners state that the existence of large landed estates in the immediate vicinity of towns and railway-line centres has been inimical to close and productive settlement, and the Crown lands not alienated are mostly unsuitable for prosperous agricultural settlement. They pray that a measure may be passed by the Legislature for purchasing a sufficiency of land on equitable terms to meet the demand for settlement; and pending the passing of such Act the Hon. the Minister of Lands be requested to take steps to purchase a thousand acres from one of the large-estate owners near Oamaru under the 168th clause of "The Land Act, 1885," and that such land may be subdivided into sections from five to fifty acres, and leased to applicants on terms specified in the Act.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee recommend the object desired by the petitioners to the favourable consideration of the Government, and also desire to express the opinion that in cases such as these the Government should, on the recommendation of the Waste Lands Board, take steps to obtain land for settlement in accordance with the existing law.

23rd July, 1886.

THE NELSON CROWN TENANTS RELIEF BILL.

THE Waste Lands Committee, to whom this Bill was referred, have the honour to report that, after careful consideration, they are of opinion that no sufficient cause has been shown for the introduction of this Bill.

23rd July, 1886.

Nos. 169, 216, 245, 246, 303, 317, and 332.—Petition of J. H. TAYLOR and Others, JAMES KEIR and Others, R. P. SHARP and Others, N. O'TOOLE and Others, JAMES BROWN and Others, J. HOOD and Others, and T. MOSES and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are settlers and colonists in the Provincial District of Canterbury. They state that they are anxious and willing to take up lands and make homes for themselves and their families in the Provincial District of Canterbury, but are unable to do so on account (*inter alia*) of the upset price of £2 per acre being prohibitive, and the maximum area of each individual holding (320 acres) being prohibitive in respect of the land now open for selection. They pray the House to take the premises into favourable consideration.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee, being of opinion that this is a matter simply of administration, refer these petitions to the Government.

25th July, 1886.

No. 353.—Petition of ROBERT S. GALBRAITH and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are leaseholders under "The Land Act 1877 Amendment Act, 1882," at Rangiuru, County of Tauranga; that the grass on their land has been entirely destroyed and their property greatly injured by volcanic dust from the late eruptions, and, in consequence, they have had to sell their cattle at a great sacrifice. The petitioners pray (as compensation for their losses) to obtain either the freehold of their said leasehold estate without further payment, or the remission and abatement for six years from the 10th June, 1886 (the date of the eruptions) of all rent or other payments due under the said Act, or such other relief as to the House shall seem meet.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

27th July, 1886.

No. 413.—Petition of W. G. GARRARD (No 2).

THE petitioner prays to know why he has no claim for a grant of land for naval services.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee reaffirm their former report of the 1st July instant.

27th July, 1886.

No. 75.—Petition of WILLIAM BENNETT and Others.

THE petitioners allege that they took up lands under the pastoral deferred-payment system; they state that that system is unsuitable to them, and that the price put upon the land was too high, in consequence of which, and of the heavy fall in price of produce, they see no escape from ruin. They ask that the pastoral deferred-payment holdings may be commuted into small runs, as provided for in "The Land Act, 1885."

I have the honour to report as follows: Having carefully considered the subject of this petition, and taken evidence thereon, the Committee are of opinion that it would be injudicious and impolitic

on the part of the State to make concessions to any one particular class of land-occupants unless it is prepared to do so to every other class under similar circumstances, there being but little distinction as regards the question at issue between the case of the petitioners and that of those who have acquired land from the Crown on freehold for cash at prices which may have proved to be out of keeping with the subsequent market-value of produce; that, while the petitioners' case is undoubtedly one of hardship, it is hoped that the recent rise in the market-value of wool may go far to improve their position. For these reasons the Committee cannot recommend the prayer of the petitioners.

28th July, 1886.

No. 95.—Petition of THOMAS BRYDONE and Others. (For minutes of evidence *vide* I-4A.)

THE petitioners state that they are pastoral tenants of the Crown in the Provincial Districts of Otago and Southland; that they acquired their holdings in 1882 and 1883 at public auction; that the rabbit pest has since reached its climax, and that wool and other produce has greatly fallen in price; that the prices they paid for the land were too high. They pray for inquiry into the condition of the pastoral tenants, and for such relief as the circumstances may demand.

I have the honour to report as follows: Having carefully considered the subject of this petition, and taken evidence thereon, the Committee are of opinion that it would be injudicious and impolitic on the part of the State to make concessions to any one particular class of land-occupants unless it is prepared to do so to every other class under similar circumstances, there being but little distinction as regards the question at issue between the case of the petitioners and that of those who have acquired land from the Crown on freehold for cash at prices which may have proved to be out of keeping with the subsequent market-value of produce; that, while the petitioners' case is undoubtedly one of hardship, it is hoped that the recent rise in the market-value of wool may go far to improve their position. For these reasons the Committee cannot recommend the prayer of the petitioners.

28th July, 1886.

No. 133.—Petition of WILLIAM MOORE and Others.

THE petitioners state that in 1871 and 1872 they were enrolled as members of the Bruce Rifle Volunteers under "The Volunteer Act, 1865;" that they served as efficient Volunteers for five years, and became entitled to receive land-scrip to the value of £30; that the then captain of the company undertook to put in their claims for scrip; that he omitted to do so in time; that a Royal Commission was held in Dunedin to inquire into similar claims to the petitioners', but neither the petitioners nor the captain received any intimation whatever of the sitting of such Commission, and did not appear in consequence. They pray for inquiry and relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: The Committee recommend the prayer of the petition for the consideration of the Government, it being a case which demands inquiry.

28th July, 1886.

No. 145.—Petition of SARAH R. McLEOD.

THE petitioner states that her late husband served as a Volunteer and acted as Interpreter during the Maori war at the Bay of Islands, in consideration whereof the Government gave him scrip for forty acres of land; that about ten years ago she gave the scrip to her solicitor (Mr. Brandon) at Wellington to put in at a Government sale; that he has mislaid it, and has not applied it to her advantage, or that of her husband. She prays for redress.

I have the honour to report as follows: That, after making a number of inquiries, the Committee are unable to obtain sufficient information to enable them to come to any satisfactory conclusion in this matter, and consider the Government department should prosecute the investigation in the recess.

3rd August, 1886.

No. 443.—Petition of BRIDGET BURGESS.

THE petitioner states that in the year 1873 her husband (Eugene Tweeney) was employed on the railway works at Pukekohe, and was accidentally killed by a fall of earth; that he left no issue and had made no will; that at the time of his death he owned seventeen acres at Pukekohe, of five of which he was the grantee under the New Zealand Settlements Acts, and the remainder he had purchased; that, owing to the law in force at the time, she was unable to deal with the said lands; that in 1881 she petitioned the House, and it was recommended that the petitioner, if equitably entitled, should have the land; that since that time she has made inquiries by letter and otherwise in Australia and Great Britain, and has been unable to discover any relatives of the said Eugene Tweeney; that she is unable to participate in the benefits of the Act of 1885 relating to persons dying intestate, as her husband died prior to the passing of that Act, and its provisions are not retrospective. She prays for relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That this is a matter of legal administration, and consequently this Committee have no recommendation to make.

5th August, 1886.

No. 431.—Petition of BENJAMIN SAVAGE.

THE petitioner states that in 1844 he bought from the Natives a certain piece of land—about three acres—situate at Matata, Bay of Plenty; that he cultivated and lived thereon for twenty years; that his title was never disputed; that at the end of this time the Native rebellion broke out, and he and his family had to take flight to Mercury Bay; that when he returned to Matata after an absence of five years he found his property destroyed and his land surveyed as part of a town-

ship called "Richmond," and cut up into allotments and sold; that he is now sixty-three years of age and has many young children depending on him. He prays to have a piece of land given to him in lieu of that which he lost owing to the circumstances stated.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee have no recommendation to make.
5th August, 1886.

No. 432.—Petition of HENRY RILEY BENNETT.

THE petitioner states that he came to New Zealand in 1841; that he married a Native woman belonging to Tauranga; that he has a family of nine children by his said wife; that in 1852 the leading chiefs of the Ngaiteangi Tribe made a deed of gift to his wife Matilda and her children for 208 acres of land situated on the banks of the Wairoa River, in the District of Tauranga, known as the Ruakaka Block; that Judge Wilson has since admitted three other Natives to have an equal claim to the land with the petitioner's children; that the petitioner applied to the then Native Minister, Sir Donald McLean, who replied that Matilda's children alone should have a claim to that land; that the case came on again before Mr. Commissioner Brabant, who gave a similar judgment to that of Judge Wilson. The petitioner states that such a decision renders the land useless to his children, and he prays that the Government will take over that piece of land and give his children the same quantity out of the confiscated block. He prays the facts to be taken into consideration.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Chairman move in the House that the petition be referred to the Native Affairs Committee, as not coming within the scope of the order of reference of the Waste Lands Committee.

5th August, 1886.

No. 155.—Petition of F. GERMANN, Chairman of the Waipa County Council.

THE petitioner states that in the County of Waipa there are a few scattered reserves under no proper supervision, which are becoming overrun with furze, and are yearly becoming less valuable in consequence of the furze. The petitioner asks that all Crown lands remaining in the County of Waipa, and not under the control of any local body, may be vested in the Waipa County Council.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the reserves in the Waipa County not already vested in any local body should be vested in such local body or association as may be deemed most suitable to have control under such reservation.

5th August, 1886.

No. 376.—Petition of R. W. MARSHALL and Others.

THE petitioners state that they are settlers and colonists in the Provincial District of Canterbury. They state that they are anxious and willing to take up lands and make homes for themselves and their families, but are unable to do so on account (*inter alia*) of the upset price of £2 per acre being prohibitive, and the maximum area of each individual holding (320 acres) being insufficient in respect of the land now open for settlement. They pray the House to take the premises into favourable consideration.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the Committee, being of opinion that this is a matter simply of administration, refer this petition to the Government.

5th August, 1886.

THE SPECIAL POWERS AND CONTRACTS 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.

9th August, 1886.

No. 436.—Petition of CHARLES KERR.

THE petitioner states that in 1876 he purchased a compensation grant for £100 from one Wellington Carrington, of Taranaki; that he was living at the Chatham Islands from 1869 to 1884, and was unable to prosecute his claim through being unaware that a Commission was sitting to report upon similar claims. He prays for inquiry into the merits of his case and for relief.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the claim be forwarded to the Government, with a recommendation that they take steps to settle it upon equitable terms.

10th August, 1886.

CLAIMS OF LOCAL FORCES.

THE Waste Lands Committee have the honour to report, with reference to the claims of members of local forces, that the Committee do not see reason to reopen the case of the claims of the local forces, and are of opinion that such claims, if entertained at all, should in the first instance be inquired into and reported upon by the Government.

10th August, 1886.

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