

change is made in regard to the administration under the Westport Harbour Act, more especially in view of the early date fixed for the meeting of Parliament.

The Board have constantly expressed their willingness to consult with the Hon. the Minister upon all matters connected with the Trust, and are anxious to obtain and meet the views of Government, but up to the present have not received any intimation, consequently the Board has assumed that all the operations have been conducted to the approval of the Minister. The Hon. the Minister for Public Works has also been good enough upon his visit to Westport to express his approval and satisfaction.

In the discharge of their onerous duties members have constantly found themselves individually and collectively attacked as wrong-doers, and they regret to find that, although the Government does recognise the faithful services they have rendered, yet it appears that calling upon them to resign would convey some confirmation of, and imply credence in, the unwarrantable statements which have been made against this Board, and the Board feel assured that such is not the wish of the Government.

The Board are anxious and willing to receive any suggestion which the Minister may make in regard to the administration of their Trust, and submit that unless some serious cause has arisen, of which they are unaware, no disturbance of the present constitution should take place until the necessary parliamentary sanction is obtained; and that if any grounds of complaint exist against the present Board, or any member of it, they should be made aware of it.

Under all circumstances, the Board regrets it cannot take upon itself the responsibility of consenting to assist in nullifying the provisions of "The Westport Harbour Act, 1884," by resigning at the present juncture; and hope that this refusal will not be taken as offensive to the Government, as the decision has been arrived at solely in the public interest, and against the personal inclinations of members.

I have the honour to ask that you will give the question at issue your kind consideration.

I have, &c.,

JAMES COLVIN,
Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

The Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS to the CHAIRMAN, Westport Harbour Board.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 22nd March, 1888.

IN reply to your letter of 20th instant, now to hand, I very much regret the decision arrived at by your Board, which, if adhered to, will thrust upon the Government the taking of a step which may possibly seem discourteous, and which we would consequently have much preferred to avoid. In view of your reply, however, and also in view of decision of Government on matter, as communicated to you in my letter of sixth instant, we have no alternative other than to issue a *Gazette* removing present members, and appointing new ones in their places. It is hoped that Greymouth Board will resign, and thus save Government taking similar action in their case, but, any how, the new Boards for both places will be gazetted on Saturday next.

Chairman, Harbour Board, Westport.

EDWIN MITCHELSON.

The CHAIRMAN, Westport Harbour Board, to the MINISTER having charge of the Marine Department.

SIR,—

Westport Harbour Board, Westport, 23rd March, 1888.

I have the honour to send you herewith, in pursuance of my telegram to you this day, the resignation of Mr. John Hughes as member of this Board.

I have, &c.,

JAMES COLVIN,
Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Marine, Wellington.

Mr. JOHN HUGHES to the CHAIRMAN, Westport Harbour Board.

DEAR SIR,—

Westport, 22nd March, 1888.

Hereby please accept my resignation as a member of the Board. In tendering my resignation I wish to point out that I am no consenting party to the Government's proposal to take all control of our works and endowments out of our hands. I entirely disagree with it, and believe that a far better result could be attained—namely, by a reconstruction of the Board by local representatives; and indignantly repudiate the assertion that has been made that a local Board of disinterested and competent men cannot be obtained. I am decidedly not in favour of abolition of the Harbour Board, believing as I do that it is a grave loss to the district that is not yet fully realised. I must express my sincere regret that the Board's affairs have been allowed to drift into their present state. Trusting that our harbour works may be pushed on with vigour and despatch,

I have, &c.,

Mr. James Colvin, Chairman, Westport Harbour Board.

J. HUGHES.

J. HUGHES, Esq., Westport to the UNDER-SECRETARY for PUBLIC WORKS.

(Telegram.)

Westport, 25th March, 1888.

HAVE resigned seat on Harbour Board. Wish to acquaint Hon. Minister am no party to Board's decision.

C. Y. O'Connor, Esq., Under-Secretary, Public Works, Wellington.

J. HUGHES.