

No. 211.—Petition of ROBERT McDUGALL and ROBERT STEWART, of Pembroke, Otago.

THE petitioners state that they signed a warrant for the committal of one F. A. Collins to prison for seven days; that the Clerk of the Court omitted to strike out the words "and there kept to hard labour," consequently prisoner suffered that punishment. That on his discharge he demanded compensation for wrongful punishment. That it cost them (petitioners) £65 13s. 8d. to settle this claim. They pray that this amount may be refunded to them.

I am directed to report that the Committee has no recommendation to make.

29th August, 1890.

No. 282.—Petition of ELIZABETH TURNER, of Wellington.

THE petitioner prays for a grant of land.

No. 284.—Petition of RICHARD SPAIN, of Wellington.

THE petitioner prays for consideration on account of military services.

No. 290.—Petition of CHRISTOPHER TAIT, of Kopuaranga.

THE petitioner prays for consideration on account of losses sustained through the faulty survey of his land.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of this Committee these petitions should be referred to the Waste Lands Committee.

3rd September, 1890.

No. 259.—Petition of JOHN MITCHELL and Others, of Greymouth.

THE petitioners petition in favour of deviation of the Midland Railway at Lake Brunner.

No. 277.—Petition of HENRY THOMPSON and Others, of Napier.

THE petitioners petition in favour of the Factories and Shops Bill.

No. 263.—Petition of P. MITCHELL and Others, of Dunedin.

THE petitioners petition against the Factories and Shops Bill.

I am directed to report that, as these Bills are now before the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

3rd September, 1890.

No. 276.—Petition of FREDERICK SUTTON, of Clive, Hawke's Bay.

THE petitioner prays for amendment of the Land Transfer Act.

No. 291.—Petition of S. ROBERTSON and Others, of Akaroa.

THE petitioners pray that the Akaroa County Council may be abolished.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government.

3rd September, 1890.

No. 166.—Petition of MULLINS, MARSHALL, and Co. and Others.

THE petitioners, residents in England, who are interested either personally or on behalf of clients in New Zealand securities, state that in the year 1879 an issue of £200,000 in 6-per-cent. debentures of the New Plymouth Harbour Board was raised in London; that the prospectus stated that the New Zealand Government had endowed the Board with one-fourth of the gross revenues arising from the sale, occupation, or other disposal of the waste lands of the Crown within the Provincial District of Taranaki, and it also showed security by way of a rate upon the district; that at the time the loan was raised the mode of selling waste lands was for cash or on deferred payment, and in the latter case the payment was 50 per cent. in advance of the cash price; that the rates of sale on deferred payment have since been reduced to the same figure as a cash purchase, and buyers allowed, after a single payment, to capitalise unpaid instalments for a series of years, and pay only 5 per cent. interest on such capitalisation during such period; that the system of letting lands on perpetual lease, which until 1887 had been limited in area to one-third of rural lands, was in that year extended to all the waste lands; that the effect of these alterations is to practically take away for present purposes the security upon which the lenders relied, and the result is that the Harbour Board were unable to meet the half-year's interest due in May, 1890, and will apparently be unable to do so in the future. Petitioners pray for redress, with a view to the holders of the debentures of the said loan being placed in as favourable a position as if the mode of selling waste lands had remained as it was in 1879.

I am directed to report that, having carefully considered all the evidence submitted to it, including the ordinance of the Provincial Council of Taranaki passed in 1875, under authority of an Act of the General Assembly of New Zealand entitled "The New Plymouth Harbour Board Endowment Act, 1874," and also the advertisement appearing in the London *Times* newspaper of the 6th September, 1879, which, after reciting the said ordinance, proceeds to state that "The Government, recognising the necessity and importance of this work from a national point of view, has endowed the New Plymouth Harbour Board with one-fourth of the gross revenues arising from the sale, occupation, or other disposal of the waste lands of the Crown within the Province of Taranaki," and seeing that one-fourth part of such gross revenues continues to be paid to the said Harbour Board, and the debenture-holders have been left in undisturbed possession of their original security, the Committee is of opinion that petitioners have no claim against the colony.

10th September, 1890.