

No. 38.—Petition of DANIEL EGAN, of Wellington.

PETITIONER prays for compensation on account of injuries said to have been received in the service of the colony.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the petitioner has no claim against the colony.

28th July, 1896.

No. 202.—Petition of JOHN BAILEY and 4 Others, of Kaiapoi.

PETITIONERS pray that the proposed legislation as affecting working-men's clubs may not be given effect to.

I am directed to report that, as there is a Bill now before the House dealing with the subject-matter of this petition, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

11th August, 1896.

Nos. 158 and 159.—Petitions of F. R. FLATMAN and 11 Others, and Mrs. D. WILSON and 34 Others, of Woodbury.

PETITIONERS pray that legislation may be passed to suppress gambling.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this is a matter of public policy; and, further, there is a Bill now before the House dealing with the matter: therefore it has no recommendation to make.

11th August, 1896.

Nos. 164, 175, 183, 192, 193, and 201 (all similar).—Petitions of L. WIGGINS and 99 Others, W. J. MULCOCK and 89 Others, JOS. WHITE and 47 Others, JNO. KIRK and 31 Others, BEN. JOHNSON and 89 Others, and ALEX. GREIG and 350 Others (of Sumner).

PETITIONERS pray that a Scripture-lesson book may be used in the primary schools of New Zealand.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration; but, as the matter is one of public policy, it has no recommendation to make.

11th August, 1896.

No. 103.—Petition of C. C. KETTLE, District Judge, of Wanganui.

PETITIONER prays that the existing law may be amended in the direction of—(a.) Raising the tenure of office of the District Court Judges from one "during the pleasure of the Governor" to a tenure "during ability and good behaviour." (b.) Placing the salaries of the District Court Judges on the permanent Civil List; and that the said salaries may be made adequate and commensurate with the responsible and onerous duties which the District Court Judges are called upon to perform.

I am directed to report that in 1894 the Committee considered a similar petition from District Judge Kettle, upon which it reported "That, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration." Having again heard Judge Kettle's statement of his case, and examined him thereupon, the Committee is strongly of the opinion that the Government should at an early opportunity take the whole matter into its careful and favourable consideration.

In support of this recommendation the Committee would draw the attention of the Government—Firstly, to the following quotation from a speech by the late Hon. J. Ballance (*vide Hansard*, Vol. LXIX, pages 909–10, 1890): "If there was one constitutional principle better established than any other it was that Judges should be appointed not 'during pleasure,' but during 'good behaviour'; and that their salaries should be fixed, and not be subject to the will of the Government or the House." Secondly, to the attached exhibit, headed "Independence of the Bench of Justice." (*Vide*, also, Appendix I.—1A.)

12th August, 1896.

Nos. 252, 243, 256, 244, 255, 306, 197, 216, 309, 227, 228, 229, and 196 (all similar).—Petitions of MARY OTWAY and 75 Others, the Vicarage, Lincoln; ADAM BARR and 99 Others; J. MCKERROW and 112 Others; W. S. CURRIE and 109 Others; J. O. BECKET and 249 Others; Rev. P. S. HAY and 137 Others; Rev. E. C. BUDD and 20 Others; S. HAMILTON and 445 Others; Mrs. A. W. WHITE and 135 Others; WM. DAVIDSON and 170 Others; WM. TAYLOR and 6 Others (No. 1); WM. TAYLOR and 6 Others (No. 2); Rev. R. COFFEY and 1,178 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that a Scripture-lesson book may be used in the primary schools of New Zealand.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration; but, as the matter is one of public policy, it has no recommendation to make.

12th August, 1896.

No. 133.—Petition of CHARLOTTE KNIGHT and Others, of New Brighton, Christchurch.

PETITIONERS pray for redress on account of certain alleged grievances received from the New Brighton Tramway Company.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

12th August, 1896.