

Nos. 246, 345, and 461.—Petitions from the LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF GOLD-MINING, West Coast, South Island (Westport Branch, Charleston Branch, and Hokitika Branch).

PETITIONERS pray that the rents payable on mining leases may be reduced from 10s. per acre to 2s. 6d. per acre.

The Committee, in view of the fact that the Mining Act Amendment Bill now before Parliament deals with the question of the rents payable on mining leases, have no recommendation to make.

14th August, 1896.

MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to whom was referred the above-mentioned Bill, have the honour to report that, having duly considered the same, they recommend that the Bill be allowed to proceed, subject to the amendments shown on a copy of the Bill attached. (*Vide* also Appendix I.—4A.)

18th September, 1896.

No. 272.—Petition of W. DAWSON and Others.

PETITIONERS pray for the recognition of their right to seek and mine for gold on lands alienated from the Crown, and in the beds of creeks and rivers.

The Committee, in view of the fact that the Mining Act Amendment Bill now before Parliament deals with the question involved in the prayer of the petition, have no recommendation to make.

22nd September, 1896.

Nos. 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 460, 489, 490, and 491.—Petitions of W. PALTRIDGE and Others, T. WOOD and Others, A. BRUCE and Others, T. J. MOYLE and Others, C. H. WHITEHEAD and Others, P. SULLIVAN and Others, J. WARREN and Others, C. J. WOOD and Others, J. H. RAE and Others, J. LANG and Others, F. SKELTON and Others, A. W. SAWYER and Others, A. CAMPBELL and Others, J. WINDSOR and Others, HUGH MACKIE and Others, J. CALLAGHAN and Others, G. COMER and Others, J. STUBLEY and Others, S. CHRISTIE and Others, J. SMITH and Others, and W. J. HILL and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that the Mining Act Amendment Bill, giving the Government power to resume land for mining purposes, may be passed into law during the current session; also, that the sections of the principal Act which make it penal for any one to act as a mine-manager without a certificate may be repealed.

The Committee, in view of the fact that the questions involved in the prayer of petitioners are dealt with in the Mining Act Amendment Bill now before Parliament, have no recommendation to make.

22nd September, 1896.

No. 274.—Petition of PHILIP PAYN, of Preservation Inlet, Miner.

PETITIONER prays that a reward may be granted to him as the first discoverer of a payable gold-field at Preservation Inlet.

The Committee, having considered the evidence tendered as to the first discoverer of gold at Preservation Inlet, are of opinion that it is of a very conflicting nature; they therefore have the honour to recommend that the Warden be requested to investigate and report on all claims, and that the evidence and information before the Committee be forwarded to the Warden.

25th September, 1896.

No. 504.—Petition of WILLIAM ROGERS and 65 Others.

PETITIONERS pray that such an alteration may be made in the law as will render available for mining purposes private lands believed to contain rich deposits of gold and silver in their districts.

The Goldfields and Mines Committee, in view of the fact that the Mining Act Amendment Bill, which proposes to afford the relief the petitioners desire, is now under the consideration of the House, have the honour to report that they have no recommendation to make.

25th September, 1896.

MINING COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Committee, to whom was referred the above-mentioned Bill, have the honour to report that, having carefully considered the provisions of the same, they recommend that the Bill be allowed to proceed.

29th September, 1896.

No. 494.—Petition of GEORGE FREDERICK SMITH, of Christchurch.

PETITIONER prays that a reward may be granted to him as the discoverer of a payable goldfield on the Ninety-mile Beach, between the outlet of Lake Ellesmere at Taumuka and the River Rakaia.

The Goldfields and Mines Committee have the honour to report that, having carefully considered the claim of George Frederick Smith, they have no recommendation to make.

2nd October, 1896.