

No. 191.—Petition of JOHN MCGREGOR, Wanganui.

PETITIONER prays for a rehearing before the Native Appellate Court as to his title to property at Kaiwaka, Wanganui.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Native Affairs Committee for consideration.

18th August, 1898.

No. 170.—Petition of A. McKEOWN, Pihama, Opunake.

PETITIONER prays for return of costs incurred by him in an action against the Public Trustee to compel the latter to contribute towards the repairing of a boundary-fence between petitioner and certain Natives.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that an amendment of the law is required giving larger discretionary powers to the Public Trustee to deal with fencing between European and Native occupiers; and that there seems to be no legal responsibility on the part of the Government for law expenses incurred by the petitioner.

19th August, 1898.

No. 86.—Petition of F. MCGOVERN, Taita, Hutt.

PETITIONER prays that a Crown grant be issued to him for Sections 19 and 20, Block XII., in the Town of Port Molyneux, in accordance with an arrangement with the Government when portion of his land was taken for a road.

I am directed to report that, inasmuch as the Crown has had beneficial possession of the road for which the land was granted in exchange for the last thirty-one years, the Committee recommend that Crown grants be issued for the sections in question.

23rd August, 1898.

No. 85.—Petition of G. V. KEMSLEY and Others, Reikiorangi, Wellington.

PETITIONERS state they are members of a fruit-growing association which took up land at Reikiorangi, in the Wellington Province. They pray for a reduction of their rents.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the values originally placed on the sections are excessive and should be reduced. They suggest that some means of relief should be made in an amending Land Act.

23rd August, 1898.

No. 214, 1897.—Petition of W. T. ERSKINE and Others, Havelock, Marlborough.

PETITIONERS pray that Government will purchase the Rai Valley Tramway, and open up the Ronga and Opouri Valleys for sawmilling and settlement purposes.

I am directed to report that, having heard the evidence of a number of witnesses in support of the petition, the Committee are unable to recommend the Government to purchase the tramway from Messrs. Brownlee and Company.

A copy of the evidence is attached. (*Vide* Appendix I.—5B.)

1st September, 1898.

Nos. 5 and 135.—Petitions of C. Y. FELL and Others, Nelson, and W. POLLARD and Others, Awatere.

PETITIONERS pray that the valleys of the Rai, Ronga, and Opouri may be conserved as a national park, and the timber therein preserved for all time.

No. 19.—Petition of E. PURSER and Others, Blenheim.

A counter-petition to the foregoing, wherein petitioners pray that the lands in question may be opened for sawmilling and settlement purposes.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the Government should carefully consider the best means of conserving the valuable forest lands in the valleys of the Rai, Ronga, and Opouri.

A copy of the evidence is attached. (*Vide* Appendix I.—5B.)

1st September, 1898.

No. 144.—Petition of CHARLES KOCH and 44 Others, Greenstone, Wakatipu.

PETITIONERS pray that the new regulations for the cutting of timber in New Zealand forests be repealed, and the old law reverted to.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the regulations should be revived so as to give the Land Board discretionary power to fix the license-fee for cutting timber, or to vary the fees according to the accessibility or value of the timber.

13th September, 1898.

No. 223.—Petition of RUSSELL BATES, Kai-Iwi, Auckland.

PETITIONER states that his leasehold at Kai-Iwi is held at too high a rent; and that he has no means of access to his land from the Kaihu Valley. He prays for consideration and redress.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make upon this petition.

13th September, 1898.