

1898.  
NEW ZEALAND.

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

(REPORT ON THE ACTION OF THE AUDIT OFFICE WITH REFERENCE TO THE MINES DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, AND THE POST OFFICE ACCOUNT, TOGETHER WITH THE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE).

*Report brought up on the 4th November, 1898, and ordered to be printed.*

### REPORT.

#### THE AUDIT OFFICE AND THE MINES DEPARTMENT.

THE Public Accounts Committee has the honour to report that it has taken evidence on the subject of the collection of arrears of rent on mining leases, and the difference between the Audit Office and the Mines Department regarding the action taken by Warden Stratford, and submits the same to the House for the information of members.

The Committee finds that the Minister has power to remit surcharges, and is of opinion that such remissions, when made, should be reported to the House.

The Committee has further inquired into a surcharge made by the Controller and Auditor-General on the Receiver of Gold Revenue at Paeroa. It finds that the Controller and Auditor-General was acting strictly in accordance with law in so making such surcharge, but recommends that the law should be amended as soon as possible, so as to prevent such difficulties arising with respect to the collection of overlapping rents in the future, and considers that if the Minister decides to disallow such surcharge he will be justified in so doing.

#### THE AUDIT OFFICE AND GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

The Committee recommends that the Government should make any alteration in the law or in the Appropriation Act that may be necessary to provide for payments which the Controller and Auditor-General has seen fit to object to.

#### THE AUDIT OFFICE AND THE POST OFFICE ACCOUNT.

The Committee has also taken evidence on the note made by the Controller and Auditor-General on the Post Office Account, and, the time at its disposal not permitting that consideration which the importance of the subject demands, it places the evidence at the disposal of the House.

4th November, 1898.

WILLIAM WILCOX TANNER, Chairman.

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

TUESDAY, 30TH AUGUST, 1898.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

*Present:* Hon. W. J. M. Larnach (Chairman), Mr. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. Guinness, Mr. McNab, Mr. Montgomery, Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, Mr. Tanner, Hon. J. G. Ward.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

In accordance with notice given, Mr. Montgomery then moved, That the Auditor-General be requested to attend and give evidence on matters relating to the control and audit of the Public Accounts.