

WEDNESDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 1900.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

*Present*: Mr. W. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. Guinness, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Palmer, Captain Russell, the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, and the Hon. Mr. Ward.

In the absence of the Chairman, *Resolved*, on the motion of the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, That Mr. Graham do now take the chair.

Mr. Graham then took the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The proposed report on the petitions of the New Zealand Midland Railway Company (Limited) was considered by the Committee.

Mr. Guinness moved, That the words "It" (line 8) down to "investigations" (line 11) be struck out, with a view to inserting the following: "The Committee recommends that power be granted this Committee to continue its investigations so as to report to Parliament next session."

And the question being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

*Ayes*, 3.—Mr. Graham, Mr. Guinness, Mr. Morrison.

*Noes*, 5.—Mr. W. Fraser, Mr. Palmer, Captain Russell, Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, Hon. Mr. Ward.

So it passed in the negative. Words retained.

Mr. Guinness moved, That before the word "evidence" (line 9) the word "such" be inserted, and that after the word "evidence" (line 9) the words "during the recess" be inserted.

And the question being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

*Ayes*, 4.—Mr. W. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. Guinness, Captain Russell.

*Noes*, 4.—Mr. Morrison, Mr. Palmer, Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, Hon. Mr. Ward.

The Chairman recording his casting-vote with the "Ayes."

So it passed in the affirmative. Words inserted.

On the motion of the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, *Resolved*, That after the word "Commission" (line 10) the words "or otherwise" be inserted.

On the motion of the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, *Resolved*, That all the words from the word "or" (line 10) down to the word "investigations" (line 11) be struck out.

*Resolved*, That the word "this" (line 12) be struck out, and the word "the" substituted; and that after the word "purpose" (line 12) the words "of dealing with these petitions" be inserted.

*Resolved*, That after the word "with" (line 13) the words "by the Committee" be inserted.

Mr. Guinness moved to insert the words "at the taking of such evidence the Government or petitioners may be represented" after the word "evidence" (line 9).

And the question being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follows:—

*Ayes*, 2.—Mr. Guinness, Captain Russell.

*Noes*, 6.—Mr. W. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Palmer, Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, Hon. Mr. Ward.

So it passed in the negative.

*Resolved*, That the words "If the suggestion of the Committee" (line 14) be struck out.

On the motion of the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, *Resolved*, That the word "the" be inserted before the word "evidence" (line 14); that the word "be" (line 14) be struck out, and the word "so" substituted; that after the word "taken" (line 14) the words "during the recess" be inserted; that the word "a" (line 14) be struck out; and that after the word "Commission" (line 15) the words "or otherwise" be inserted; that from the word "during" (line 15) down to the word "taken" (line 16) be struck out; that after the word "members" (line 16) the words "of the Public Accounts Committee" be inserted.

The Clerk was ordered to send in the report, as amended, to the House.