

I am directed to report that this Committee, having gone carefully into the petitioner's case, is of opinion that the document referred to in the petition is not genuine, but from the evidence submitted has no reason to believe that the petitioner is in any way responsible for the same. Regarding the petitioner's claim for further compensation, your Committee has no recommendation to make.

1st September, 1903.

PETITIONS RECONSIDERED.

THE reports on the petitions of J. A. Paton, and others, and five similar petitions, and on the petition of N. H. Bell, and others, for and against the use of coupons in connection with the sale of packets and packages of tea and other goods, having been referred back by the House for reconsideration,—

I am directed to report that the Committee, having reconsidered the subject-matter of the petitions referred to, adheres to its previous finding, reported to the House on the 20th August last—viz., "That the Committee, having heard evidence for and against the use of coupons, has no recommendation to make."

8th September, 1903.

No. 123.—Petition of THOMAS SCOTT and Others, of Dunedin.

PETITIONERS pray that assistance may be granted the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association, by subsidy or by annual grant.

I am directed to report that the Committee, having heard the evidence regarding the kindergarten work being done in Dunedin, is of opinion that it is of great value to the State, and would recommend to the favourable consideration of the Government the question of granting a subsidy to work of this kind throughout the colony; and that the evidence of James Allen, Esq., M.H.R., and H. D. Bedford, Esq., M.H.R., together with a letter from Rev. Mr. Waddell, be printed and added to this report. (*Vide* Appendix I.—2A.)

15th September, 1903.

Nos. 276, 277, and 278.—Petition of ADAM JOHN McCLUSKY, of Auckland.

PETITIONER prays—First, that an inquiry may be held into his case, and for compensation, &c.; second, that he may be granted compensation for loss of office as constable, &c.; third, that he may be granted compensation for loss of office as prison warder, &c.

I am directed to report that, having heard the evidence of the petitioner, and carefully considered the departmental papers, together with the evidence of the Inspector of Prisons, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

15th September, 1903.

Nos. 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, and 465.—Petitions of THOMAS ANDREW and 77 Others, ALBERT BIRCH and 97 Others, G. A. SMITH and 53 Others, FRANK HISCOCK and 48 Others, OLIVIA HOPKINS and 34 Others, D. McDONALD and 72 Others, W. McKAY and 65 Others, R. C. A. MACPHAIL and 13 Others, and HUGH ROSS and 89 Others, of Otago.

PETITIONERS pray for the extension of the railway from Lawrence to Roxburgh.

I am directed to report that, as this railway seems to be in a position of equal importance with many others advocated in the other provinces of the colony, the Committee recommends the petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

15th September, 1903.

No. 438.—Petition of J. H. POWELL and Others, of Charleston.

PETITIONERS pray that inquiry be made into the mining-rate of that district, and that relief be granted them.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of this Committee, this petition should be referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee.

15th September, 1903.

No. 307.—Petition of CHARLES MOELLER, of Auckland.

PETITIONER prays that he may be granted a compensation on account of his long service in the Marine Department.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommends the petition be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

22nd September, 1903.

No. 221.—Petition of WILLIAM AIREY RICHARDSON, of Tarradale.

PETITIONER prays that he may be granted an annuity for military services rendered to the colony.

I am directed to report that the Committee strongly recommends the petition be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

22nd September, 1903.