

1904.
NEW ZEALAND.

LANDS COMMITTEE :

(REPORT OF) ON THE PETITION OF JOHN WALSH (NO. 207), TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(MR. HOGG, CHAIRMAN.)

Report brought up on 2nd November, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

THURSDAY, THE 30TH DAY OF JUNE, 1904.

Ordered, "That Standing Order No. 218 be suspended, and that a Committee, consisting of eighteen members, be appointed to consider all Bills and petitions that may be introduced into this House affecting the lands of the Crown, and to report generally upon the principles and provisions which they contain; the Committee to have power to call for persons, papers, and records; five to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Bennet, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Ell, Mr. Flatman, Mr. Graham, Mr. Hall, Mr. Harding, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Lang, Mr. Laurenson, Mr. Lawry, Mr. R. McKenzie, Mr. J. W. Thomson, Mr. Vile, Mr. Witty, Mr. Wood, and the Mover."—(Hon. Mr. DUNCAN.)

PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled:

In the matter of "The Rotokare Domain Act, 1903," and of John Walsh, of Eltham, farmer, lessee of part of the said domain.

YOUR petitioner most humbly prays for relief from the wrong inflicted upon him by the passage of the said Act, for the following reasons—namely:—

That on the 29th day of October, 1902, his tender for the lease for twenty-one years of part of the said domain, comprising 112 acres, was accepted by the Rotokare Domain Board.

That he paid two half-years' rent to the said Board, amounting to £11 4s., and signed the lease to himself tendered to him for his signature by the said Board.

That owing to the passage of the said Act he was dispossessed of the lease thereof, and it was necessary for him to journey to Wellington twice during the time Parliament was sitting last year—once under instructions from the Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth.

That he let a contract for £130 to fell the bush upon the land leased and paid two-thirds of that sum to the contractors, and in addition thereto sundry expenses connected with the said lease.

That the said Act only provides for compensation being paid to the extent of double the value of improvements made by the lessee.

That his claim for compensation was tendered to the Hon. the Minister of Lands claiming £560 seven days previous to the passage of the said Act, not the third part of £6,000, as stated by the leader of the House on the 21st July.

That he considers he is unjustly treated in depriving him and his family, of whom there are ten, of what he considered his *bonâ fide* property without any compensation.

That the principal expenses paid by him in connection with the said land, owing to the passage of the said Act, do not come under the heading of "improvements," and therefore its arbitrary provision prevents his being paid a sum equivalent to the loss in moneys paid by him and other losses he has suffered.

Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your honourable House may grant him such relief as an amendment of the said Act.

JOHN WALSH.