

1908.
NEW ZEALAND.

LANDS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE) RELATIVE TO AN EXCHANGE OF LAND AT WOODWARD STREET AND WELLINGTON TERRACE; TOGETHER WITH THE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS, EVIDENCE, AND APPENDIX.

(HON. MR. DUNCAN, CHAIRMAN.)

Report brought up on the 18th September, 1908, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

FRIDAY, THE 3RD DAY OF JULY, 1908.

Ordered, "That Standing Orders Nos. 219 and 339 be suspended, and a Committee be appointed, consisting of fifteen members, to whom shall stand referred, after their first reading, all Bills affecting or in any way relating to the lands of the Crown or educational or other public reserves; the Committee shall have power to make such amendments therein as they think proper, and to report generally when necessary upon the principles and provisions of the Bill; the Committee to have power to call for persons, papers, and records; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Hon. Mr. Duncan, Mr. Ell, Mr. W. Fraser, Mr. Greenslade, Mr. Hall, Mr. Hogan, Mr. Lang, Mr. Lawry, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Macpherson, Hon. Mr. Mills, Mr. Remington, Mr. Symes, Mr. Witty, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. McNAB.)

THURSDAY, THE 30TH DAY OF JULY, 1908.

Ordered, "That Paper No. 135, 'Correspondence, Plans, &c., relative to an Exchange of Land at Woodward Street and Wellington Terrace between the Government, the Wellington City Council, and the Company of T. K. Macdonald (Limited),' be referred to the Lands Committee."—(Mr. FISHER.)

REPORT.

THE Lands Committee, to whom was referred Paper No. 135, "Correspondence, Plans, &c., relative to an Exchange of Land at Woodward Street and Wellington Terrace between the Government, the Wellington City Council, and the Company of T. K. Macdonald (Limited)," have the honour to report that your Committee has taken evidence on and exhaustively inquired into the following statements which have been referred to it for investigation:—

1st. That the Crown had sold either to Mr. T. K. Macdonald or the Wellington City Council a certain area, to wit, 6.55 perches of derelict land situate on Wellington Terrace, near Woodward Street.

2nd. That said sale had been effected without competition and outside the provisions of the statute, whereas it was claimed that said land should have been disposed of by public competition.

3rd. That the price obtained for said 6.55 perches was considerably less than its real value.

4th. That the strip of land conveyed to the City Council by Mr. Macdonald was only 0.47 of a perch, and not 4 perches as stated by Macdonald, Wilson, and Co. in their letter addressed to the Under-Secretary for Crown Lands, dated 2nd May, 1907.

5th. That there was something irregular in the bargain made between the City Council and Mr. Macdonald in regard to the erection of certain concrete walls, to be used by Mr. Macdonald as foundations for the building to be erected by him later on.

Your Committee examined the following witnesses: W. C. Kensington, Under-Secretary for Lands; R. A. Patterson, Chief Accountant, Lands Department; Paul Verschaffelt, Record Clerk, Lands Department; R. Letham, messenger, Lands and Survey Department; F. H. Martin, Government Valuer; E. B. Brown, barrister, Wellington; Hon. T. W. Hislop, Mayor of Wellington; Hon. T. K. Macdonald, M.L.C.; W. H. Morton, City Engineer, Wellington; J. O'Shea, City Solicitor, Wellington; J. R. Palmer, Town Clerk, Wellington; F. T. O'Neill, Chief Clerk, Lands and Survey Department; Hon. R. McNab; F. M. B. Fisher, M.P., Wellington.