

1910.
NEW ZEALAND.

HAMILTON CLAIMS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF); TOGETHER WITH PETITION AND MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

(MR. HOGG, CHAIRMAN.)

Report brought up on 6th October, 1910, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

WEDNESDAY, THE 17TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1910.

Ordered,—"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the petition of G. D. Hamilton, with power to call for persons and papers; the Committee to consist of Mr. Bollard, Mr. Ell, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Poland, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Ross, Mr. Stallworthy, Mr. E. H. Taylor, and the mover."—(MR. HALL.)

PETITION.

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

THE humble petition of George Douglas Hamilton, of Mangatoro and Tiratu, near Dannevirke, sheweth,—

1 That he first occupied certain lands known as the Mangatoro Estate in 1857, being years before there was any European occupation in the neighbourhood, the nearest being fifty miles distant, and continued to occupy the same until the happening of events hereinafter set out.

For about twenty years there were no roads connecting with the outside country, the ' Seventy-mile Bush ' being bush. The occupation was for years undertaken at the risk of capital, labour, and life such as is not understood in these times. The land was acquired from the Maoris on fair terms at a time when those settling the country risked their property and lives. It was exceptionally difficult country to develop, and in its natural state practically valueless, producing £100 per year from stock from over 30,000 acres. It was, by perseverance, knowledge, and capital, reclaimed from bush, scrub, and fern, and made to produce over £13,000 per annum (gross) and over £8,500 net per annum out of which to pay interest.

2 In order to develop the estate your petitioner borrowed from the Bank of New Zealand (after twenty years' occupation) from time to time sums amounting in all, with interest, to over £60,000, which was secured by mortgage of the land and mortgage of the stock on the said estate, the total value of the security being estimated by the bank at £139,000.

3. Prior to the 25th day of March, 1889, the property showed each year during some years an excess of profit after debiting to the property all charges, and including interest on the amount owing to the said bank; but out of such profit sums were spent for permanent improvements, such permanent improvements being undertaken with the consent of the manager of the branch of the bank where your petitioner's account was kept.

4. For some years prior to the said 25th day of March, 1889, very little money was spent on the property for improvements in excess of the amount derived from profit.

5. About the year 1885 your petitioner was offered by another bank sufficient to pay off and carry on the improvements, and he could have made arrangements with others, but he refused the same after consulting the manager of the Bank of New Zealand, who informed him that he need have no fear but what such bank would carry on the account.

6. It was always understood between the bank and your petitioner that as long as the business was showing a profit to the good the moneys could remain owing at current rates; but some time prior to the 25th day of March, 1889, the bank, through its officers, demanded payment of the whole sum owing by your petitioner