

also bounded on the south-east side by the sluicing claim of the Messrs. Hurley Brothers and party, Wilkie and party, and others; said claims have also been in full work the past three or four years. In fact, the entire block is surrounded on all sides by auriferous ground, and now being worked.

2. That said block contains a very rich lead of gold, and will, when capital is brought to bear upon it, turn out to be one of the richest and most important leads of gold yet found in the Province.

3. That said block was formerly surveyed by Mr. Wm. Acton, at a cost, with the runholders, of some seventy (70) pounds; and that Mr. Acton, on two several occasions, did make application for an agricultural lease of the said block; which applications were refused by the Waste Lands Board, Dunedin, Mr. Warden Wood, and Mr. A. J. White, clerk to the Executive Council.

4. That said block was illegally and fraudulently obtained, and has been sold without being resurveyed; no notices were posted either at the Warden's Office or on the ground, nor was the Warden asked to report on the same. The *Otago Witness* contained a report of the meeting of the Waste Lands Board when Mr. McDonald applied, stating that Mr. Allan McDonald had applied for fifty acres of land situate in the Hindon District, an entirely different district, and some 200 miles away from this. We, therefore, surmise that Mr. McDonald's application was similarly worded, the intention being evidently to mislead the public, and debar the miners here from objecting; and had it not been for the transfer of the land to Mr. Horace Bastings and Mr. H. W. Simson, the public here would never have heard a word about it until the Crown grant was issued, and the Government would then have had to give compensation in order to regain possession of the land.

Trusting that you will accede to the prayer of your petitioners, and as in duty bound they will ever pray, &c.,

Signed { GEORGE ARMSTRONG,  
JEREMIAH KENNEDY, and 145 others.

## No. 6.

Mr. R. SHAW to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Switzers, 16th November, 1871.

Mr. Bradshaw sent me, for the information of the Committee of the Switzers Miners' Protection Association, your letter to him of 26th October, No. 539, in reference to the sale of fifty acres of auriferous land to A. McDonald by the Waste Lands Board, Dunedin, and informing us that the Crown grant would be withheld for the present.

This Committee assume you will have been presented long ere this with the petition of the residents of Switzers, praying you to set aside the above grants.

In your letter to Mr. Bradshaw is a copy of a telegram from Mr. J. T. Thomson, Dunedin, to Mr. G. S. Cooper, Wellington, in which the following passage occurs, and to which we take exception:—"No report from Warden was recently obtained, such not being obligatory by regulations, and the same Warden was favourable to sale 1868." We believe this statement is contrary to the fact, as Mr. Warden Wood has on several occasions publicly stated that he was adverse to the sale; in fact, most strongly opposed it.

I will refer to one other paragraph in same telegram: "Plan by Government surveyors shows gold workings outside of section." A part of the grant has been worked for the last six or seven years; there are also water-races on the section.

Had the ground been advertised for sale it would have realized £500 as easily as £50. The grant was issued through false representations. There are residence areas on the section, granted by Mr. Wood, and which will involve the Government in endless litigation.

One claimant has already applied to the Waste Lands Board for compensation; his improvements would be valued at from £100 to £150. Had the application been made in the usual way, through the Warden's Court, it never would have been entertained; but Mr. McDonald knew too much for that: he knew it could not be obtained except in an irregular and clandestine manner, and therefore resorted to the Waste Lands Board.

This Committee note some resolutions carried unanimously in the Legislative Council, and introduced by Mr. Holmes, bearing on the Moa Flat sale; the Committee think sections 3 and 4 of aforesaid resolutions are equally applicable to McDonald's grants; the Committee most respectfully desire to direct your attention to the same.

In conclusion, and apologizing for trespassing so far on your Honor's valuable time, this Committee think they have shown sufficient cause why this grant should be set aside. However, Sir, should you be of the contrary opinion, we would most respectfully solicit the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry to inquire and report on the whole transaction; and should you, Sir, decide on appointing a Committee, we would observe, with all deference, that the Commission should consist of one or more gentlemen far removed, socially or politically, from that local bias which is ever the attendant of small provincial institutions.

I have, &c.,

RALPH SHAW,  
Secretary, S.M.P.A.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

P.S.—The Commission to sit at Switzers, with power to procure all information regarding application, &c., from Waste Lands Board.

R. S.

## No. 7.

Mr. R. SHAW to the CHAIRMAN, Waste Lands Board, Dunedin.

SIR,—

Switzers, 16th November, 1871.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your note of 2nd instant, in reference to the application of the Rev. Mr. Morrison for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres of auriferous ground in Happy Valley, Switzers, and to thank you for the information therein contained.