

was averse to a license under the Licensing Act being granted, a liquor-selling establishment was forced upon them, in the shape of a working-men's club. They complain of the conduct of the said club, and pray for an inquiry into it.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the petition should be referred to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

5th November, 1884.

No. 520, Sess. II.—Petition of WILLIAM SMITH, Auckland.

THE petitioner prays for an investigation into the conduct of Mr. Oliver Mays, Superintendent of Motuihi Quarantine Station, in regard to the manner in which he was compelled to resign his office of Dépôt-master there.

I am directed to report that, from the evidence before the Committee, they consider the petitioner has no claim; but the Committee recommend that, if the petitioner still desires an investigation into his case, an independent inquiry should be made in Auckland.

5th November, 1884.

No. 59, Sess. II.—Petition of MARGARET HIGGINS.

THE petitioner states that her late husband left some land in the Matakohi District; that at the end of last October she received a notice from the Public Trustee that he would sell the land if the highway rates were not paid. She ascertained the rate was only 1s. 7d., and that she was only liable for two years; but a demand was made upon her for £5 1s., which she paid to prevent the land being sold. That about the same time the Highway Board claimed 1s. 7d. for the year's rate, and £4 13s. 4d. for arrears, which she also paid, fearing the land would be sold; that the Public Trustee, on the 28th July last, claimed a further sum of 12s. 6d. She prays the House to make inquiry into her case, and to refund her the £5 1s. she has been compelled to pay twice over.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the local body, before placing the property in question in the hands of the Public Trustee for sale or lease, should have exhausted all available means to find out the owner of the land, and this they do not appear to have done. The Committee would draw attention to the very large proportion which the expenses in this case bear to the rates. The rates for two years amount to only 3s. 2d.; but the amount which Mrs. Higgins had to pay was £5 1s., and the sum of 12s. 6d. is still unpaid. As, however, the law does not seem to have been broken, the Committee do not see their way to make any recommendation for relief. The Committee would point out that Mrs. Higgins is in error in regard to paying the same rates twice over. The rates on which the Public Trustee took action were the county rates, but the rates she paid to the local body were the rates due to the Road Board.

5th November, 1884.

No. 512, Sess. II.—Petition of JOHN LONDON.

THE petitioner claims the sum of £43 7s. expended by him on account of survey of Native land at Lower Waihou, purchased by the Government.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that the petitioner should be paid the amount claimed, £43 7s.

5th November, 1884.

No. 477, Sess. II.; No. 505, Sess. II.; and No. 495, Sess. II.—Petitions of A. DENNISTON and Others, J. MOFFAT and Others, and G. W. COWARD and Others.

THE petitioners pray that no alteration may be made in the present Licensing Act.

I am directed to report that the Committee do not deem it necessary for them to offer any opinion to the House on the subject-matter of these petitions.

5th November, 1884.

No. 412, Sess. II.—Petition of GEORGE M. SNELSON and Others (No. 1), Palmerston North.

THE petitioners, ratepayers of the Manawatu Road Board, pray that some consideration be given to them for the improvements made on the road-lines contiguous to Section 443, situate at Palmerston North, and sold on deferred payment.

I am directed to report that the Committee consider the petitioners have no claim against the colony.

5th November, 1884.

No. 497, Sess. II.—Petition of WILLIAM PIGGOTT and Others, Bombay Settlement.

THE petitioners pray for a compassionate allowance for a widow named Catherine Anne Piggott, aged thirty-two, with six children.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make.

5th November, 1884.

No. 158, Sess. II.; No. 87, Sess. II.; No. 159, Sess. II.; No. 160, Sess. II.; No. 377, Sess. II.; No. 468, Sess. II.—Petitions of WILLIAM COOPER and Others, Auckland; L. MACNEILL and Others, Picton; L. H. RAWSON and Others, Wanganui; R. STOUT and Others, Dunedin; H. A. SYMES and Others, Waverley; and JOHN WEBBER and Others, Christchurch.

THE petitioners, office-bearers of the various freethought associations of New Zealand, pray that the House will refuse to enact any blasphemy laws.

I am directed to report that the Committee have no recommendation to make.

5th November, 1884.