

1888.
NEW ZEALAND.

GOLDFIELDS AND MINES COMMITTEE

(REPORTS OF).

MR. SEDDON, CHAIRMAN.

Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

SPECIAL ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

TUESDAY, THE 5TH DAY OF JUNE, 1888.

Ordered, "That the Goldfields and Mines Committee be authorised to inquire into and report on the working of the schools of mines now established in various parts of the colony; also to report generally on the best means whereby the gold- and silver-mining industry of the colony may be fostered and encouraged."—(MR. SEDDON.)

No. 194.—Petition of GEORGE CLARKSON.

THE petitioner prays for a reward for being the first discoverer of gold at the Thames.

I am directed to report that a thorough investigation was made into the claims on this subject by a special Commission of the Auckland Provincial Council (entitled "the Goldfields Reward Inquiry Commission") in 1870, and also that the Thames Goldfield had already been proclaimed before the alleged discovery was made. The Committee therefore is unable to recommend that any reward be paid to the petitioner.

28th June, 1888.

Nos. 402, 477, and 401, Sess. II., 1887.—Petitions of J. P. OAKES (Nos. 6, 7, and 5).

THE petitioner prays for rewards for various alleged discoveries of gold.

I am directed to report that, the Committee having passed a resolution limiting the period for claiming rewards for discoveries of gold to twelve months from the date of such discoveries, the Committee cannot entertain the petitions.

28th June, 1888.

REPORT ON THE MINING COMPANIES ACT 1886 AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to whom was referred the above Bill, have the honour to report that they have considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed, with the amendments shown in the annexed copy of the Bill.

28th June, 1888.

No. 284.—Petition of TIMOTHY J. O'LEARY and 102 Others.

THE petitioners, miners and others of Charleston, pray that the River Nile, on the West Coast, be at once proclaimed a sludge-channel within the meaning of the Act.

I am directed by the Committee to report that this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

29th June, 1888.

INTERIM REPORT No. 1 ON ORDER OF REFERENCE of the 5th June, relating to the Mining Industry of the Colony.

I AM directed by the Goldfields and Mines Committee to report as follows: That an interim report under the order of reference dated the 5th June, 1888, be made to the House, by the Chairman, as follows: Last session the Committee reported on the 21st December, 1887, "That during the recess the Committee recommends the Government to obtain from America and elsewhere full information as to the best and most effective methods of dealing with refractory ores." The Committee regrets to find, according to information elicited from the Mines Department, that action was not taken on the recommendation contained in the report above referred to until the 3rd May, 1888, on which date the Hon. the Minister of Mines forwarded to the Hon. the Premier a memorandum whereof the following is a copy: "Mines Department, Wellington, 3rd May, 1888.—The

Hon. the Premier.—It would be desirable to ask the Agent-General to obtain information from the principal metallurgical firms at Freiburg, in Germany, and at Swansea, in England (especially from those who have large works for the extraction of refractory ores containing gold and silver), as to the mode of treatment adopted, if the same is not a secret process; also to see if any of those firms would come out to this colony and erect similar metallurgical works here. In the event of the treatment being a secret process, to see upon what terms, if any, a person from this colony could be instructed and taught the process they use; and also to see if there are any books published that contain a description of the process of treating these ores at Freiburg and Swansea, and, if so, to forward copies of the same; and generally to obtain any information bearing on the treatment of refractory ores.—G. F. RICHARDSON." That this delay in giving effect to the recommendation made by the Committee of last session has placed the Committee this session at a disadvantage in dealing with the question referred to it under the order of reference hereinbefore mentioned. That the Committee is of opinion that delay in dealing with this question is inimical to the mining industry, and would urge that the Government should at once, in addition to the information asked to be obtained by the Agent-General, endeavour to obtain information from America, through the Colonial Agent and other sources.

29th June, 1888.

REPORT ON THE MINING ACT 1886 AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to whom was referred the above Bill, have the honour to report that they have considered the same, and recommend that it be allowed to proceed with the amendments set forth in the annexed copy of the Bill.

12th July, 1888.

No. 323.—Petition of JOHN DOWLING and Others.

THE petitioners pray that the Paroa River and the New River may be proclaimed sludge-channels.

I am directed to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Government, and the Committee recommend the Government to give effect to the prayer of the petition as soon as the Mining Act 1886 Amendment Bill is passed.

14th August, 1888.

INTERIM REPORT No. 2 ON ORDER OF REFERENCE of the 5th June, relating to the Mining Industry of the Colony.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to whom was referred the consideration generally of the best means whereby the gold- and silver-mining industry of the colony may be fostered and encouraged, have the honour to report,—

1. That, in the opinion of this Committee, the development of the vast mineral resources of the colony would be greatly furthered by their existence being brought prominently on every occasion before the world, so as to attract the attention of investors in mining enterprise, and lead to the introduction of foreign capital.

2. That your Committee are of opinion that the Victorian Centennial Exhibition now being held, and the Paris Exhibition to be held in May next, both offer splendid opportunities of bringing our mineral products before the public, and that such opportunities should certainly not be neglected.

3. That your Committee, after making the fullest inquiry, are of opinion that it is desirable that the present mineral exhibits from the colony at Melbourne should be augmented by exhibits of auriferous and argentiferous ores, auriferous cements and sands, copper ore, and nickeliferous sand, and other mineral products, in bulk.

4. That your Committee are also of opinion that maps showing the several mining districts and chief localities where mining is now being carried on might with advantage be exhibited; also that the area of proved auriferous ground, the number of claims, the capital invested, and dividends paid should be published in pamphlet-form and distributed gratis.

5. That it would be advisable, when the mineral exhibits of the colony are completed, to have a separate catalogue thereof compiled, and distributed gratis.

6. That, in the opinion of your Committee, it is to be regretted that the Mines Department left the collection of the mineral exhibits entirely to the Commissioners, and declined to take any active part in it, beyond supplying to the Commissioners the specimens in the possession of the department, especially as the correspondence shows that the Commissioners desired that the mining industry should be dealt with by the department. It appears, however, that the Commissioners did not do the subject justice after being requested by the department to undertake the sole management of the mineral exhibits; for the specimens in the possession of the department were not obtained by the Commissioners and forwarded, nor was the chief officer of the department asked for information or for assistance. It would also have been much better had the Department of Mines taken steps to ascertain whether or not full justice was being done to the mining industry by the Commissioners in the way of supplying exhibits and information. From the evidence before the Committee, and the correspondence received, it is quite clear that the sums offered by the Commissioners to the several local committees were altogether insufficient to defray the expense of procuring exhibits. On the other hand, the Commissioners, though practising the most rigid economy, have exceeded the sum placed at their disposal. Want of sufficient funds may therefore be set down as one cause why the mineral wealth of the colony has not been more fully represented at the Victorian Centennial Exhibition. The Committee, however, are of opinion that, when the Commissioners found themselves unable to obtain a sufficiency of exhibits on account of the inadequacy of the sum allowed for expenses, they ought to have applied to the Government for more money; and, had their application been refused, the Commissioners would have

been relieved of further responsibility in the matter. The Committee are also of opinion that, considering the advantages derivable from the Exhibition, it is to be regretted that the local bodies, mine-owners, and residents in the several mining districts did not take greater interest in the proceedings of the Commissioners, and render them more effectual assistance.

7. That the restriction as to payment of Customs dues on auriferous exports was illiberal and had a most detrimental effect, and it is well, though somewhat late, that the restriction has been removed.

8. The Committee, having communicated, through the Chairman, with local bodies and persons interested in mining in different parts of the colony, and having received from them valuable information and very liberal offers of assistance in procuring exhibits of all kinds required, are of opinion that the several offers made should at once be accepted.

9. Your Committee further recommend that the Government procure from each of the Auckland, Thames, Otago, Nelson, Reefton, and Westland Districts large quantities of auriferous and argentiferous ores, auriferous cement and sand, and other valuable minerals, and arrange for the cost of transit thereof from the mines to the Melbourne Exhibition: the exhibits to be under the control of the contributors as to sale or reimportation.

10. That your Committee further recommend that the New Zealand Handbook, in which the colony's mineral resources and mines are elaborately described, should be completed without delay and circulated at the Exhibition, and that the Handbook of New Zealand Mines compiled by the late Minister of Mines, the Hon. W. J. M. Larnach, together with other handbooks which may be compiled in reference to the mines and mineral resources of particular localities, be also circulated at the Exhibition.

11. That maps showing the areas which are held under lease or license in the several mining districts, and which are now obtainable, be procured and forwarded to the Exhibition, together with photographs, &c., of mines, water-races, hydraulic and dredging apparatus.

12. That your Committee recommend the Government to send to Melbourne, on behalf of the colony, an expert or experts in practical mining, possessing a knowledge of mining machinery and appliances, and the treatment, scientific and practical, of refractory auriferous and argentiferous ores, such expert or experts to note carefully and report on the mining machinery and appliances, and the several improved processes used in extracting the precious metals from the said ores.

13. That your Committee recommend that arrangement be made with exhibitors, where possible, that the mineral exhibits which remain over from the Melbourne Exhibition at the close thereof be forwarded, at the expense of the colony, to the Paris Exhibition.

14. Your Committee, in order to give effect to the opinions in this report expressed, recommend the Government to provide the sum of £500 to defray the cost of procuring and forwarding additional exhibits to the Melbourne Exhibition, and a further sum of £500 to defray the cost of procuring and forwarding mineral exhibits to the Exhibition to be held at Paris next year.

15. That this report be referred to the Government for their favourable consideration. (For evidence, *vide* I.—4A.)

17th August, 1888.

INTERIM REPORT No. 3 ON ORDER OF REFERENCE of the 5th June, relating to the Mining Industry of the Colony.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to whom was referred the consideration generally of the best means whereby the gold- and silver-mining industry of the colony may be fostered and encouraged, have the honour to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the attached copy of a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Goldfields and Mines Committee should be forwarded for the favourable consideration of the Government: "Auckland, 18th August, 1888.—Seymour Thorne George, Commission and Mining Agent, Auckland, to R. Seddon, Esq., M.H.R., Chairman Goldfields Committee.—Dear Sir,—The following letter of mine appeared in this morning's *Herald*: 'The Melbourne Exhibition: a Suggestion.—To the Editor.—Sir,—As it has been determined to send parcels of our ores from the different mining districts to the Melbourne Exhibition, might I suggest, as a good method of drawing attention to our exhibits and mineral wealth, some of our ores being of a complex character, that an assayer be engaged to be constantly employed in making assays in public in the Exhibition of the various parcels of ore on exhibition, and thus be able to explain and practically demonstrate to the visitors the character and value of the different classes.—I am, &c., S. THORNE GEORGE.' If you approve of the suggestion would you kindly bring the subject before your Committee, with a view of getting the Government to adopt it. It seems to me useless to exhibit a class of complex ores, which, to the ordinary visitor, would simply be a heap of stone, without adopting some means of attracting attention. And I think it would be a novelty to the general public to see the small button of bullion produced from stone, and to the investor a means of ascertaining the value of the various ores. The Government have a number of competent assayers in their employment; the cost, therefore, of sending one over with the necessary apparatus would be small, if my suggestion is adopted. I think the assayer should be constantly making assays from the various heaps as he might be requested by visitors, and, of course, free.—Yours faithfully, S. THORNE GEORGE."

24th August, 1888.

INTERIM REPORT No. 4 ON ORDER OF REFERENCE of the 5th June, relating to the Mining Industry of the Colony.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to whom was referred the consideration generally of the best means whereby the gold- and silver-mining industry of the colony may be fostered and encouraged, have the honour to report that, the Government having delayed procuring the necessary information of the processes in vogue in Europe and America for dealing with refractory ores, smelting, &c.,

and from the fact that the Committee have been unable to obtain the evidence of Professors Black and Ulrich on the subject, the Committee are unable to make any specific recommendations other than those contained in previous Interim Reports Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The Committee recommend that provision should be made for temporarily carrying on the existing schools of mines on the basis laid down by Professor Black in his report to the Government on the subject. The Committee further recommend that a similar order of reference, as of the 5th June, 1888, be renewed next session; and that during the recess the Government procure the fullest information obtainable in reference to the subject-matter of the said order of reference, and of the treatment of refractory ores. The Committee further recommend that the report be referred to the Government for their favourable consideration.

24th August, 1888.

No. 407.—Petition of JOHN WALSH and Others, Miners of Paroa District, in the Grey County. THE petitioners pray that the special mining-claim of 100 acres in the New River, at Paroa, recommended by the Warden at Greymouth, in favour of John Byrne and Samuel Brown, may be disallowed.

I am directed to report that, the claims having been granted, no relief can be given to the petitioners.

24th August, 1888.

No. 67, Sess. II., 1887.—Petition of ALEXANDER McDONALD, of Orwell Creek, in the County of Grey.

THE petitioner states that through some mistake on the part of the Government officers his hotel, situated at Orwell Creek, was undermined and subsequently destroyed, and that he has suffered great monetary loss in consequence thereof. He prays for compensation.

I am directed to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the favourable consideration of the Government, and that the petitioner's claim be fairly and finally dealt with.

24th August, 1888.

[*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, nil; printing (1,275 copies), £2 5s.]

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