

1889.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# REPORTS OF PUBLIC PETITIONS M TO Z COMMITTEE.

(MR. T. THOMPSON, CHAIRMAN.)

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

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## NEW ZEALAND.

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

## ORDER OF REFERENCE.

*Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.*

TUESDAY, 25TH JUNE, 1889.

*Ordered*, "That a Public Petitions M to Z Committee, consisting of ten members, be appointed, to consider all petitions that may be referred to it by the Petitions Classification Committee, to classify and prepare abstracts of such petitions, in such form and manner as shall appear to it best suited to convey to this House all requisite information regarding their contents, and to report the same from time to time to this House, and to have power to report its opinions and observations thereupon to this House; also to have power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum; the Committee to consist of Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Grimmond, Mr. Humphreys, Mr. Joyce, Mr. T. Thompson, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Ward, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. FERGUS.)

Nos. 12 and 33.—Petition of the NORTH AUCKLAND HOSPITAL and CHARITABLE AID BOARD.

THE petitioners pray for certain amendments in the Hospital and Charitable Aid Acts.

I am directed to report that, as there is a Bill before the House dealing with the subject-matter of these petitions, in the opinion of the Committee they should be referred to Government.

4th July, 1889.

No. 72.—Petition of EMMA E. PACKE and Others.

THE petitioners (in the name and on behalf of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of New Zealand) pray that the Contagious Diseases Act may be repealed.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the petition should be referred to the Government, as it deals with a matter of public policy.

10th July, 1889.

Nos. 4 and 5.—Petition of EDWARD MURRELL and Others and R. McDougall and Others.

THE petitioners, residents in the electoral district of Wakatipu, pray that a Commission may be appointed to inquire into the proceedings of an inquest on a fire at Tarras, Otago.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

10th July, 1889.

No. 98.—Petition of the UNITED FIRE BRIGADES' ASSOCIATION.

THE petitioners state that they frequently render valuable services to the Government in protecting public buildings from fire, &c. They apply for assistance.

I am directed to report that, as this question has already been dealt with by the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

10th July, 1889.

No. 51.—Petition of CHARLES O'MALLEY, of Christchurch.

THE petitioner prays for an inquiry into his case, and that he may be granted compensation for loss of office.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the petitioner has no claim against the colony.

10th July, 1889.

No. 126.—Petition of JAMES PEAT and Others, of Patea.

THE petitioners support a Bill constituting the Waverley County.

I am directed to report that, as this Bill is now before the Local Bills Committee, this petition should be referred to that Committee.

10th July, 1889.

1—I. 2.

## No. 82.—Petition of EDWARD REVELL.

THE petitioner states that he was a duly-appointed Deputy Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages at Kaiapoi; that in 1888, owing to illness on the part of the Registrar, petitioner performed all the duties of the office for a period of nine weeks; that in payment for such service he has only received the amount of the fees—namely, £6. He prays for further compensation for loss of time.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

17th July, 1889.

## No. 7.—Petition of JOHN FULTON and Others, the Members of the Otago Harbour Board.

THE petitioners allege that they have a grievance in connection with the reduction in the area of their endowments, and pray for such relief as may be considered equitable.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of this Committee, the petition should be referred to the Public Petitions A to L Committee. (*Vide* I.—1.)

17th July, 1889.

## No. 21.—Petition of SAMUEL MILLS.

THE petitioner prays for a further inquiry into the conduct of the bailiff of the Resident Magistrate's Court, Auckland.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government.

18th July, 1889.

## No. 1.—Petition of W. H. WEST and Others, of Wellington.

THE petitioners pray that a Bill may be introduced into Parliament to establish a University College in Wellington; that suitable endowments be granted to the said college; and that a site and suitable buildings be set apart in Wellington for the purposes of the said college.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

18th July, 1889.

## No. 114.—Petition of the WELLINGTON and MANAWATU RAILWAY COMPANY.

THE company prays that it may be relieved by law from the payment of property-tax upon that part of its capital which has been expended in the construction of its railway-line, and the necessary buildings connected therewith, and upon the value of the rolling-stock used thereon; or that it may be empowered to deduct the property-tax paid by it in respect of the amount of its liability to its debenture-holders from any moneys from time to time payable to them by your petitioning company; that the law may be altered so as to prevent your petitioning company's railway-line from being assessed to local rating as part of a complete work, or otherwise with relations to the purpose to which it is put.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the petitioning company is a contracting party with the Crown; and for a work which in its nature is primarily beneficial to the public; that the capital of the shareholders should be assessed at the market value of the shares; that, as to the capital borrowed on debentures, the company should be restored to its position as at the date of the contract, so that it may be empowered to deduct property-tax paid by it in respect of the amount of its liability to its debenture-holders from any moneys from time to time payable to them by the petitioning company; that, as to the subject of local rating, the Committee is of opinion that this question should receive the consideration of the Government.

19th July, 1889.

## No. 22.—Petition of J. C. SOALL, of Auckland.

THE petitioner prays for a further inquiry into his system of musketry instruction, &c., and that relief may be granted to him.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

19th July, 1889.

## No. 216.—Petition of GEORGE F. VOZEY, of Auckland.

THE petitioner prays that the jurisdiction of Resident Magistrates may be extended.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

23rd July, 1889.

## No. 223.—Petition of W. BEDELL STANFORD and Others, of Christchurch (No. 1).

*Re* the Industrial Schools Act.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the Industrial Schools Act should be so amended as to allow girls to be detained in the schools up to the age of seventeen years.

23rd July, 1889.

## No. 224.—Petition of W. BEDELL STANFORD and Others, of Christchurch (No. 2).

THE petitioners allege that the number of indecent assaults on females of tender age is alarmingly on the increase. They pray that the age of protection may be raised from thirteen to sixteen years.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government, with a recommendation that the age of consent should be raised.

23rd July, 1889.

No. 136.—Petition of T. WELLS and Others, of Waikato.

THE petitioners pray for the remission of a fine inflicted on certain persons for a breach of the Tobacco Act.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the excess of fine and costs, or expenses incurred in securing conviction, should be remitted, and that the Government be recommended to amend the law so that sellers of locally-grown un-Customed tobacco be made equally liable to fine with the purchasers of same.

23rd July, 1889.

No. 189.—Petition of JAMES McKEE, Moderator, Presbytery of Timaru.

THE petitioner prays for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act.

I am directed to report that, as a Bill dealing with the subject-matter of this petition is now before the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

23rd July, 1889.

No. 134.—Petition of JOHN PENALIGON, of Auckland.

THE petitioner prays that a pension may be granted to him on account of his twenty-four years' service in the Government Armoury and Stores Department.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no further claim against the colony.

7th August, 1889.

No. 197.—Petition of R. C. SHEARMAN, of Wellington.

THE petitioner prays for further consideration on account of his long service in the Police Force of the colony.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the Government has dealt with petitioner in a liberal manner, and that he has no further claim against the colony.

7th August, 1889.

No. 192.—Petition of ARCHIBALD RUSSELL, of Temuka.

THE petitioner states that he has been in the railway service of the colony over twenty years; that in consequence of retrenchment by the Railway Commissioners he has been disrated and his section cut out. Petitioner alleges that this necessitated his leaving the service. He prays for compensation at the rate of one month's pay for each year of service.

I am directed to report that, the petitioner having declined to accept the employment offered to him by the department, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

7th August, 1889.

No. 91.—Petition of DANIEL STEWART and Others, of Helensville.

THE petitioners allege that the wharf which the Government propose to erect at Kaukapakapa is unnecessary. They pray that public money may not be spent on this work.

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

8th August, 1889.

No. 199.—Petition of HENRY NUNWEEK and Others, of Canterbury.

THE petitioners pray that effective measures may be taken by the Legislature to check the further spread of the codlin moth among the orchards of the colony.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government.

8th August, 1889.

No. 36.—Petition of GEORGE WILLIAM BERTRAND TITMUS, of Temuka (No. 1).

THE petitioner alleges that in the year 1880, in consequence of being drawn into a squabble in a publichouse, he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment; that he was kept in gaol for four months' beyond his sentence; that he caused a public inquiry to be made into the matter, and his charges were substantiated, but he has never been paid the expenses which he alleges was allowed him for travelling three hundred miles to attend the inquiry; that in January, 1886, he was imprisoned for eighteen months for having no lawful visible means of support; that while serving this sentence he was assaulted and cruelly ill-treated in the gaol; that he was innocent of the charge for which he was condemned, and possessed property both in Tasmania and New Zealand. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner is entitled to mileage from Queenstown to Dunedin *re* Dunedin Gaol Inquiry, say, £15; but with respect to the other allegations contained in the petition, as they are not supported by evidence, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

8th August, 1889.

## No. 106.—Petition of STEPHEN SPALDING.

THE petitioner states that in October, 1886, he was tried for arson, pronounced insane, and committed to the Whau Lunatic Asylum during the pleasure of the Colonial Secretary. The petitioner, who alleges that he is now perfectly sane, also states that he witnessed and suffered illtreatment and neglect during his incarceration in said asylum. He prays for an inquiry into the affairs of the asylum, &c.

I am directed to report that, as it appears that petitioner has been at liberty for a period of eight months previous to his reincarceration in the Avondale Asylum without any symptoms of insanity manifesting themselves, and there being a difference of opinion as to his present mental condition, the Committee indorse the report of the Public Petitions Committee of last session on this case—namely, that an examination of petitioner be made by competent medical practitioners independent of the asylum authorities; and, if the result of such examination should go to prove that petitioner is sane, this Committee would recommend that he be liberated.

8th August, 1889.

## No. 28.—Petition of the NIGHTCAPS COAL COMPANY, Southland.

THE petitioners pray that the Government will either purchase or lease their railway.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

14th August, 1889.

## No. 118.—Petition of SARAH CAROLINE MCGAVOCK, of Avenal, Southland.

THE petitioner states that her late husband served the Government for twenty-three years on the Bluff and Kingston line of railway, and alleges that his death in October, 1888, was owing to exposure when discharging his duties. The petitioner prays for compensation at the rate of one month's pay for each year of her husband's service.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

14th August, 1889.

## No. 379.—Petition of GEORGE ROSS and Another, of Palmerston South.

THE petitioners allege partiality on the part of the Rabbit Inspector for Palmerston District, and pray for an inquiry into his conduct.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the petition should be referred to the Joint Live Stock and Rabbits Committee. (*Vide* I.—11.)

14th August, 1889.

## No. 300.—Petition of THOMAS HAWKINS SMITH, of Maketu.

THE petitioner prays for compensation on account of losses alleged to have been sustained owing to the action of the Government.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Native Affairs Committee.

14th August, 1889.

## No. 73.—Petition of THOMAS PATTERSON, of Invercargill.

THE petitioner prays for compensation on account of injuries sustained on the Dunedin-Invercargill Railway, at Canna Street crossing.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

14th August, 1889.

## No. 34.—Petition of JOHN ROCHFORD, C.E., of Kihikihi.

THE petitioner alleges that in forcing a line of railway through a country owned and occupied by Natives, and thus opening up the King-country under circumstances of great difficulty and danger, he rendered services to the colony. He prays that these services may be recognised in the same manner as those of Mr. Hursthouse, who also met with rough treatment at the hands of the Maoris, especially as, after a long period of work, he was dispensed with summarily on the plea of retrenchment.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

16th August, 1889.

## No. 274.—Petition of JAMES TAYLOR and Others.

THE petitioners state that James Parmenter, of Woodville, was killed in September, 1886; that he left two motherless children; that he owned property valued at from £1,300 to £1,500, subject to a mortgage of £500; that a rise in the value of this property was an absolute certainty; that he left other effects worth £300; that on his death offers were made by neighbours to adopt the children; that the Public Trustee stepped in, with the result that, in two years and nine months, the children are left destitute, without even a trinket belonging to their parents. The petitioners pray for an inquiry into the management and working of the Public Trust Office generally, and more particularly with regard to this estate.

I am directed to report that, having heard the statement of the Public Trustee (who produced an abstract of receipts and disbursements in connection with the estate in question), the Committee is of opinion that the allegations contained in the petition have no foundation in fact, and therefore have no recommendation to make.

16th August, 1889.

No. 240.—Petition of JOHN MADDEN, of Wellington.

THE petitioner prays for further compensation on account of having lost a leg while in the service of the Railway Department.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

21st August, 1889.

No. 259.—Petition of SAMUEL MORRISON, of Dunedin.

THE petitioner, late a warder in Dunedin Gaol, prays for compensation for loss of office.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

21st August, 1889.

No. 295.—Petition of THOMAS TYNE, of Coromandel.

THE petitioner, late a gaol-warder, prays that an inquiry may be held by some person unconnected with the Prisons Department into the cause of his dismissal from the Mount Eden Gaol.

I am directed to report that the Committee cannot recommend that the prayer of the petitioner should be granted.

21st August, 1889.

No. 198.—Petition of JAMES WILLIAM THOMAS and DAVID BROWN, of Amberley.

THE petitioners state that they tendered for a contract on the Greymouth Railway in April, 1888, and lodged a deposit of £100. As this was not returned when the other tenderers' deposits were, they believed themselves to be the lowest tenderers, and felt certain of obtaining the contract; that their deposit was kept by the Government for four months, and then returned with an intimation that their tender was rejected. They allege they suffered great hardship in having to hold their plant in readiness for a period of four months, during which time they could engage in no other work. They pray for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

27th August, 1889.

Nos. 407 and 408.—Petition of Sir WILLIAM FOX, President of the New Zealand Alliance for Suppression of the Liquor Traffic, and ANNIE JANE SCHNACKENBERG, President, Women's Christian Temperance Union of Auckland.

THE petitioners pray that the Licensing Act may not be amended in any way which would lessen the local-option powers provided by it.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

27th August, 1889.

No. 163.—Petition of JOHN MYNOTT, of New Plymouth.

THE petitioner prays that an inquiry may be granted into the conduct of the Deputy Official Assignee at New Plymouth.

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

27th August, 1889.

No. 165.—Petition of G. TRAVERS and Others.

THE petitioners pray that the Waiapu Riding may be cut off from Cook County, and constituted a separate county.

I am directed to report that, as a Bill proposing to deal with the subject-matter of this petition is now before the House, in the opinion of the Committee the petition should be referred to the Government.

29th August, 1889.

No. 298.—Petition of STONE BROTHERS and Others.

THE petitioners, shipowners, master mariners, and shipping agents, allege that the rates levied by the Government for light-dues and port-charges are excessive. They pray for such relief from this burden of a special tax on the shipping interest of the colony as can be afforded by assimilating the light-dues and port-charges to those of all the other Australasian Colonies.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration of the best method of equalising the charges paid by vessels engaged in the coasting trade.

29th August, 1889.

## No. 57.—Petition of ELIZABETH McDONALD, of Blenheim.

THE petitioner states that her late husband was the owner of Section 101 in the Town of Blenheim; that said section was compulsorily taken by the Government for railway purposes, and her husband was only offered £100 as compensation, which he felt compelled to accept; that the railway-line was diverted, and section sold by Government for £400, although in the same state in which it was taken fourteen years previously. The petitioner prays that the surplus of the money obtained, after deducting the £100 and interest thereon, may be granted to her as a compassionate allowance.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

29th August, 1889.

## No. 429.—Petition of JAMES N. SHEPHERD and Others.

THE petitioners claim certain land at Whangaroa North.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Native Affairs Committee.

3rd September, 1889.

## No. 283.—Petition of J. PETCHELL and Others, of Wallace.

THE petitioners pray the Government to construct a road between Orepuki and Riverton.

## No. 394.—Petition of the PUHOI ROAD BOARD.

THE petitioners pray for relief on account of having been placed in financial difficulties in consequence of the decision of a Compensation Court.

## No. 439.—Petition of B. PEARSON and Others.

THE petitioners pray for a grant to open up the Matakana-Te Arai Road.

## No. 294.—Petition of JAMES REILLY and Others.

THE petitioners pray for the erection of a bridge over the Takaka River, Collingwood.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

3rd September, 1889.

## No. 369.—Petition of EUGENE MCCARTHY, of Wellington.

THE petitioner states that he held command of the steamship "Hannah Mokau" in 1879-80; that in June, 1880, this vessel was, by civil process, seized and sold by order of the Government; that at time of seizure £70 was owing to him for wages as commander; that he claimed this amount from the officer deputed to seize the said steamship, and was informed that his claim would be favourably considered on representation being made. The petitioner prays that the sum of £70 may be paid to him.

I am directed to report that this petition was before the Public Petitions Committee in 1881, and was reported upon favourably. That this Committee consider the petitioner equitably entitled to £54 for wages earned prior to and being due to him at the time of the seizure of the "Hannah Mokau" by the Government. The full sum claimed by petitioner is £70, but as he has already had £16 paid to him, that sum should be deducted, leaving a balance of £54, as above.

3rd September, 1889.

## No. 150.—Petition of THOMAS McMATH and JOHN WALKER, of Southland.

THE petitioners state that in April, 1888, they tendered for the Mataura Bridge Contract, on the Riversdale-Switzers Railway; that they deposited with their tender (which was the lowest) a cheque for £300; that this money was retained by the Government for 163 days, and then returned with an intimation that the Government did not intend to proceed with the work at present. The petitioners allege that they have suffered serious loss through their deposit being detained so long, as they were unable to undertake profitable contracts both here and in Victoria. They pray for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

3rd September, 1889.

## No. 390.—Petition of D. T. SHAND and Others.

THE petitioners, members of the Henley and West Taieri River Boards and others, complain of the action of the railway authorities in not supplying sufficient water-way for the Taieri River in times of flood. They pray that their case may be considered, and relief granted.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the allegations contained in the petition are sustained by evidence adduced, and they recommend the Government to grant the prayer of the petitioners.

3rd September, 1889.

## No. 239.—Petition of ANN ROBERTSON, of Rotorua.

THE petitioner states that in 1880 she purchased the property at Rotorua known as the Lake House, for the sum of £1,000, from one Isaac Wilson; that said Isaac Wilson had a lease from the Natives, and petitioner's purchase related to its unexpired term of nineteen years; that in



February, 1880, petitioner was forcibly ejected from the premises by order of one Robert Graham; that said Robert Graham then obtained a lease of the hotel from the same Natives who had leased to Isaac Wilson, and this lease was protected by section 11 of "The Thermal-Springs Districts Act, 1881," Robert Graham being in actual occupation at the time of the passing of the said Act. Petitioner states that she has expended large sums of money in prosecuting her claims in the Law Courts of the colony, but can obtain no redress. She prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner was illegally and forcibly ejected from her property at Rotorua; that the passing of "The Thermal-Springs Districts Act, 1881," validating the titles of all in actual occupation, precludes all possibility of recovery on the part of the petitioner, thus inflicting upon her a great injustice; that the petitioner has in equity a claim against the colony.

3rd September, 1889.

Nos. 188 and 435.—Petitions of W. THORNE and Others and F. W. LANG and Others, of Auckland.

THE petitioners pray for certain amendments in the Rating Act, 1882.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend the Rating Act be amended in the direction of providing that personal service of summons for rates shall be a condition precedent to recovery of rate and sale of land for non-payment thereof. Such non-service of summons shall not be a bar to the local body recovering the rate after the lapse of two years.

3rd September, 1889.

No. 459.—Petition of W. J. NAPIER and Others, of Devonport.

THE petitioners petition against the Devonport Cemetery Bill.

I am directed to report that, as this Bill is now before the House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

3rd September, 1889.

No. 382.—Petition of JAMES MILLS and Others, of Waihao, Canterbury.

THE petitioners pray for certain amendments in the Counties Act, 1886.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, the Counties Act should be so amended that, in case County Councils fail to carry out the provisions of clause 46 of the said Act, the Governor in Council should have power, upon petition by the ratepayers, to adjust the representation.

3rd September, 1889.

No. 460.—Petition of WILLIAM HENRY SKINNER, of Wellington.

THE petitioner states that he lost his eyesight through illness contracted while in the Volunteer service of the colony; that the Government granted him a pension of 2s. 6d. per day, and gave him to understand that work would be found for him. He prays that his pension may be increased by 1s. 6d. per day.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, petitioner has no claim against the colony.

5th September, 1889.

No. 387.—Petition of NICOL, ELDER, HOGG and Others.

THE petitioners, representing Thomas Bell and Company (Limited), pray that their claim to Sunday Island, in the Kermadec Group, may be recognised; that, in the event of their being deprived of the said island or any part thereof, full compensation may be given.

No. 289.—Petition of THOMAS RIPPIN and Others, of Dunedin.

THE petitioners petition against amendment of "The Slaughterhouses Act, 1871."

No. 319.—Petition of WILLIAM WILSON and Others, of Teremakau, &c.

THE petitioners pray for a road from Paroa to Teremakau Bridge, and that this railway bridge may be used as a traffic-bridge.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

5th September, 1889.

No. 261.—Petition of GEORGE SAMPLE, of Wellington.

THE petitioner states that he has been on the permanent staff of the Railway Department for about six years, and that his services have now been dispensed with because he reported certain irregularities committed by the Storekeeper at Petone. That, at an inquiry held into this matter, he was not allowed an opportunity to cross-examine or rebut any evidence offered by the Storekeeper and other witnesses. Petitioner prays for another inquiry into the whole affair, and, if his charges are substantiated, that he may receive compensation or other relief.

I am directed to report that, the Committee having made exhaustive inquiry into the allegations contained in the petition, find that petitioner has no claim against the colony.

5th September, 1889.

## No. 426.—Petition of SAMUEL and JOHN McBRIAR, of East Oxford.

THE petitioners state that in 1886 they returned to the Property-tax Commissioner the value of their property, all of which they hold in partnership, at £1,600, and claimed an exemption of £500; that this exemption was refused, and petitioners paid under protest on the full amount. That it appears they should have made other separate returns showing they had no private property. They allege it was the duty of the department to have explained this matter to them. They pray that the amounts they have paid in excess may be refunded.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, on satisfactory proof being afforded to the Property-tax Commissioner that petitioners have paid tax in excess, such excess should be refunded.

5th September, 1889.

## No. 260.—Petition of G. W. SCHWARTZ.

THE petitioner states that he held the position of clerk at the Petone Railway Stores for upwards of seven years; that his services have been dispensed with in consequence of inquiries he made from an officer of the department into certain irregular transactions which had taken place at the Petone Stores; that, at an inquiry into this matter held by the Railway Commissioners, he was debarred from giving certain evidence. Petitioner prays that another investigation may be made, and, if his charges are substantiated, that he may be afforded relief.

I am directed to report that the Committee, having made exhaustive inquiry into the allegations contained in the petition, find that petitioner has no claim against the colony.

5th September, 1889.

## No. 512.—Petition of R. W. MCKENZIE and Co.

THE petitioners state that they were the contractors for the erection of the Arahura Bridge, Hokitika-Grey Railway; that owing to certain material which was to be supplied by Government not arriving in the colony at the specified time, &c., they suffered loss. They pray for compensation.

I am directed to report that, having heard the statements of the Minister for Public Works, the Hon. E. Richardson, late Minister for Public Works, and Mr. Blair, the Engineer, the Committee is of opinion that petitioners have no legal claim; yet, owing to the great delay in the delivery of the cylinders and consequent loss thereby to petitioners, they have a claim in equity. Therefore the Committee recommend that the sum of £450 be paid to petitioners in full of all demands.

11th September, 1889.

## No. 461.—Petition of ROBERT MATSON, of Addington.

THE petitioner alleges that a letter containing valuable certificates was posted to him about the 13th April, 1889, and that he has never received the same. He prays for compensation for loss sustained.

## No. 511.—Petition of W. J. MURPHY, of Woodville.

THE petitioner alleges that he cannot get justice from the Bench at Woodville.

## No. 503.—Petition of S. R. WEBB and Others, of Lyttelton.

THE petitioners petition *re* inebriate asylums and administration of asylums.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

11th September, 1889.

## No. 299.—Petition of J. H. NEWMAN and Others, of Opunake.

THE petitioners pray for shipping facilities at Opunake.

I am directed to report that the Committee cannot recommend that the prayer of the petitioners should be granted.

11th September, 1889.

## No. 517.—Petition of F. W. LANG, for Waipa County Council (No. 2).

THE petitioner prays for amendment of "The Rating Act, 1882."

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

14th September, 1889.

## No. 463.—Petition of IDA PRINCE.

(*Vide* I.—2A.)