

1889.
NEW ZEALAND.

GOLDFIELDS AND MINES COMMITTEE

(REPORTS OF).

MR. CADMAN, CHAIRMAN.

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

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

TUESDAY, THE 25TH DAY OF JUNE, 1889.

Ordered, "That a Goldfields and Mines Committee, consisting of fourteen members, be formed; five to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Brown, Mr. Cadman, Mr. Duncan, Colonel Fraser, Mr. Grimmond, Mr. Guinness, Mr. Allen, Mr. M. J. S. Mackenzie, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Pyke, Mr. R. H. J. Reeves, Mr. Seddon, Mr. Valentine, and the mover."—(Hon. Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON.)

THURSDAY, THE 4TH DAY OF JULY, 1889.

Ordered, "That all matters relating to mining, and all Bills relating to mines, shall stand referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Hon. Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON.)

TUESDAY, THE 9TH DAY OF JULY, 1889.

Ordered, "That the paper laid on the table this day in reference to the Kumara Sludge-channel be referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."

WEDNESDAY, THE 10TH DAY OF JULY, 1889.

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 mining industry of the colony may be fostered and encouraged."—(Mr. CADMAN.)

WEDNESDAY, THE 7TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1889.

Ordered, "That the petitions referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee last session, and not reported on, be again referred to the Committee."—(Mr. CADMAN.)

FRIDAY, THE 16TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1889.

Ordered, "That the petition of J. and E. Bennett be referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Hon. Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON.)

FRIDAY, THE 23RD DAY OF AUGUST, 1889.

Ordered, "That the report of the Goldfields and Mines Committee relative to the Kumara Sludge-channel be referred back to the Committee for reconsideration."—(Hon. Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON.)

FRIDAY, THE 23RD DAY OF AUGUST, 1889.

Ordered, "That the petition of James and Mary Campbell be referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee."—(Mr. FULTON.)

REPORTS.

AMENDMENT OF ORDER OF REFERENCE.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee have the honour to report that, at a meeting held this day, they passed the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That the Honourable the Minister of Mines be requested to move the House to complete the order of reference appointing the Committee, so as to give them full power to deal with all matters connected with mining."

3rd July, 1889.

PROPOSED ORDER OF REFERENCE.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee beg to report that they have passed the following resolution: "That the Goldfields and Mines Committee be authorised to inquire into and report on the
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working of the Schools of Mines now established in various parts of the colony; also to report generally on the best means whereby the mining industry of the colony may be fostered and encouraged."

10th July, 1889.

EXHIBITS FOR THE DUNEDIN EXHIBITION (No. 1).

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee beg to report that, in consideration of the proper representation of the mining, mineralogy, and geology of the colony at the Dunedin South Seas Exhibition, the Government be requested to make suitable provision so that the department may be enabled to send full and representative exhibits.

10th July, 1889.

EXPENDITURE ON MINERAL EXHIBITS.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee beg to report that they have passed the following resolution: "That the Government be requested to bring down a measure, at an early date, empowering local authorities in mining districts to expend moneys in the procuring of mineral exhibits for the Dunedin South Seas Exhibition, or other exhibition hereafter which the Government of the day approve."

10th July, 1889.

No. 2.—Petition of SIMON FRASER, of Auckland.

THE petitioner claims compensation as the discoverer of the West Taieri goldfield.

I am directed to report that the petitioner's claim was dealt with and a sum of £30 awarded to him by the Provincial Government of Otago at the time of his discovery. Since then the petitioner has repeatedly petitioned Parliament for a further reward. His claim has now been six times before the Goldfields Committee, and once before the Public Petitions Committee, and has been adversely reported upon each time. No further evidence has been adduced, and the Committee concurs with the decisions previously arrived at—viz., that the petitioner has no claim.

6th August, 1889.

No. 186.—Petition of JAMES SIMPSON and 71 Others.

THE petitioners pray that relief may be given them by constructing a track through the Oparara Gorge.

I am directed to report that this Committee recommends the extension of the track to the attention of the Government.

6th August, 1889.

CERTIFICATION OF MINE-MANAGERS.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee have the honour to report that they have passed the following resolution: "That the Minister of Mines be requested to bring in a Bill to amend section 203 of 'The Mining Act, 1886,' in order that an extension of twelve months' time may be allowed to persons desirous of obtaining mine-managers' certificates of competency."

6th August, 1889.

EXHIBITS FOR THE DUNEDIN EXHIBITION (No. 2).

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee have the honour to recommend that the Government send suitable mineral exhibits to the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, and that some official be placed in charge for the purpose of giving information to visitors. The Committee are of opinion that a suitable handbook of New Zealand mines and minerals should be prepared and placed before the public at the Exhibition.

8th August, 1889.

THE MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE Goldfields Committee are of opinion that the Mining Act Amendment Bill, introduced by Mr. Seddon and now before the House, contains many valuable and necessary amendments to the existing mining laws, and is a measure necessary to be passed. The Committee recommend the Minister of Mines to adopt the Bill as a Government measure.

16th August, 1889.

GRANTING OF SUBSIDIES TO MINING PROSPECTORS.

THE Goldfields Committee, who have had the above-mentioned subject under consideration, have the honour to report that, in their opinion, it is desirable that a subsidy of pound for pound be given by Government in aid of prospecting for gold, upon moneys expended by County Councils, prospecting associations, or private parties, provided such prospecting associations or private parties shall first be approved by the local authorities; and that the Minister of Mines be asked to make provision for same on supply estimates.

16th August, 1889.

No. 356.—Petition of P. BRENNAN and 31 Others.

THE petitioners state that under "The Mining Act, 1886," certain managers of mines have to pass an examination which is unduly severe, and that the period fixed in which the candidate must

pass is too short. They pray that the time for enabling candidates to pass be extended for a period of not less than one year, and that the examination be confined to underground workings.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that the petition be referred to the Government, with a recommendation to amend the law so as to comply with the prayer of the petition.

16th August, 1889.

No. 137.—Petition of C. A. SMITH.

THE petitioner states that in the year 1870 he discovered a goldfield in the Murray Creek. He prays that he may receive the reward to which he considers himself entitled for such discovery.

The Goldfields Committee, to whom the petition was referred for consideration, have the honour to report that they are of opinion that the lapse of time since the alleged discovery is too great, and the evidence before the Committee is insufficient to enable them to make any recommendation upon the matter.

16th August, 1889.

PAPERS RELATING TO THE KUMARA SLUDGE-CHANNEL (No. 1).

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee have the honour to report that they are of opinion that the Manager of the Kumara Water-race (Mr. J. Gow), when suggesting to the Minister of Mines the placing of gratings in the miners' tail-races, to prevent large stones going into the No. 1 Sludge-channel, did wrong in not informing the Minister of the fact that gratings had been previously tried for the same purpose and condemned, also, by a decision of Warden Giles, ordered to be removed, and that the then Minister of Mines had withdrawn the instructions for the introduction of the said grating.

That the Manager of the race should have submitted the plans of the grating to the Mines Department prior to asking for authority for the reintroduction of the said gratings, and acted indirectly in advising the Minister to "be firm" in insisting on the reintroduction of the grating in the face of the decisions of the Warden and the orders of the late Minister of Mines.

That it is impracticable to profitably hydraulic-sluice the auriferous drift at Kumara if gratings were placed in the miners' tail-races as proposed.

That, when the miners made the offer to reduce the grade in their tail-races, so as to prevent large stones going into the channel, also to pay increased fees for use of the channel, the Manager should at once have telegraphed that offer to the Minister, or, at the very least, have forwarded same by the first mail thereafter leaving for Wellington; also, the Manager should have notified the Minister that he (the Manager) had stopped the works.

That the matter in dispute was not of sufficient import to warrant over one hundred men being for several weeks thrown out of employment, thus entailing serious loss and hardship upon them, besides causing great loss to the colony.

That, in the opinion of the Committee, the Manager of the Kumara Sludge-channel showed want of tact in dealing with the sludge-channel difficulty; and the Committee advise the Minister, in the interests of the Kumara mines, to remove Mr. Gow to some other post.

That the maintenance of the No. 1 Channel, and the management thereof, after deviation and alteration by the miners themselves, will effect a large yearly saving to the colony, and more than compensate for the grant-in-aid made by the Minister.

That the action of the Minister of Mines in committing the colony to so large an expenditure without first consulting Parliament, and Parliament in session, is questionable; and that the paragraph in the agreement made between the Minister and the miners in which the Minister agrees to grant the miners the use of the unaltered portion of the channel is *ultra vires* and void, being contrary to the law; and the Minister intends to ask for an amendment of the law to meet the case.

That the paragraph in the agreement made between the Minister and the miners as to payment of moneys received from sales of water into a No. 2 Account, and to be operated upon by the Manager during the construction of the deviation, comes more properly within the review of the Public Accounts Committee; and the Committee recommend the House to refer that part of the arrangements, as shown in the correspondence and papers, to the Public Accounts Committee.

22nd August, 1889.

No. 284.—Petition of JOHN SMITH and 2 Others.

THE petitioners, prospectors of the Donnelly's Creek Quartz-mining Company, allege that, relying on a distinct pledge given by the Chairman of the Goldfields Committee to the Mayor of Ross, to the effect that any exhibits they might send to the Centennial Exhibition would be forwarded free of charge, and the value of the result of crushing paid to them, sent half a ton of auriferous quartz; that Mr. Gordon informed them some months after the close of the Exhibition that their quartz had been mixed up with forty-nine other parcels, and he only returned £1 5s. 6d. to them. They allege the stone was worth £15 4s. They pray that the balance of £13 18s. 6d. may be paid them, apart from the damage done to the company by the unjust report and action of Mr. Gordon.

I am directed to report as follows: That, on the petitioners proving to the satisfaction of the Government that their quartz was of the value stated, the Government be recommended to pay the amount claimed—viz., £13 18s. 6d.—less £5, the cost of crushing.

28th August, 1889.

No. 290.—Petition of WILLIAM RICHARDS.

THE petitioner states that in November, 1883, he contracted with the Government to construct 35 chains of a tunnel in the Mikonui Water-race; that he worked on it till 1885, nearly two years;

that the contract price was £1 3s. 9d. per foot; that he constructed 21 chains, value £2,124 4s., on which he received progress-payment amounting to £1,704, leaving a balance due to him of £420 4s.; that he has only received £9 of the balance; that he ceased work under a misapprehension, owing to his deposit-money having been returned to him. He prays for consideration.

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

28th August, 1889.

PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE KUMARA SLUDGE-CHANNEL (No. 2).

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee, to whom were referred the papers relative to the Kumara Sludge-channel, have the honour to report as follows: (1.) That, in the opinion of your Committee, it is a matter of regret that serious loss of work should have been entailed on the miners in the settlement of this dispute. (2.) That the proposal of the Minister, contained in paragraph 5 of the basis of agreement as between the Minister and the miners, cannot be given effect to as the law now stands, as the title to that portion of the No. 1 Sludge-channel proposed to be handed over is now vested in the Queen under the provisions of "The Public Works Act, 1882," and can only be disposed of and dealt with under that Act and "The Local Bodies' Finance and Powers, Act, 1885." An amendment of the law will be necessary to give effect to the proposal contained in the agreement. (3.) That the subject-matter, as set forth in paragraph 7 of the agreement, be referred to the Public Accounts Committee, the same being more a question of finance than of mining.

28th August, 1889.

No. 371.—Petition of C. H. MILLS and Others.

THE petitioners state that Charles Jackson and M. Patterson discovered an important goldfield in Marlborough. The signatures to the petition include the names of the Chairman and members of the Town Board of Havelock, Pelorus Road Board, Picton Road Board, and the Mayors and members of the Borough Councils of Blenheim and Picton. The petitioners pray that the House vote £500 to the prospectors.

I am directed to report as follows: (1.) That Charles Jackson and M. Patterson are the discoverers of the goldfield in the Pelorus Road district known as "Mahakipawa." (2.) That the Pelorus Road Board did not adopt the regulations under the Mining Act respecting the discovery of new goldfields; and in justice to the prospectors they should immediately do so. (3.) That when the Board adopts the regulations, and it is proved to the satisfaction of the Government that the conditions have been fulfilled, the Committee recommend the Government to fulfil their part of the obligation.

6th September, 1889.

No. 506.—Petition of W. R. SANDERSON and Others.

THE petitioners, residents in the Maruwhenua district, Otago, pray that the Maruwhenua River be declared a watercourse into which tailings, mining *débris*, and waste water may be discharged.

I am directed to report as follows: That the Committee are of opinion that it is in the interests of the colony, and would facilitate mining in the Maruwhenua district, if the Maruwhenua River were proclaimed a watercourse for the reception of tailings and mining *débris* under the provisions of section 154 of "The Mining Act, 1886;" and the Committee recommend the proclamation of the said river accordingly.

6th September, 1889.

No. 503.—Petition of JOSEPH KILGOUR.

THE petitioner states that he and eight others applied to the Nelson Waste Lands Board for coal-prospecting licenses, and that the Board granted the licenses subject to the approval of the Minister of Lands; that the petitioner paid the fees and charges in connection with said licenses; that he put men on to prospect, and made tracks through and to the land applied for, and spent large sums of money on said land; and your petitioner was subsequently refused the licenses, and suffered considerable loss thereby, and prays for redress.

1. I have the honour to report that the Committee is of the opinion that an unreasonable delay occurred between the time the Nelson Land Board recommended the granting of the prospecting licenses and the Minister's refusal to approve same, and that on this determination being arrived at the right of refusal of a lease of the lands over which the prospecting licenses obtained should have been given to Mr. Joseph Kilgour.

2. That, leases of the land in question having subsequently been given to other persons, and seeing these leases could not be annulled without landing the colony in serious difficulties, the Committee recommend that Mr. J. Kilgour be recouped all moneys expended by him in connection with the prospecting licenses and the areas contained therein, the formation of a company to work the said areas, and other incidental expenses—this recommendation to cover the moneys expended only as between the 4th and 14th July, 1887, and the 4th April, 1888.

10th September, 1889.

No. 310.—Petition of JAMES and MARY CAMPBELL.

THE petitioners took up land under the homestead clauses of "The Land Act, 1877," and have complied with the conditions.

The Committee therefore recommend that titles be issued for the land, and, in the event of an application being made for its resumption under section 41 of "The Mining Act, 1886," that steps be taken to resume such portions of the land as may be actually necessary for mining.

10th September, 1889.

No. 309.—Petition of JAMES and EMILY BENNETT.

THE petitioners took up land under the homestead clauses of "The Land Act, 1877," and have complied with the conditions.

The Committee therefore recommend that titles be issued for the land, and, in the event of an application being made for its resumption under section 41 of "The Mining Act, 1886," that steps be taken to resume such portions of the land as may be actually necessary for mining.

10th September, 1889.

No. 409.—Petition of GEORGE ERICKSON and 157 Others.

THE petitioners pray that when the Midland Railway grant is dealt with the Government will reserve from selection by the railway company certain lands specified in their petition for mining purposes.

I am directed to report as follows: That the petition be referred to the Government for consideration; and the Committee recommend that the views of the petitioners be carried out.

10th September, 1889.

No. 481.—Petition of G. H. F. ULRICH and 20 Others.

THE petitioners state that for the proper and efficient instruction of students in the School of Mines it is desirable that they should visit different mining centres, and pray that concessions in railway-fares be granted them.

I have the honour to report as follows: That the students when accompanied by teachers, or having a certificate from a professor, should be allowed free passes to visit working mines or geological features in the district. That this report be referred to the Government, with a view of inducing the Railway Commissioners to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee.

10th September, 1889.

No. 487.—Petition of N. L. McCLELLAND.

THE petitioner states that the Wakamarina Goldfields have had insufficient assistance in the making of tracks, &c., and prays for redress.

I am directed to report as follows: As the local body receives the goldfield revenue it is for that body to consider whether the works should be undertaken. If the Government, after inquiry, find that the work is necessary, the usual subsidy should be granted by the Mines Department.

12th September, 1889.

No. 485.—Petition of GEORGE W. B. TITMUS (No. 2).

THE petitioner states that he is the discoverer of various goldfields in New Zealand; also that he performed acts of bravery in saving life, &c.

I have the honour to report as follows: That, considering the length of time which has elapsed since the alleged discovery, and the inability of this Committee to find any official records of the exploits mentioned by the petitioner, the Committee is of opinion that the petitioner has no claim against the colony.

12th September, 1889.

GENERAL REPORT.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee desire to bring under the notice of the House and the Government the following resolutions, which have been unanimously adopted:—

1. That a subsidy of £1 for £1 be given by Government in aid of prospecting for gold upon moneys expended by County Councils' prospecting associations or private parties, provided that all such parties shall first be approved by the local authorities, and that Ministers be requested to provide for the same in the Supplementary Estimates.

2. That, in the opinion of the Goldfields Committee, the granting of more than one application in any one district to any company for special mineral licenses is detrimental to the mining industry, and that the Minister of Mines be requested to instruct the Wardens accordingly.

3. That the Government subsidise the local bodies in sending a representative from Westland, Otago, and the Thames Goldfields to take charge of the mineral exhibits at the Dunedin Exhibition, and that the representatives send a report to the local bodies on the exhibits and the mining machinery at the Exhibition.

4. That a work dealing with elementary questions in geology, mining, &c., be issued for use in the public schools in mining districts.

5. That the Government be requested to take into its serious consideration, during the recess, some system of assisting the construction of water-races in mining districts.

6. That, in order to encourage the introduction of foreign capital, the Government should offer special facilities, by way of freedom from rent and taxation, for a limited period of time, or in such other way as they may deem advisable.

7. That, in the opinion of the Committee, the Government should undertake the smelting and assaying of gold, purchasing when required, at their standard value, all ingots so smelted and assayed.

8. That the Minister of Mines be requested to procure, during the recess, papers and information dealing with the working and cost of the Melbourne and Sydney Mints.

9. That the time named in section 203 of "The Mining Act, 1886," for managers to obtain

certificates of competency should be extended for twelve months; and in the interim the Government should alter and simplify the system of examination, in order that managers may be classified in accordance with their proficiency.

10. That the offering of a limited number of scholarships for competition among students at the School of Mines would be an incentive to the youths in mining districts to qualify for mine managers.

11. That the evidence given before the Committee by Mr. Witheford respecting the development of our goldfields, and by Mr. Luks respecting the treatment of refractory ores, should receive the serious attention of the Government without delay.

12. That the system adopted by some companies in demanding exorbitant percentages from tributers, in lieu of fully manning holdings which can be worked without pumping-machinery, is detrimental to the mining interest, and should be discouraged by the Government.

13. That the Government be requested to prepare regulations for mining under the foreshores, and make them as liberal as possible, as large capital is required to develop this class of mining. •

13th September, 1889.

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