

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

NEW PLYMOUTH HARBOUR COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF).

Brought up 19th August, 1891, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

FRIDAY, THE 12TH DAY OF JUNE, 1891.

Ordered, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report within three weeks upon the state of the New Plymouth Harbour and the position of the New Plymouth Harbour Board with regard to the £200,000 loan, and the securities for the same; with power to call for persons and papers. Such Committee to consist of Hon. J. McKenzie, Hon. Mr. Richardson, Mr. Macarthur, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. McGuire, Dr. Newman, Mr. Shera, Mr. E. M. Smith, and the mover."—(Mr. G. HUTCHISON.)

TUESDAY, THE 16TH DAY OF JUNE, 1891.

Ordered, "That three be the quorum of the New Plymouth Harbour Board Committee."—(Mr. G. HUTCHISON.)

THURSDAY, THE 18TH DAY OF JUNE, 1891.

Ordered, "That the name of Mr. Wright be added to the New Plymouth Harbour Committee."—(Mr. G. HUTCHISON.)

WEDNESDAY, THE 1ST DAY OF JULY, 1891.

Ordered, "That the New Plymouth Harbour Committee have leave to order certain papers to be printed."—(Mr. G. HUTCHISON.)

TUESDAY, THE 14TH DAY OF JULY, 1891.

Ordered, "That leave be granted to the New Plymouth Harbour Committee to postpone bringing up their report for three weeks."—(Mr. G. HUTCHISON.)

REPORT.

In 1874 an endowment was created by Act of the General Assembly of one-fourth "of all revenues arising from the sale, occupation, or other disposal of the waste lands of the Crown" in the Provincial District of Taranaki, which, from and after the constitution of a Harbour Board under any Ordinance of the Provincial Council of the Province of Taranaki, was to be paid over to such Board for any of the general purposes of a Harbour Board, or as might be defined in any Ordinance under which the future Board might be constituted.

In 1875 the Taranaki Provincial Council constituted a Harbour Board which was empowered to construct a harbour at New Plymouth, and for that purpose to raise a loan of £350,000 on the security of its endowment and other revenues. It also provided, as a contingent means for meeting interest and sinking fund, for the imposition of a rate over a limited area. The whole provincial district was estimated to comprise 2,137,000 acres, of which only 404,490 acres were then in the hands of Europeans or of the Crown, available for settlement. The rating area as defined was estimated to comprise 1,767,000 acres.

In 1876 the General Assembly amended the Ordinance by cutting down the borrowing powers to £200,000, which might be raised at £95 for every debenture of £100, with interest at £6 per cent. per annum. The land revenue under the endowment was directed to be set aside specially for the payment of interest and sinking fund on the loan so authorised.

When the endowment was made in 1874, the area of "waste lands of the Crown" within the provincial district was about 750,000 acres of uncertain value. The district had been the theatre of serious Native troubles in the past, and the whole of the land within the boundaries of the provincial district held by the aboriginal natives had been confiscated as the penalty for rebellion, but without being for some time treated or described as "waste lands of the Crown."