

On Mr. Duthie's amendment being put, the Committee divided, and the names were taken down as follow :—

Ayes, 4.—Mr. Duthie, Mr. Massey, Hon. Mr. Rolleston, Mr. Sligo.

Noes, 5.—Mr. Duncan, Mr. Graham, Hon. Mr. J. McKenzie, Mr. Morrison, Hon. Mr. Ward.

So it passed in the negative.

The Hon. Mr. Ward's amendment carried.

Mr. Guinness, M.H.R., further examined.

Mr. W. Barnett, of Christchurch, ex-Mayor of Kumara, called, sworn, and examined.

A reporter was present, and took down the evidence in shorthand.

The Committee adjourned at 1 o'clock.

The Committee met again after 3 o'clock p.m., leave to sit having been granted by the House.

The examination of Mr. Barnett was continued.

Resolved, on the motion of the Hon. Mr. Rolleston, That the Committee obtain from the Under-Secretary of the Colonial Secretary's Office copies of the two petitions (in 1882) for a special audit of the accounts of the Kumara Borough Council, together with copies of any correspondence relating thereto.

The Committee then adjourned to Wednesday, 19th October, at 10.30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, 19TH OCTOBER, 1898.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present : Mr. Sligo (Chairman), Mr. Duncan, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Graham, Hon. Mr. J. McKenzie, Mr. Morrison, Hon. Mr. Rolleston, Hon. Mr. Ward.

The minutes of last meeting, with an amendment, were read and confirmed.

Letter and telegram from Dr. Giles, of Mauku, Auckland, in reply to the Chairman's request to him to attend. Dr. Giles stated that he had no information to furnish to the Committee, and referred them to the depositions. He asked to be excused from attendance.

Resolved not to take any action in the meantime.

A reporter was present, and took down the evidence in shorthand.

Mr. William Nicholson, accountant, Palmerston North (an ex-auditor of the Borough of Kumara), was called, sworn, and examined.

The Committee adjourned till 10.30, Thursday, 20th instant.

THURSDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 1898.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present : Mr. Sligo (Chairman), Mr. Duncan, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Graham, Mr. Massey, Hon. Mr. J. McKenzie, Mr. Morrison, Hon. Mr. Rolleston, Hon. Mr. Ward.

Minutes read and confirmed.

Letter from Colonial Secretary's Office, covering copies of two petitions in 1882 for a special audit of Kumara Borough Council accounts, together with copies of all correspondence relating thereto.

Mr. W. Nicholson was further examined.

Mr. George Rudkin, Town Clerk, of Kumara, was called, sworn, and examined.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr. Duthie, That the books and vouchers of the Kumara Borough Council produced, together with the special auditors' report, be submitted to two certificated accountants, to inquire into and report on the evidence there contained as to amounts due and reputed payments to Nathan Seddon, and as to whether any evidence is disclosed in the books, documents, and vouchers as to any payments having been made to Mr. R. J. Seddon for Nathan Seddon; and that the accountants be Messrs. Henry Kember and D. T. Stuart.

The Committee then adjourned until 10.30 a.m. Monday, 24th instant.

MONDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 1898.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present : Mr. Sligo (Chairman), Mr. Duncan, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Graham, Mr. Massey, Hon. Mr. J. McKenzie, Mr. Morrison, Hon. Mr. Rolleston.

Minutes read and confirmed.

Examination of Mr. Rudkin continued.

Resolved, That Mr. Rudkin be requested to stay in Wellington at the Committee's pleasure.

Mr. Henry Burger, storekeeper, Kumara, called, sworn, and examined.

Mr. A. C. Campbell, ironmonger, Kumara, called, sworn, and examined.

A reporter was present, and took down the evidence in shorthand.

The report of the accountants, Messrs. Kember and John Scott, was handed in. The Chairman stated that, Mr. D. T. Stuart having been unable to attend, Mr. John Scott had been asked to act, and had consented.

Resolved, That the report of Messrs. Kember and Scott be printed as an exhibit.

Resolved, That Mr. Peter Todd, draper, Kumara, be summoned to give evidence.

The Committee adjourned till 10.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 26th instant.