

Petitioners A. C. Hubbard and others represent that on the 4th April, 1895, the Ohinemuri and Waihou Rivers were proclaimed sludge-channels; that since that time the introduction of the cyanide process has led to a great increase of mining operations and consequent silting-up of the rivers, thereby destroying a valuable waterway and creating great damage to large areas of valuable land and the obstruction of natural drainage; that by reason of the silting-up of the rivers numbers of farmers and settlers are being ruined, and the progress of their portion of the Dominion checked: wherefore they pray that immediate steps be taken to preserve a valuable national asset.

Petitioner John W. Thorp, settler and orchardist, represents that in consequence of the silting-up of the rivers he has been put to grievous losses—in an orchard of 11 acres a large number of valuable fruit-trees, valued by experts at £3,000, have been destroyed, whilst rich pasture-land has been covered so as to be rendered worthless. Petitioner furnishes a detailed account showing his losses at £1,004.

The Goldfields and Mines Committee have the honour to report that they recommend that the petitions of F. R. W. Daw and others, A. C. Hubbard and others, and John W. Thorp be referred to the Government for immediate consideration; the Committee also respectfully recommend that, in view of the urgency of the position, a Commission be set up to devise a remedy for evils which have arisen through the silting-up of the rivers.

22nd December, 1909.

THE Goldfields and Mines Committee have the honour to report to your honourable House that at a meeting of the Committee held yesterday morning the following resolution was unanimously agreed to, namely:—

“That this Committee place upon record their warm appreciation of the impartial manner in which the Chairman (Mr. H. Poland) has presided over their deliberations, and extend to him their hearty thanks for the consideration and ability which he has displayed in the conduct of the business of the Committee.”

22nd December, 1909.

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