

FRIDAY, AUGUST 17<sup>TH</sup>, 1855.

PRESENT :—

Messrs. Travers  
Hart  
Mackay

Messrs. Crompton  
Brown  
Forsaith

Mr. Sewell—Chairman.

Minutes of the Committee read and confirmed.

The Auditor-General (Dr. Knight) attended to give evidence.

The correspondence between the Superintendent of Canterbury and the central Government on the subject of the distribution of the Land Fund was read by the chairman of the Committee. The following questions were then answered by the Auditor-General.

1. Q—Referring to the 62nd clause of the Constitution Act, what construction do you put on the words "such sums as may become payable" with reference to the time at which they may be considered payable. Do you consider these words as applying to sums payable at the commencement of the year of appropriation, or as including any sums that may become payable during the currency of the year of appropriation? A—I may state generally that the rule is that the expenses of land purchases are charged against the current receipts. All expenses of land purchases which are brought finally to account during the currency of any year are charged against the current receipts of the land fund. Such is the practice.

2. Q—Is that without reference to the period at which contracts may be made? A—Yes, that is without reference to the period at which contracts are made. I think that the revenues of the quarter should be charged with the contracts of that quarter. And that Mr. McLean should be treated as an independent accountant, the result of such a practice would be that the expenditure actually incurred on account of land purchases in any quarter would be charged against the receipts of that quarter.

The Committee then adjourned till the next day, Saturday, August 18, at 10 a. m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>, 1855.

PRESENT :—

Messrs. Travers  
Hart  
Forsaith

Messrs. Mackay  
Crompton  
Brown

Mr. Sewell—Chairman.

Minutes of Committee read and confirmed.

The undermentioned papers were laid before the Committee :—

His Excellency's Messages Nos. 14, 16, 18, 21, 22.

Petition from Mr. P. A. Deck, received August 15th.

Petition from Mr. P. A. Deck, received August 17th.

Dr. Knight attended to give evidence.

Mr. McLean attended to give evidence.

The following questions were then put to Mr. McLean.

1. Q—Is the portion disputed by the natives included in the 8500 acres for which you propose to pay an instalment? A—It is. It is from 8 to 10,000 acres. It is the land over which the Moananui claim.

2. Q—Are there any disputed claims over the remainder of the block? A—The rest is pretty clear.

3. Q—When you say pretty clear do you mean to say that it is perfectly clear from any disputes? A—No, there is scarcely a purchase made in New Zealand where there are not disputes arising from family jealousies, &c. It is not so much a question of titles to land as of family jealousies, &c.

4. Q—These difficulties which arise from pride and jealousy are they easier or more difficult to remove than those arising from disputed titles? A—