

1877.

NEW ZEALAND.

JACKSON'S BAY SETTLEMENT

(PAPERS RELATING TO THE ISSUE OF A ROYAL COMMISSION TO INQUIRE INTO THE).

Laid on the Table of the House and ordered to be printed, 26th October, 1877.

No. 1.

Mr. H. L. ROBINSON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

County Council Chambers, Hokitika, 16th July, 1877.

By direction of the County Council, I have the honor to forward copy of a resolution passed at the sitting held on the 11th instant, as follows:—

“That, in the opinion of this Council, the proper method to set at rest the very unsatisfactory and conflicting reports regarding the actual condition of the Jackson's Bay Special Settlement would be for the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report on same; that this Council therefore respectfully request the Government to appoint such Commission, and would at the same time suggest that this Council be represented in such Commission.”

The Council, I may remark, in arriving at this decision, were not led thereto by any impression that the settlement was mismanaged by the officer in charge of it, and had no intention of impugning the conduct or action of any person in connection with it. But strong doubts are entertained as to the capability of the country to support an agricultural population, on account of the extreme poorness of the soil, and the difficulty and expense of clearing it; and the expediency of spending any more public money in its support is so questioned, that the Council were of opinion that the whole subject could best be inquired into and determined by a Commission partly composed of practical men, whose business it would be to inquire into the present actual condition of the settlers, and to arrive at a well-considered conclusion as to their future prospects at Jackson's Bay.

I have, &c.,

H. L. ROBINSON,
County Chairman.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

MEMORANDUM.

REFER to Hon. Mr. Bonar for any remark he may be pleased to make on this proposal. I do not know that it is intended to spend more public money in Jackson's Bay, nor can I see that a Royal Commission is necessary to tell us what is already known.

28th July, 1877.

DANIEL POLLEN.

HON. DR. POLLEN,—

The fullest information as to the nature of the soil of the settlement, and its adaptability for settlement, is already in possession of the Government from repeated official reports and otherwise. Full details, showing the present and past condition and future prospects of the settlement, are embodied in the reports from the Resident Agent and correspondence to Minister for Immigration. There can be no possible difficulty, if the County Council desired to make a personal inspection of the settlement, to their doing so, without the expense and trouble of a Royal Commission. A copy of the last annual report by the Resident Agent was forwarded by me to the County Chairman, and laid on the table of the Council

Wellington, 23rd August, 1877.

JAMES A. BONAR.

No. 2.

The UNDER SECRETARY to Mr. H. L. ROBINSON.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 27th August, 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter (A. 1941, July 16th) forwarding copy of a resolution of the County Council of Westland, requesting the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report on the condition of the Jackson's Bay Special Settlement, and, in reply, am directed by the Colonial Secretary to inform you that the information regarding the settlement is full and reliable, and it does not appear necessary that the Government should take the step of issuing a Royal Commission.

H. L. Robinson, Esq., Chairman of the Council,
County of Westland, Hokitika.

G. S. COOPER.

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