

No. 418.—Petition of CHARLES JOHN JOHNSTON, Wellington.

THE petitioner states that, in October, 1881, he was captain of the Wellington Naval Brigade; that, on the 20th October of that year, he received urgent orders from the Government to have his men that had volunteered for active service ready to proceed to Opunake; that he waited on Colonel Reader, and received from him positive instructions to obtain such articles of clothing as the men required; that the clothing was made in Wellington and the men fitted out; that the account for clothing, which he has paid, amounts to £380 14s., which the Government refuses to pay. He prays that the House will grant the sum of £380 14s., and such further relief as the House may think fit.

I am directed to report: That the expenditure for clothing having been made by the officers commanding the Naval Volunteers at a time requiring prompt action, and under verbal instructions from the Under-Secretary for Defence in Wellington, which instructions were liable to misapprehension; and considering that the time allowed to elapse by the Government before declining payment of the uniforms was so great as to prejudice the recovery of any disputed amount from the men, the Committee recommend the Government to give effect to the prayer of the petitioner, and pay the amount claimed.

30th August, 1883.

Nos. 502 and 503.—Petitions of JOHN S. HUDSON and Others and GEORGE EYRE and Others.

THE petitioners pray that the Local-Option Extension Act may pass into law.

I am directed to report: That, the subject-matter of these petitions being now before the House, the Committee have no recommendation to make.

30th August, 1883.

No. 449.—Petition of GEORGE LONGHURST, Wellington.

THE petitioner states that on the 9th April, 1880, he was convicted and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude, with two floggings, for an alleged offence of rape; that he is now undergoing penal servitude, and has suffered two floggings; that in the month of June, 1882, he was advised that certain additional evidence had been discovered which raised a strong presumption that he had been falsely charged with the said crime; that Genevieve Elizabeth Adams and James Jonathan Adams were arraigned on the charge of conspiracy and found guilty. That by reason of the foregoing facts he prays that he may receive such relief as the House can afford from the penalty imposed upon him.

I am directed to report: That, as the Committee will be unable to enter into the whole of the evidence in this case owing to the late period of the session at which the petition was presented, the Committee are of opinion that the matter be referred to the Government for their consideration.

30th August, 1883.

No. 500.—Petition of MARTHA SMITH, Wellington.

THE petitioner states that she is the widow of Ben Smith, late of Waipawa, in the Hawke's Bay District; that on the morning of the 8th March last her husband was killed by a passing train while crossing the railway bridge on the line between Waipawa and Waipukurau; that in the year 1882 the House voted a sum of money for the purpose of erecting foot-bridges on the said railway bridge, but up to the day of the fatal accident no steps had been taken to carry it out. She submits that had the foot-bridges been erected the accident would not have occurred; that she is left, in her declining years, without means of support. She therefore prays the House will recompense her for the loss she has sustained.

I am directed to report: That, having inquired into the case of the petitioner, the Committee cannot make any recommendation in favour of compensation.

31st August, 1883.

No. 285.—Petition of JOHN BROWN, Invercargill.

THE petitioner states that a contract for the supply of fencing for the Railway Department was entered into by John Weeks; that he advanced money to the said Weeks to enable him to pay labour; that by way of security the proceeds or payments were legally assigned to him; that a sum of £100 11s. 6d. was stopped by the Railway Department in payment of some old debt alleged to be due by John Weeks; that he is the loser through such stoppage of payment. He prays the House will extend to this matter such consideration as in justice it demands.

I am directed to report: That the Committee, having carefully inquired into the petitioner's case, are of opinion that he has no claim against the Government.

31st August, 1883.

No. 471.—Petition of HONORA McMANUS, Thames.

THE petitioner states that she had charge of the Church School, Thames, and that, without any fault having been found, the school was closed and her services dispensed with; that she has only had seven months' employment during the year, by which she has suffered great loss. She prays for redress.

I am directed to report: That the Committee are of opinion that the subject-matter of this petition is one for the Auckland Education Board to deal with, and the Committee do not consider it desirable to interfere with their functions.

31st August, 1883.