

3. The committee recommend that the Act relating to changing earmarks be put into force, and that any person changing an earmark be liable to a fine not exceeding £ . . . Also, that the Government should appoint a stock ranger to be paid out of stock-tax for each county, and two veterinary surgeons for each Island, they to be stock inspectors also.

The Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

J. W. STUBBS, Secretary.

North Otago Agricultural and Pastoral Association, Oamaru,
25th July, 1891.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward to you a copy of resolutions passed at a meeting of the committee of the association, being in response to your invitation to them to give their views on any subject relating to the welfare of the agricultural and pastoral industries, contained in your circular memorandum of the 27th May, 1891.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. John McKenzie, Minister of Agriculture.

J. CHURCH, Secretary.

*Resolutions passed by the Committee of the North Otago Agricultural and Pastoral Association.
24th July, 1891.*

THAT the committee of this association are pleased with the action of the Minister of Agriculture in consulting the various bodies representing the agricultural and pastoral industries, asking them for suggestions relating to anything that will promote the prosperity of such pursuits; and desire to tender their thanks for the interest he evinces in endeavouring to elicit the opinions of those connected with these important industries. That in response to his invitation to express suggestions this committee are of opinion,—

1. That the sheep rate of 2s. per 100 is excessive, and would suggest that the rate be reduced to such an amount as would cover the cost of inspection, and that the balance, if any, be handed over to the county funds.

2. That the subsidy to the San Francisco service should be abolished, as the fact of subsidising shipping to and from America is frequently most injurious to the interests of agriculturists, by enabling America to compete in the grain-markets of Australia, while there is no corresponding benefit of trade with that country.

3. That the duties upon grain and agricultural products, and also those upon timber, should be abolished, as the former are simply inoperative from excess of production over consumption in the colony, and the latter offer a premium for the destruction of our forest trees, while they increase the cost of all improvements upon farms where timber is used, and the farmers are thus made to pay, in addition to the special land-tax, an increased price for timber.

4. That the railway rates for the conveyance of live-stock should be reduced to the lowest possible figure, especially for store stock.

5. That the petition of the Oamaru Harbour Board should be acceded to, inasmuch as the forced competition of the railway is most prejudicial to the owners and occupiers of land in the North Otago District, as they are rated compulsorily for the maintenance of the harbour, and the Oamaru Harbour is the natural outlet for the products of the district.

6. That it is desirable that arrangements should be made with the Railway Commissioners for the conveyance of judges to and from all agricultural shows free of charge, as the payment of such an expense is a heavy burden upon all agricultural associations that are universally acknowledged to be benefitting to the agricultural and pastoral industries.

7. That the Railway Commissioners be asked to reduce the short-distance rates on the railways for the carriage of grain and other agricultural products to the lowest possible figure, as carriage of such products has been done for a long time alongside of a railway-line by farm drays and waggons.

J. CHURCH, Secretary.

SIR,—

Otago Agricultural and Pastoral Association, Dunedin, 25th June, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your circular memorandum of the 27th May, and to enclose herein the resolutions passed by this association at a meeting held on the 24th instant, called to consider the same.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, Wellington.

SYDNEY JAMES, Secretary.

Otago Agricultural and Pastoral Association, Dunedin.

Resolved, That it is of great importance to the farming community to have the Customs returns of the exports to foreign ports published regularly, as is done in the Australian Colonies, and that the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture be respectfully urged to have this done in future.

2. That greater expedition should be used in publishing the agricultural returns, which, as a rule, are collected in February, and are seldom published till June, after the greater portion of the grain has been exported.

3. That, as this association did not receive the letter of the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture, which was dated the 27th May, until the 15th June, when Parliament was already in session, they had not an opportunity of thinking over suggestions bearing on the welfare of the agricultural community as fully as they would have wished to. Under the circumstances, they content themselves by endorsing the resolutions passed by the Canterbury association as regards dairy produce and the rates for railway carriage, and urge the Hon. the Minister to endeavour to carry into effect as soon as possible the recommendations made therein.