

Nos. 492 and 493.—Petitions of JAMES POWELL and Others, and A. SALTON and Others.

PETITIONERS pray for railway-extension from Waicola Station, through Scott's or Raymond's Gap, into the Waiiau Valley.

I have the honour to report that the Railways Committee recommend that these petitions be referred to the Government for consideration.

6th October, 1896.

Nos. 395, 441, 442, and 447.—Petitions of S. TOWNLEY and Others, J. VARNEY and Others, F. W. TONGE and Others, and JOHN GARDNER and Others.

PETITIONERS pray for the construction of a light railway from Paeroa to Waihi.

I have the honour to report that the Railways Committee recommend that these petitions be referred to the Government for consideration.

6th October, 1896.

No. 106.—Petition of W. H. HARGREAVES and Another (the Westport-Cardiff Coal Company, Limited).

PETITIONERS pray that the deficiency clauses of "The Westport-Ngakawau Railway Extension Act, 1890," be repealed, and that they may be relieved from liability for payment of accrued arrears thereunder.

I have the honour to report that the Railways Committee recommend that if the Westport-Cardiff Coal Company (Limited) and the Mokihinui Coal Company (Limited) respectively undertake in writing, to the satisfaction of the Government, to faithfully perform the following conditions—viz., (1) That within the next nine months they will increase their share-capital and plant and enlarge their running operations to such extent as the Government and Westport Harbour Board deem satisfactory; and also (2) that they will pay up their respective arrears under section 6 of "The Westport-Ngakawau Railway Extension Act, 1890," and section 8 of the amending Act of 1894, by monthly instalments, the amount of which and date of first instalment to be agreed upon—then the Government should undertake that, so long as the aforesaid conditions are faithfully performed, no proceedings shall be taken to enforce payment of the moneys payable under those sections. Legislation to be introduced if required to give effect to this recommendation.

6th October, 1896.

No. 526.—Petition of THOMAS WALTER.

PETITIONER prays for compensation for damage done to his estate, Hamilton, Waikato, by fire, which he alleges was caused by sparks from a locomotive on the railway.

I have the honour to report that, in the opinion of the Railways Committee, there is no evidence to prove that the fire originated through any act or omission on the part of the Railway Department; they have therefore no recommendation to make.

7th October, 1896.

No. 392.—Petition of J. N. WOOD and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that the Waikaia-Riversdale Railway be completed.

I have the honour to report that the Railways Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Government.

7th October, 1896.

No. 495.—Petition of the NEW PLYMOUTH HARBOUR BOARD and NEW PLYMOUTH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

PETITIONERS pray for a reduction in the haulage rates between the Breakwater Wharf at Moturoa and New Plymouth.

I have the honour to report that the Railways Committee consider the Railway Department has offered a reasonable concession with regard to freight, and have no further recommendation to make.

13th October, 1896.

No. 477.—Petition of JOHN GARDNER and Others.

PETITIONERS pray that the Mount Rex Wharf, at the junction of the Kaukapakapa and Kaipara Rivers, be thrown open for traffic.

I have the honour to report that the Railways Committee recommend that this petition be referred to the Government.

13th October, 1896.

No. 478.—Petition of TIMARU AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL ASSOCIATION.

PETITIONERS pray that a railway-siding, including loop-line, cattle-yards, and passenger-platform, be constructed, free of expense to the association, at the Washdyke, about two miles north of Timaru.

I have the honour to report that the Railways Committee recommend the prayer of the petitioners to the favourable consideration of the Government.

13th October, 1896.

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