

Council to the sale of which, or such proportion as may be found necessary, is hereby given.

(2.) That a branch line of light railway from Oamaru to the valley of the Waiareka, a distance of 15 miles, be at once constructed at a cost not exceeding £31,000; said cost to be defrayed from the sale of 60,000 acres of pastoral land, in terms of section 150, "Otago Waste Lands Act 1872," such land to be situate in the Northern district.

(3.) That the light line of railway already commenced be at once completed from Riverton to Orepuki, in length 16 miles; estimated cost of construction £40,000, payment to be made in land in alternate sections on either side of the proposed line, at current value.

(4.) That a line of railway between Riverton and Otautau, in length 16½ miles, already surveyed, be constructed at a cost of £40,000, payment to be made in cash or land, at the option of the Government.

(5.) That a light line of railway to connect the Otautau line with the Invercargill and Winton Railway at Wallace town junction, a distance of 14 miles, be constructed at a cost of £20,000, payment to be made in cash or land, at the option of the Government.

(6.) That a branch line be constructed from the Southern trunk line to Green Island coal pits and meat preserving works, and that His Honor the Superintendent be requested to place the sum of £6000 on the Estimates for this purpose.

(7.) That the following branch railways be commenced next year, and that the Government be requested in the meantime to obtain the necessary survey and estimate, viz.:—Waipaehe to Tapanui, main trunk line to Kaitangata, main trunk line to Outram, Palmerston to Waihemo, Otautau to Nightcap coalfield.

The following was also adopted as an alternative resolution to the first one given above:—

That in the opinion of this Council the General Government should be strongly urged to take immediate steps to construct the Dunedin and Moeraki line of railway, being a highly important portion of the Main Trunk Line, and one which there can be no doubt would prove pre-eminently reproductive; and further, that failing the General Government being in a position to undertake its immediate construction, the Provincial Government be requested to obtain borrowing powers on the most favourable terms possible, so as to enable them to proceed with its immediate construction.

With regard to the completion of the main trunk line from Waitaki to Invercargill, the General Government has already announced that it intends to ask authority from the Assembly to fill up the gaps now existing in this line, which are causing so much anxiety to Dunedin people.

#### PROCLAMATION OF NEW HUNDREDS.

Another question which provoked a large amount of discussion towards the end of the session was the proposal of the Government to proclaim several new Hundreds throughout the Province. The matter was first brought before the Council in the shape of the following message from the Superintendent:—"The Superintendent desires the co-operation of the Provincial Council in recommending His Excellency the Governor to proclaim three new Hundreds as follows, in terms of section 96 of the 'Otago Waste Lands Act 1872':—(1) 20,000 acres in runs 185 and 260; (2) 10,000 acres in runs 74 and 161; (3) 15,000 acres in runs 137 and 123."

Before the proposals of the Government were taken into consideration, the following contingent motions, proposed by Mr McKenzie, were agreed to:—"1. That this Council recommends the proclamation of a Hundred of 6000 acres in runs Nos. 80 and 109, a large portion of that area being already surveyed. 2. That after the proclamation of said Hundred, 2500 acres be set apart to be dealt with under the system of deferred payments."

The consideration of the Government proposals was then proceeded with upon a resolution approving of the recommendations contained in the Superintendent's Message, and requesting His Honor to take the necessary steps to give effect thereto. A very warm discussion ensued, many members who formerly supported the Government now speaking and voting against their proposals. Nearly all the members of the Opposition, however, supported the Government in this matter, and the resolution was carried intact. The first hundred proposed—20,000 acres in runs 185 and 260—is on Mr Holmes' runs between the Lee and Deep Streams in the Taieri district. Respecting the second hundred, the following information was furnished: "10,000 acres to be selected in the Wyndham Valley on runs 74 and 161. This land begins immediately east of the Mokoroa hundred, and is just an extension of it up the Wyndham Valley. The altitude of the greater portion will be from 400 to 500 feet above a level. The land consists of flats along the river margin, and spurs running down from the Tautuku forest. At least one half the land would be agricultural." The Chief Surveyor reported upon the third hundred as follows:—"15,000 acres to be selected on runs 137 and 123. This land lies west from Lawrence on to the Beaumont ferry and Clutha river, and is intersected by the main interior road from Lawrence. The summit level of the ground is 1300 feet above sea level. . . . About one-half the land is ploughable. . . . In connection with this block, there is also the block of 5,000 acres on deferred payments; in all, 20,000 acres for settlement."

#### LAND ON DEFERRED PAYMENTS.

At an early period of the session the following Message was transmitted to the Council by His Honor the Superintendent:—"The Superintendent submits for the consideration of the Provincial Council the desirability of setting apart the following blocks of land for settlement on deferred payments, as provided by the 'Otago Waste Lands Act 1872':—(1) 5000 acres on Run No. 111; (2) 5000 acres in Runs 167A, and 78; (3) 2500 acres in Runs 168, and 175A; (4) 2500 acres in Run 199; (5) 2500 acres in Runs 244, and 261; (6) 3000 acres in Run 346; (7) 2500 acres in Run 109; (8) 1000 acres in Run 205; (9) 5000 acres in Runs 123, and 137. On the 23rd July, a resolution was brought down by the Government, and agreed to by the Council approving of the recommendations contained in the

above message, and requesting His Honor to take the necessary steps to give effect thereto.

#### PROPOSED ABOLITION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL.

On the 28th July Mr Fish moved the following series of resolutions: "Whereas the establishment of Grammar Schools in the various parts of the Province renders it unnecessary that the Dunedin High School for Boys should be continued at the public expense: And whereas the maintenance of the said school at the expense of the State involves an expenditure for which there is no equivalent return, and prevents the establishment in Dunedin of one or more Proprietary Schools, of a class quite equal to if not superior to the High School, which there is good reason to believe would otherwise be established: and whereas it is expedient that there should be provided a normal or training school for teachers, combined with a fourth elementary school in Dunedin: Resolved—1st. That the High School for boys be discontinued, and that adequate compensation be paid to the teachers for loss of office. 2nd. That the High School buildings be applied to the purpose of a Training and Elementary School as aforesaid. 3rd. That the Rector's residence be either sold or leased to any individual or proprietary desirous of establishing a high class school for boys upon a suitable scale. 4th. That one of the Dunedin District Schools be raised to the rank of a Grammar School, in terms of the Grammar School Ordinance, and a portion of the expenditure heretofore appropriated to the High School, be appropriated to this purpose."

Mr Turnbull proposed an amendment on these resolutions, with the object of shelving the question for another year, in order to enable hon. members to fully consider the question. Before a discussion took place, Mr Fish withdrew his resolutions, it being understood that the subject will be brought before the Council at its next session.

#### ENCOURAGEMENT OF TREE PLANTING.

On the 22nd July, Dr Webster brought down certain regulations under the Forest Trees Planting Encouragement Acts, for adoption by the Council. The regulations were submitted in consequence of a resolution previously passed by the Council, affirming the desirability of bringing the Province under the operation of the Acts referred to. The following are the conditions by compliance with which it is proposed that Otago settlers may reap the advantages of this liberal measure:—1. The planting in respect of which a grant of land under the Act is claimed need not be in one block, but may be in several blocks on the same property.—2. The land planted must be securely fenced.—3. It must have been devoted to planting for at least two years. (Section 2 of the "Forest Trees Planting Encouragement Act Amendment Act 1872" provides that "if root crops are cultivated among the forest trees planted in any land, such land shall not, by reason only of such crops being cultivated, be deemed to be not devoted only to purposes of planting.")—4. The trees must be in a vigorous and healthy state when the grant of land is applied for.—5. The number of trees planted must be at the rate of not less than 500 per acre.—6. The trees must be of an average height of two feet, except in the case of gum, wattle, poplar or willow, which must be of an average height of six feet.—7. As soon as the land is fenced and the trees planted, a report must be sent to the Secretary for Lands, who will cause inspection of the same to be made; from the date of which if duly certified, the two years will be calculated.—8. The amount of the land order to be issued under authority of section 4 of the Amendment Act 1872, in respect of every acre of land planted, shall be 14 9s. The fulfilment of the conditions above prescribed shall be ascertained and shall be certified in the forms annexed by an officer appointed by the Superintendent. Upon the receipt of such certificate, the Superintendent may either issue his own certificate to the Waste Lands Board, or he may, if he thinks fit, cause further enquiry to be made into the facts of the case. [Form of certificate:—I, A. B, do hereby certify, after personal inspection of plantations made by C. D, that \_\_\_\_\_ acres of land have been planted by him, in accordance with the statements contained in the application of \_\_\_\_\_, 187\_\_\_\_, that the conditions imposed under the regulations issued under the "Forest Trees Planting Encouragement Act 1871," have been faithfully complied with, and that he is entitled under the provisions of the said Act to receive a grant of land not exceeding \_\_\_\_\_ acres."] We believe it is intended to alter the term of "two years" named in the above rules, to "ten years." These regulations are framed by the Superintendent for the guidance of the Waste Lands Board in this matter. The object of this alteration will be to prevent any person using the land for other purposes than tree planting.

#### TERMINATION OF THE SESSION.

On the 29th July the whole of the estimates, were passed and the Appropriation Bill No. 2 pushed through all its stages. When the Council was prorogued on the following day, nearly every motion on the Order Paper had been disposed of. His Honor delivered the following prorogation speech:—

Mr Speaker and Gentlemen—On behalf of the Governor, on the 23th day of July current, I assented to the Appropriation Ordinance, 1873-4, passed by you. I have this day, on behalf of the Governor, assented to the following Ordinances passed by you:—Appropriation Ordinance (No 2), Lawrence Reserves Management Ordinance, Port Chalmers Waterworks Empowering Ordinance, Queenstown Waterworks Empowering Ordinance, Dempsey Trust Ordinance, Cromwell Waterworks Empowering Ordinance, Clyde Waterworks Empowering Ordinance, Education Reserves Ordinance, South Dunedin Cemetery Closing Ordinance, Sheep Ordinances Amendment Ordinance, The Outram District Road Boards Election 1873 Validation Ordinance, Ferries Ordinance 1862 Amendment Ordinance 1873, The Otago Municipal Corporations Ordinance 1865 Amendment Ordinance 1873, Cromwell Athenæum Ordinance, Riverton Athenæum Ordinance, Payment to Members Ordinance, Impounding Ordinance Amendment Ordinance. I have also this day reserved for the signification of the Governor's pleasure therein the following bills passed by you:—Portobello School Glebe Exchange Bill, North Shag Valley School Reserve Sale Bill, Dunedin Reserves Management Bill, Invercargill Athenæum Reserves Management Bill, Frankton Racecourse Reserve Management Bill, Invercargill Hospital Reserves Management Bill,