

ALBURY BRANCH.—In this case, as the railway is already completed as far as it is necessary to carry it at present, the vote proposed is merely sufficient to cover existing liabilities and contingencies.

OXFORD TO SHEFFIELD AND WHITECLIFFS EXTENSION.—This line is also complete from Oxford to Sheffield, but there are some outstanding liabilities and contingencies to be met, and the vote proposed is sufficient to cover these, and also a short extension at the end of the Whitecliffs line to give access to the several coal mines across the river.

LIVINGSTONE BRANCH.—This railway was commenced and partly formed throughout its whole length of 12 miles as far back as five years ago, and the £40,000 odd expended upon it up to March last has been lying waste for several years. It is now thought, therefore, that it is time that some return should be got for all this expenditure; and we therefore propose to vote this year a sum sufficient to complete it throughout.

PALMERSTON-WAIHEMO, 8 miles.—This railway has also been in hand an unconscionable length of time, and we now propose to complete it forthwith. The vote to be asked for will be sufficient to do this.

CATLIN'S RIVER BRANCH.—For this railway we propose a vote sufficient to complete and equip the line to the Port Molyneux Road.

WAIPAHI-HERIOTBURN.—This railway being already completed, the vote proposed is merely to cover existing liabilities.

EDENDALE-TOITOIS.—It is proposed to complete this railway to the end of present formation, namely, to a point four miles beyond Wyndham; and the vote to be asked for will be sufficient for that purpose.

OTAGO CENTRAL RAILWAY.—As already stated, I consider that the Hindon section of this railway should have been more rapidly pushed ahead, and it will be my endeavour to further this end during the current year by all means in my power, and also to push forward the construction of the line generally as rapidly as is at all possible, in order to utilize as soon as practicable the large expenditure of close upon £200,000 already made upon it. With this view it is proposed to ask this year for a vote which will be sufficient to enable all the work to be put in hand which can be reasonably got at without entailing a heavy loss for carriage of material.

LUMSDEN-MARAROA.—The vote proposed for this line is sufficient to complete it to end of present formation, namely, to a point six miles from its commencement.

GORE-KELSO.—It is not intended to continue this line at present, so the vote proposed is merely sufficient to cover cost of working survey and land plans.

WAIMEA-SWITZERS.—The vote proposed for this is sufficient to complete it up to the end of the seventh mile.

SEAWARD BUSH.—For this railway a vote is proposed sufficient to complete it to the end of the sixth mile.

RIVERTON-OREPUKI.—In this case the vote asked for will complete and equip the railway throughout up to its present terminus near Orepuki.

If the House consents to vote the amount which I have intimated that we now intend to ask for railways, we shall have, I expect, by the end of this financial year, a length of 1,480 miles of railway open for traffic, as against 1,404 opened up to the 31st March last.

Honourable members are aware that large sums have been expended on roads to the north of Auckland in lieu of expenditure on railways. This course was decided on many years since, it being considered that roads were a more immediate object of necessity than railways. The time has come, however, when the people to the north of Auckland are very earnestly appealing for an extension of