

No. 312.—Petition of WILLIAM LYONS and others.

THE petitioners, members of New Zealand racing clubs, state that in the case of gentlemen using the railways for the carriage of hunters to the scenes of their engagements the department has made a reduction in their freight to half the usual rate. They pray that, in the interest of the railway revenue and the furthering of a grand national pastime, a similar concession may be made in the case of racehorses.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

15th July, 1886.

Nos. 326 and 327.—Petitions of GEORGE HENDERSON and Others, and ALEXANDER T. THOMPSON and Others.

THE petitioners pray that the House will give effect to the proposal of the Government to vote the sum of £100,000 for the construction of a direct line of railway from Blenheim to Tophouse.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

15th July, 1886.

Nos. 328, 329, 330, and 331.—Petitions of A. E. HYDE and Others, R. H. WAITE and Others, J. G. HARKNESS and Others, and JOHN SHARP and Others.

THE petitioners, inhabitants of Marlborough and Nelson, pray that the House will vote a sum of £100,000 to construct a railway from Blenheim, *via* Renwicktown, Rock Ferry, Are Are and Kaituna Valleys, Havelock, Pelorus and Rai Valleys, to Wakapuaka and Nelson, and authorize a complete survey to be made during the recess.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, these petitions should be referred to the Government for consideration.

15th July, 1886.

No. 333.—Petition of H. B. MACKENZIE and Others.

THE petitioners pray that the New Plymouth Harbour Board Bill may not be passed.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Local Bills Committee.

15th July, 1886.

No. 321.—Petition of B. W. DUDLEY and THOMAS KEIR.

THE petitioners, President and Secretary of the Mandeville and Rangiora Temperance Union, ask the House to refund the expenses incurred by the Licensing Committee of Mandeville and Rangiora in defending an action in the Supreme Court for refusing to renew a license. They pray that the sum of £146 18s. 10d. may be refunded to them, the Committee having had to pay that amount for legal expenses.

I am directed to report that the Committee cannot recommend the prayer of the petitioners should be granted.

16th July, 1886.

No. 325.—Petition of ALEXANDER STEWART and Others, of Peninsula.

THE petitioners pray that the Otago Harbour Bridge Bill may not be passed.

I am directed to report that, as the Bill dealing with the subject-matter of this petition is now before the House, the Committee have no recommendation to make.

16th July, 1886.

No. 336.—Petition of E. L. CLARK.

THE petitioner states that he was confined in the Auckland Lunatic Asylum without any cause except the malice of persons whose interest it was to make it appear he was insane. He prays that a Select Committee may be appointed to inquire into his case and determine the amount of compensation he is entitled to; and also that the laws relating to lunacy may be so altered that such an appeal as the present may never again become necessary.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of the Committee, this petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

20th July, 1886.

No. 288.—Petition of EDWIN HARROW.

THE petitioner states that, on hearing of the volcanic eruption in the Rotorua District, he at once proceeded there; that a rescuing party was organized to proceed across Lake Tarawera in a boat, but a guarantee of £12 10s. was required by the owner of the said boat for its safe return; that the Government Agent refused to guarantee that sum, on account of its being too much, whereupon petitioner and the other members of the party did so; that the boat had to be taken in a wagon to Wairoa, and they were informed that the Government would send a party of men to clear the road; however, only one man came to their assistance in doing so; that, although the expedition was a private one, yet Captain Mair took charge of it as if it had been sent out by Government. The petitioner prays that a searching inquiry may be made into the following matters—viz., the conduct of the Government officials in the district in not promptly despatching relief parties; the conduct of Mr. Johnstone in not guaranteeing the sum of £12 10s., and of Captain Mair in assuming the