

In all other cases he appears to have taken every possible precaution to prevent damage. Omitting this amount, the damage suffered would be from £30 to £40. The department is not to blame for the numerous fires on this property, as the spark-arresting appliances are kept in good order, and the fires do not spread from *débris* beside the line, but start upon Mr. Wallace's grass. There appears to be an increased velocity of the prevailing wind at a particular place on his farm, owing to the configuration of the land, and this wind blowing across the line carries the sparks into his luxuriant rye-grass, which is very dry during the summer months.

Although Mr. Wallace has no legal claim against the department, he has suffered so often and has undergone such suspense that some compensation might be given to him, if not to be a precedent in other cases.

J. W. POYNTON, S.M.

No. 74.—Petition of T. C. P. WHITELEY and Others, of Otahuhu, near Auckland (No. 1).

PETITIONERS pray that the new workmen's tickets be made available by any train from Otahuhu reaching Auckland before 9 a.m.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that the petition be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

28th August, 1900.

No. 500 (1899).—Petition of C. D. MORPETH, of Custom-House Quay, Wellington.

PETITIONER, who is general secretary to the New Zealand Officers' Institute, prays on behalf of the members that the Government Railway Department Classification Act, and the amendments thereof, be amended so that the salaries of chief Railway officers shall be more on an equality with those of the Railway officers holding similar positions in the Australian Colonies, and that Station-masters and clerical staff shall be as efficiently remunerated as Postmasters and clerical staff of the Post and Telegraph Department.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that, as a matter of policy, this petition be referred to the Government for consideration.

28th August, 1900.

No. 231.—Petition of THOMAS PATTERSON, of Invercargill.

PETITIONER prays that the sum of £50, balance of a sum of £100 recommended by the Public Petitions M to Z Committee in 1891 to be given him as a compassionate allowance, be now paid.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that the report of the Committee of last year be given full effect to, viz. :—

"That the Government be urged to give full effect to the recommendation of the Public Petitions M to Z Committee dated 1st July, 1891, which was as follows: 'That, in the opinion of the Committee, the accident to Thomas Patterson was caused partly through the belt of trees obscuring the view of an approaching train, and from the very high wind blowing at the time preventing him from hearing the whistle, and that the Railway Commissioners be recommended to take steps to render this crossing less dangerous, and that the Government be recommended to place the sum of £100 upon the supplementary estimates as a slight compensation to Patterson for the severe injuries and loss sustained by him through the accident.'"

28th August, 1900.

Nos. 15 and 103.—Petitions of ARTHUR BLUNDELL WRIGHT, of Auckland, and HENRY BROWN, of Manuera, Auckland.

PETITIONERS pray for compensation for damage and loss to property which they allege was caused by sparks from railway locomotives.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that these two petitions be referred to the Government, with a recommendation that a Stipendiary Magistrate do inquire into the statements contained therein, and cause evidence to be taken in connection with the same.

28th August, 1900.

No. 48.—Petition of DAVID KNIGHT, of Hawera.

PETITIONER prays for compensation on account of loss and damage sustained at a level crossing near Hawera on the 11th February, 1898.

I am directed to report that the Committee recommend that a compassionate allowance of £50 be allowed the petitioner.

28th August, 1900.

No. 99.—Petition of WILLIAM NORGATE, of Lyttelton (No. 2).

PETITIONER, who was injured whilst working on a railway truck on the wharf at Lyttelton, prays for compensation.

I am directed that this Committee does not see any reason for altering its former decision, viz. : "That this Committee has no recommendation to make."

28th August, 1900.