

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE ANNUAL SHEEP RETURNS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MAY, 1885 (SUPPLEMENTARY RETURNS).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Mr. B. P. BAYLY to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office (Stock Branch), Wellington, 21st June, 1886.
I have the honour to lay before you the statistical information referred to in my annual report dated 14th May, 1886 (H.—8).
The classification of sheep can be approximately estimated as follows: Merino—males, 3,165,711; females, 4,067,754. Long-wool—males, 457,061; females, 869,644. Cross-bred—males, 2,178,833; females, 3,807,798. Total—males, 5,802,380; females, 8,744,421. Grand total, 14,546,801.

On reference to the returns of the past few years it will be observed that a steady decrease in merino sheep is taking place, and that at the same time this deficiency, together with the whole annual increase, is made up in the long-wool and cross-bred classes, the latter being in excess of former returns by over 700,000 sheep for the year. As more land comes under cultivation so does the demand for this class of sheep increase, they being specially adapted for both butchers' use and freezing purposes.

It is satisfactory to again be able to report an increase in the frozen-meat trade, 574,192 carcasses having been exported this year, an increase of 83,126 over the previous season. 97,579 sheep have been used at preserving works, or a decrease of 2,911; 69,214 were boiled down, or an increase of 17,000; 3,004 were exported alive (these, with the exception of 20, were all shipped to the South Sea islands); and 496 were imported from Australia and Tasmania.

I have, &c.,

BENJAMIN P. BAYLY,
Superintending Inspector.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.