

1887.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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LANDS THROWN UP IN RABBIT-INFESTED DISTRICTS  
IN OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND,  
AND INCREASE OF LAND UNDER CULTIVATION IN OTAGO AND MARLBOROUGH,  
(RETURN OF).

*Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 28th April, 1887.*

*Ordered*, "That there be laid on the table a return showing—(1.) The area of country thrown up in Otago and Southland since it became infested with rabbits, and showing the loss of revenue to the Crown arising therefrom. (2.) The increase of land under cultivation in the Districts of Otago and Marlborough for a period commencing 1st April, 1879, to the 31st March, 1886."—(MR. LANCE.)

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No. 1.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS, Dunedin, to the UNDER-SECRETARY for CROWN LANDS.  
SIR,— Crown Lands Department, Dunedin, 10th May, 1887.

In reply to your telegram of the 2nd instant and memorandum of the 3rd instant No. 283/2, asking for a return showing the area of country thrown up in Otago and Southland since it became infested with rabbits, and showing the loss of revenue to the Crown arising therefrom, I have now the honour to supply the required information.

The area surrendered amounts to 1,346,554 acres, and the loss of revenue to the 1st March last to £32,803. Of this area the greater portion has been relet at considerably-reduced rentals, only twenty runs containing about 414,000 acres lying unoccupied at the present time exclusive of West Coast runs, which are unoccupied on account of their elevation and inaccessability, and not because of rabbits.

I have, &c.,

Under-Secretary, Crown Lands, Wellington.

J. P. MAITLAND,  
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

No. 2.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS, Invercargill, to the UNDER-SECRETARY for CROWN LANDS.  
SIR,— Crown Lands Office, Invercargill, 6th May, 1887.

*Re* telegram No. 403, calling for return showing area of country thrown up in Southland since it became infested with rabbits, &c. No runs in Southland have actually been thrown up on account of the rabbit pest. Prior to the incoming of the rabbits the runs were held at 2d. per acre all round, the period of lease being generally from 1866 to about 1883. During the period from the incoming of the rabbits to the expiry of most of the leases in 1883 the losses to the runholders must have been enormous, but as the original rent paid to the Government was moderate, this rent still continued to be paid, none of the runs having been thrown up.

In 1883 the most of the runs were relet generally at the old figure (which was the upset) of 2d. per acre. No doubt had the country not been infested with rabbits the runs would have realized, I should say, an average of 4d. per acre at least, thus making the loss to the Government since 1883 not less than £15,000. The information given above may be put in a tabular form as follows:—

|                                   |     |     |     |         |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|---------|
| Loss to the Government up to 1883 | ... | ... | ... | Nil.    |
| Loss to the Government since 1883 | ... | ... | ... | £15,000 |

This table is constructed on the lines indicated above; the loss of revenue to the Government not having been so great for the reasons given, but the loss to the individual runholders and to the country generally having been enormous.

I have, &c.,

Under-Secretary, Crown Lands, Wellington.

JOHN SPENCE,  
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

## ACREAGE of LAND in CULTIVATION, MARLBOROUGH and OTAGO, 1879 to 1886.

## MARLBOROUGH.

| Year.   | Fallow. | Grain. | Green and<br>other Crops. | Artificial Grasses. | Total.  | Increase in<br>Total Acreage. |
|---|---------|--------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1879  | 3,012   | 7,911  | 2,304                     | 55,133              | 68,360  | ..                            |
| 1880  | 2,917   | 9,116  | 2,467                     | 52,926              | 67,426  | 934                           |
| 1881  | 4,482   | 9,287  | 3,028                     | 67,318              | 84,115  | 16,689                        |
| 1882  | 10,401  | 8,538  | 3,744                     | 60,807              | 83,490  | 625                           |
| 1883  | 3,367   | 9,456  | 4,626                     | 77,781              | 95,230  | 11,740                        |
| 1884  | 3,182   | 9,790  | 7,451                     | 104,301             | 124,724 | 29,494                        |
| 1885  | 5,642   | 9,254  | 7,461                     | 117,370             | 139,727 | 15,003                        |
| 1886  | 7,111   | 8,863  | 7,640                     | 135,337             | 158,951 | 19,224                        |
| Total increase, land in cultivation, 1879 to 1886 |         |        |                           |                     | .. ..   | 90,591                        |

## OTAGO.

|   |        |         |         |           |           |         |
|---|--------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 1879  | 77,404 | 195,630 | 94,288  | 416,208   | 783,530   | ..      |
| 1880  | 77,156 | 207,050 | 107,561 | 469,158   | 860,925   | 77,395  |
| 1881  | 86,203 | 206,614 | 135,182 | 572,936   | 1,000,935 | 140,010 |
| 1882  | 89,021 | 220,694 | 154,504 | 650,479   | 1,114,698 | 113,765 |
| 1883  | 66,611 | 266,543 | 174,462 | 822,963   | 1,330,579 | 215,881 |
| 1884  | 73,051 | 242,858 | 222,477 | 867,278   | 1,405,664 | 75,085  |
| 1885  | 59,080 | 270,506 | 225,517 | 988,571   | 1,543,674 | 138,010 |
| 1886  | 81,439 | 228,385 | 208,298 | 1,079,654 | 1,597,776 | 54,102  |
| Total increase, land in cultivation, 1879 to 1886 |        |         |         |           | .. ..     | 814,246 |

NOTE.—About 60 per cent. of the grass lands in Marlborough, and about 24 per cent. in 1879 and 16 per cent. in 1886 in Otago, consisted of lands simply surface-sown with grass seed; and, although included above, can hardly be strictly deemed "cultivated" lands.

WM. R. E. BROWN,  
Registrar-General.

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