

1878.

NEW ZEALAND.

CANCELLATION OF RUNS IN OTAGO

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

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

No. 1.

Mr. HENRY DRIVER to the Hon. Mr. STOUT.

SIR,—

Wellington, 12th October, 1878.

You are doubtless aware that considerable anxiety has been felt in the Provincial District of Otago in consequence of Run No. 369, belonging to Messrs. Cargill and Anderson, as well as one leased to Messrs. McLaren and Turnbull, having been cancelled under the provisions of the Mines Act of last year. Numerous telegrams have been forwarded to the Otago representatives, setting forth that the above cancellations have caused a feeling of insecurity, and possibly a financial crisis would follow if it were thought that the provisions of this Act would be exercised to any great extent. In consequence of these telegrams, a meeting of the Otago members was held yesterday, when it was decided that some expression of opinion should be obtained from you as to the future intentions of the Government in this matter; and I am deputed to ask if you will be kind enough to explain the circumstances that have caused the Government to take advantage of the Act referred to, as it is very generally felt, and I have no doubt you are of the same mind, that the provisions of the Act were not intended to be used except in cases of absolute necessity.

I wish you to distinctly understand that I do not desire to hamper the fair and legitimate action of the Government, but I think an expression of opinion from you as to the future intentions of Ministers would tend to allay the feeling that has resulted from the action already taken.

I shall feel much obliged by an early reply.

The Hon. Robert Stout, Minister for Lands,
Wellington.

I am, &c.,
HENRY DRIVER.

No. 2.

The Hon. Mr. STOUT to Mr. HENRY DRIVER.

SIR,—

Government Buildings, Wellington, 14th October, 1878.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th October instant, and I am glad that by it the opportunity is afforded me of stating the policy the Government has pursued, and intends to pursue, in providing for settlement in the Provincial District of Otago.

You are right in assuming that I am aware that some anxiety has been manifested by some persons and companies in Dunedin regarding the tenure of pastoral holdings. A telegram has been forwarded to some members of the Legislature, of which the following is a copy:—

“Great consternation among mercantile, banking, and runholding interests here, on hearing the purpose of the Government to cancel leases of runs, contrary to provisions of Land Act, by misuse of clauses of Mines Act. If this is done, the value of all leases is reduced to simply the amount of compensation, and the result can only be disastrous, and may cause collapse of pastoral interest, and possibly financial crisis, by foreclosing of securities over such property. Are there no men among our representatives to make a stand against so cruel and disastrous a course?”

“The Australian Mortgage, Land, and Finance Company
(Limited), Cargill, Gibbs, and Co., Agents.

“The National Mortgage and Agency Company of New
Zealand (Limited), Geo. G. Russell, General Manager.

“John McNab, Manager, Bank of Australasia.

“Colonial Bank of New Zealand (Limited), Beale, Manager.

“Wright, Stephenson, and Co.