

1882.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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## WASTE LANDS COMMITTEE.

REPORT ON THE DISPOSAL OF PASTORAL LANDS BILL, TOGETHER WITH  
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

*Brought up 4th August, 1882, and ordered to be printed.*

### REPORT.

THE Waste Lands Committee, to whom was referred the above Bill, having taken evidence upon the subject, have duly considered the Bill.

I am directed to report: From the evidence before the Committee, it appears that, with the exception of the pastoral leases in Otago, which fall in in February, 1883, the provisions of this Bill would be practically inoperative for the next eight years; (2) that, with the exception of the provision which limits the tenure of pastoral land to ten years, the runs falling in next year can be advantageously dealt with under the law at present in force; (3) that the Committee will recommend an amendment in the Government Land Bill, having for its object an extension of tenure in respect of purely pastoral lands.

4th August, 1882.

### MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, 4TH AUGUST, 1882. (Mr. FULTON, Chairman.)

Mr. McKERROW examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] You have read this Bill. I think it would be convenient if you were to make such a statement on it as you think proper, and we can ask you questions after?—The first clause of the Bill is this:—

“1. The short title of this Act is ‘The Disposal of Pastoral Lands Act, 1882,’ and shall be deemed to be incorporated with, and shall be read and construed, *mutatis mutandis*, with ‘The Land Act, 1877.’”

That I have no remark to make on. Then section 2 reads:—

“2. All Crown lands which shall, after the passing of this Act, be let or leased, or occupied under license, or in any other way for pastoral purposes, shall be dealt with in a manner hereinafter provided. No larger extent of land than will be sufficient, according to the estimate of the Land Board, to carry all the year round five thousand sheep or one thousand head of cattle shall be disposed of in one block.”

This section, so far as it relates to size of runs, is word for word with section 119 of “The Land Act, 1877,” under which the runs are disposed of. The only difference it would make is this: that in Otago some of the runs which were in existence when the Act was passed in 1877 are of larger carrying capacity than here stated. By the Act of 1877, when these runs come again to be relet, it is within the power of the Land Board, the Government concurring, to relet these runs in such large areas as they are at present. If this Bill becomes law, that of course could not be done. I may further remark that the operation of this section of the Bill would not affect for many years the disposal of the pastoral estate in the other land districts of the colony, because the runs in these districts are now let for such terms that it would be 1890 at the very earliest before it would operate in Canterbury. In Marlborough it would not operate for fourteen years on the million acres let in that district. So the Bill would have an immediate effect only in Otago. Not later than February of next year, by the present law, forty-eight runs, aggregating 1,700,000 acres, will have to be dealt with; and, if this Bill becomes law, of course these runs will have to be much subdivided, and in a manner that I think would be very prejudicial to the working of the country, and in a very considerable degree lessen its value as pastoral country, unless one lessee took up several runs, in which case of course the evil would vanish. Then section 3 reads:—

“3. Before any run shall be opened for application the Land Board shall determine the amount of rent to be paid for such run, and notify the same by advertisement in the usual