

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

WASTE LANDS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF), ON THE PETITION OF THOMAS BRYDONE AND OTHERS, PASTORAL CROWN
TENANTS OF OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND, TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Brought up 28th July, 1886, and ordered to be printed.

REPORT.

PETITIONERS state that they are pastoral tenants of the Crown in the Provincial Districts of Otago and Southland; that they acquired their holdings in 1882 and 1883, at public auction; that the rabbit pest has since reached its climax, and that wool and other produce has greatly fallen in price; that the prices they paid for the land were too high. They pray for inquiry into the condition of the pastoral tenants, and for such relief as the circumstances may demand.

Having carefully considered the subject of this petition, and taken evidence thereon, the Committee is of opinion—

That it would be injudicious and impolitic on the part of the State to make concessions to any one particular class of land-occupants, unless it is prepared to do so to every other class under similar circumstances; there being but little distinction, as regards the question at issue, between the case of the petitioners and that of those who have acquired land from the Crown on freehold for cash, at prices which may have proved to be out of keeping with the subsequent market-value of produce.

That, while the position of the petitioners is undoubtedly one of hardship, it is hoped that the recent rise in the market-value of wool may go far to improve their position.

For these reasons the Committee cannot recommend the prayer of the petitioners.

A. P. O'CALLAGHAN,

Chairman.

28th July, 1886.*