

1910.
NEW ZEALAND.

CANTERBURY PASTORAL RUNS, THE LICENSES OVER WHICH TERMINATE ON FEBRUARY 28, 1911

(REPORT OF INSPECTION OF), BY MR. REEVES AND MR. PARISH.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

Messrs. H. M. REEVES, RICHARD PARISH, and ROBERT GUTHRIE to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LANDS.
SIR,—

Lands Office, Christchurch, N.Z., 19th October, 1909.

In accordance with the instructions of the Acting Minister of Lands, dated 27th August, 1909, we have inspected those pastoral runs of Canterbury the licenses over which terminate on the 28th February, 1911. The only run not examined was No. 237, known as the Upper Hurunui, which we were instructed by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Christchurch, not to visit. In making our report we should like to point out that our inspection was conducted with the utmost speed consistent with the efficient accomplishment of our task, and that we are greatly indebted to the tenants and managers of the runs visited for their hospitality, and for the facilities and assistance unanimously afforded us in carrying out our duties.

Owing to the fact that Mr. Guthrie felt it impossible for him to agree with many of the conclusions of his fellow-Commissioners, he suggested that he should embody his opinions in a separate report, and this proposal the Commission indorsed. On comparing his report with that of the majority, you will observe that, while on several points there is a difference of opinion, on many others the three Commissioners are substantially in agreement.

We have, &c.,

H. M. REEVES,
RICHARD PARISH,
ROBERT GUTHRIE,
Per H. M. REEVES.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands, Wellington.

REPORT OF MR. REEVES AND MR. PARISH.

SIR,—

Lands Office, Christchurch, N.Z., 19th October, 1909.

In beginning our report we should like to emphasize the fact that we are in thorough sympathy with the principle of closer settlement, and that in making our inspection we have been animated not only by the announced desire of the Government to promote settlement wherever practicable, but also by our own convictions. This being the case, it is almost unnecessary to remind you that in making our recommendations we have gone as far in the direction of subdividing the pastoral runs under notice as is, in our belief, consistent with the welfare of the State's property and with the prosperity of the incoming tenants. After careful investigation we are left with the conclusion that the question of settling the back-country runs of Canterbury is one which should be approached with the greatest caution. However much the State may desire to increase the number of persons occupying its pastoral runs, there are certain obvious facts which it cannot lose sight of, and these facts all point to the necessity for the utmost care. With very little exception, the land inspected by the Commission is not what, for want of a better definition, may be termed "small men's country." Its situation, remote from the sea and plains, and at a high altitude—