

matters referred to in the Commission, a copy of which is attached hereto, have the honour to report as follows :—

We assembled at Dunedin on the 13th April, and held a meeting, at which our itinerary for Southland and Otago was arranged, and various matters discussed. The Chairman, Mr. Sadd, delivered a short opening address.

Leaving Dunedin on the morning of the 14th April we arrived at Invercargill, and there held a public sitting, taking evidence. On the 15th April a second sitting was held at Invercargill. While in that city we visited the Museum and had an opportunity to examine the admirable collection of indigenous grasses and other economic plants arranged by Mr. J. Crosby-Smith, F.L.S. On the 16th April your Commission proceeded to Manapouri by way of the Aparima Valley, to Mossburn, and thence by the coach-road to the lake. We had an excellent opportunity of viewing the tussock pastures along the route, and seeing their relation to the depredation caused by the rabbit, and their changes according to the nature of the soil and the climate. On the evening of the same day Mr. Robert Murrell, a runholder of Manapouri, gave valuable evidence before your Commission. The next day we proceeded to Lumsden, holding a public sitting there and taking evidence, after which we proceeded by train to Kingston, and thence by steamer on Lake Wakatipu to Queenstown. On the 19th April we held at Queenstown a well-attended public sitting, and obtained a great deal of excellent evidence regarding the neighbouring sheep-stations. The next day we proceeded by way of the Waimea Plains to Gore, where we held a public sitting. His Worship the Mayor of Gore welcomed the Commission, and expressed the hope that evidence of assistance to the Dominion generally would be obtained. The next day we proceeded to Switzers, where a well-attended public sitting was held. In the afternoon we visited Mr. R. S. Charter's Greenvale Station, situated at the base of the Black Umbrella Mountains. We examined the pasture *en route*, and were struck with the large amount of country rendered worthless through the spread of manuka. We also noted that the sweetbrier was likely to become dangerous. The next morning your Commission left Switzers for Tapanui, and observed the beneficial effect of close settlement where there had originally been large holdings. A public sitting was held that evening and a considerable amount of evidence given. An important matter brought before us was a suggestion that the Blue Mountains should be handed over to the Forestry Department. During our stay we visited the Tapanui State Nursery. On the 23rd April we proceeded from Tapanui to Dunedin, having visited on the way the Conical Hills plantation. The morning of the 24th April was occupied by routine business. On the 26th April your Commission held a public sitting at Dunedin and obtained a considerable amount of instructive evidence. We sat again in the same city the following day, when further interesting information was elicited. On the 28th April your Commission left Dunedin in motor-cars for Roxburgh, via Lawrence. A public sitting was held that evening at Roxburgh and was well attended. The next morning we proceeded by way of Fruitlands to Alexandra. At Fruitlands we were at the average northern limit of the south-western rainfall, and observed on the one side the well-grassed Old Man Range, and on the opposite side of the River Clutha the depleted area of part of Central Otago. We also saw the extensive orchards planted a few years ago by the Fruitlands Company on ground which has suffered considerable depletion. The same day we held a public sitting at Alexandra, and heard a good deal of first-hand evidence regarding the special pastoral problems of Central Otago. The next day we proceeded to Cromwell, visiting *en route* first the striking example of dry farming conducted by Mr. Barker, and next the powerhouse on the Fraser River, and investigating the supply of water for irrigation purposes. At Cromwell a public sitting was held, and further important evidence obtained of a similar nature to that given at Alexandra. The next day we proceeded to Northburn Station, under the guidance of Mr. D. Middleton and Mr. W. H. Reid, an officer of the Agricultural Department concerned with tussock-grassland investigation. Here we had an opportunity of carefully examining the experimental plots designed by the Department of Agriculture with the view of finding out some of the fundamental principles on which