

Appendix.

No. 4.

Minutes of
Evidence.H. O'Brien, Esq.
28 June 1837.

Wednesday, 28 June 1837.

Henry O'Brien, of Yass, esq., a considerable Land and Stock Proprietor, called in ;
and Examined.

I do not profess to know much of the general wants of the Colony in respect to agricultural labour, but I am aware that the complaint of a great deficiency is very general.

The number of bales of wool shipped during the year 1836, was	-	22,000
And supposing that on the 1st of January 1837, there remain to be shipped	-	1,000
And that there were manufactured in the Colony	-	1,000

The aggregate produce of 1836 would thus amount to	-	24,000
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Again ; supposing that each bale contained 100 fleeces, the number of sheep clipped that year would be	-	2,400,000
To which are to be added the September lambs not shorn ; say to each 10,000 sheep, 1,200 lambs ; making the total number of lambs	-	288,000
To which add the next March lambing, say	-	300,000

Making the total number of sheep in the colony, in the present year	-	2,988,000
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For each 1,200 sheep, three men are required as shepherds and hut-keepers, which would give	-	7,470
And for every 100 men thus employed, 10 labouring men would be required as farm servants, labourers, and bullock drivers, which would give for these purposes	-	747

Making the number employed on sheep establishments	-	8,217
To which add the number employed on cattle establishments, say	-	1,200

Which would give as the total number of men employed in 1837, on the several sheep and cattle stations in the colony	-	9,417
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For every 10,000 sheep, 10 extra men will be required in May 1838 ; and taking for granted that the flocks will at that time amount to 3,000,000, there would then be immediate employment in tending the flocks alone for	-	3,000
And there would be required for the cattle establishments about	-	500
Making the number of immigrants that would be required for the increased flocks and herds alone of 1838	-	3,500 men

Besides which, agricultural labourers, household servants and mechanics will be required in large numbers ; but I do not profess to possess any accurate knowledge of the exact number that would be likely to find employment. I have at this moment from 1,000 to 1,400 sheep in several of my flocks, instead of 600, which I consider to be enough in one flock. I have lately hired several freed men at very high wages, and I would willingly hire others at the same rates if I could get them. If a sufficient supply of immigrants from Great Britain and Ireland can be obtained, I would much prefer them to Indians or Chinese ; but, situate as we are at present, with rapidly increasing flocks and herds, and with hands infinitely short of the requisite number to tend them, I would recommend the immediate introduction of such numbers of the hill labourers of India, and of Chinese, as the colonists shall previously enter into arrangements with the government to receive and employ on their arrival here, under certain specified regulations as to wages and good treatment. Such a measure would prevent the introduction of persons whose services might not be required on their arrival in the colony. I would take ten of these people on trial myself.

Lieutenant-Colonel *Henry Dumaresq*, Commissioner for the Australian Agricultural Company, called in ; and Examined.

Lieut.-Col.
H. Dumaresq.

I AM not in possession of data on which to found calculations with respect to the present deficiency of labourers, farm and household servants, shepherds, stock-keepers, and mechanics, and therefore can bring little more than vague conjecture in aid of the interesting subject now under consideration of the Committee ; but it appears to me that by taking the numbers of cattle and sheep stated in the late census, and calculating their probable increase for the next ensuing two years, and then estimating the number of convicts who may arrive in the colony during the same period, and whose services may be applied to their superintendence, allowing three men to each 1,000 sheep, and two men to each 1,000 head of cattle