

1941.

NEW ZEALAND.

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1925

(REPORT ON THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 109 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1925.

The LAND PURCHASE CONTROLLER to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LANDS.

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st June, 1941.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit my report on the land-purchase operations for the year ended 31st March, 1941.

In my last report I gave details of the Matanuku Downs and Strathmore Estates, for the purchase of which the Dominion Land Purchase Board had just completed negotiations. Both these transactions were finalized during the year under review, and, in addition, other properties in the North Auckland, Auckland, Canterbury, and Southland districts were acquired with a view to development for closer settlement.

Brief particulars of the year's purchases are given hereunder:—

W. H. Bradley's property, containing 1,248 acres, is situated in the Hobson County, seven miles from Te Kopuru and seventeen miles south from Dargaville. The country, which lies well, can be described as level to undulating with some steep faces. At the date of purchase 157 acres were in good grass, 160 acres ploughed and partly cultivated, the balance being in inferior grasses, mainly danthonia and rat-tail. All the fencing erected by the vendor was particularly well constructed. An ample water-supply for closer subdivision will be obtainable from lakes and springs. Electric power will be available within twelve months. The carrying-capacity of the property when fully developed is estimated at 600 dairy cows and about 120 heifers and steers, so that it should be possible to obtain from twelve to fourteen self-contained dairy-farms.

Ototoa Block, acquired in January, 1941, from Messrs. South Head, Ltd., contains 1,610 acres 2 roods 28 perches, and comprises the better-grassed portion of the South Head Station. The nearest sale-yards and railway-station are at Helensville, twenty-three miles distant by metalled road. The soil is sandy loam on sandstone, and there is ample water for closer subdivision. The present capacity is about 1,800 breeding-ewes and 100 breeding-cows, but after further development the utilization will be dairying.

R. Billing's property, of 894 acres 2 roods at Pongakawa, was purchased in September, 1940, and is now being developed in conjunction with other land in the locality. Very little use had been made of the property by the vendor, and when taken over by the Government it was considerably affected by ragwort and rabbits. However, the country is sound, and it has been proved that it responds readily to proper farming methods.

The *Strathmore Estate*, 9,836 acres 2 roods 4 perches, is located twenty-eight miles from Rotorua and one mile from the Reporoa Township, School, and Post-office. The vendor, the Finance Corporation of New Zealand, Ltd., gave possession on the 2nd September, 1940. Development is now proceeding under the control of the Superintendent of Land Development, Auckland, the work being undertaken in conjunction with that on the Small Farms Board's Mihi Block adjoining. The land varies between good-quality partly-drained swamp, fair to good-quality flat and rolling country, ploughable hills, and poor pumice flats. The coarse pumice flats and portion of the hills are doubtful development propositions and will not be touched meantime, work being confined to approximately 6,400 acres, representing the best of the block. It is estimated that about sixty self-contained dairy-farms will be obtained on subdivision.