

1913.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1908
(REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in compliance with Section 85 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1908.

The LAND PURCHASE INSPECTOR to the MINISTER OF LANDS.

Wellington, 23rd July, 1913.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the report of the Department for the year ending 31st March, 1913.

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS.

The number of properties considered during the year was 208, containing an area of 661,211 acres; a considerable proportion being either unsuitable for subdivision, or offered at a price quite beyond their value for settlement purposes.

The area purchased and taken possession of was 52,099 acres freehold, together with about 60,000 leasehold. Two other properties acquired, containing 4,285 acres, have since been disposed of. The actual expenditure was £428,044, making a total of £6,376,155 for 1,349,040 acres.

The estates opened for selection were, with few exceptions, all taken up, but, as stated in the last report, the demand is mainly for grazing country where little or no labour is required.

Further purchases to the extent of 127,592 acres, valued at £462,183, have been completed, and will be dealt with before the end of the financial year.

The area of lands suitable to meet the wants of applicants—*i.e.*, grazing-areas—is becoming more and more circumscribed, and so long as the demand is in this direction such lands will continue to increase in value. Any land suitable for dairying is being held for very high prices.

LAND SETTLEMENT FINANCE ACT.

During the year there were incorporated ten associations, with a membership of eighty-seven, and an area of 11,354 acres, valued at £185,899. The total number of associations incorporated up to the 31st March last is thirty-four, with a membership of 239, and an area of 35,050 acres, valued at £462,094.

Generally speaking, the initial difficulties in connection with such undertakings have been well surmounted. In a few instances some trouble has been experienced, but with the exercise of a little patience matters should right themselves.

The difficulty of arranging finance, and the troubles incidental to the formation of associations under the present Act, are seriously hindering operations. It is hoped that the proposed new Bill will be placed upon the statute-book this session.

Appended are explanatory tables.

I have, &c.

The Hon. W. F. Massey, Minister of Lands.

JOHN D. RITCHIE.