

1924.  
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.  
SETTLEMENT OF CROWN LANDS

(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

CONTENTS

GENERAL REPORT:—	PAGE	APPENDIX II:—	PAGE
Review of Past Year .. .. .	2	Land for Settlements—	
Purchase of Land for Subdivision .. .. .	3	Estates opened for Selection .. .. .	26
Legislation .. .. .	3	Summary of Settlements established .. .. .	26
Lands for Selection .. .. .	3	Extracts from Reports of Commissioners of	
Urewera Block .. .. .	4	Crown Lands—	
Revaluations .. .. .	4	North Auckland .. .. .	33
National Endowment .. .. .	5	Auckland .. .. .	34
Forfeitures and Surrenders .. .. .	5	Gisborne .. .. .	34
Receipts .. .. .	5	Hawke's Bay .. .. .	34
Rebates .. .. .	5	Taranaki .. .. .	35
Postponements .. .. .	5	Wellington .. .. .	35
Arrears .. .. .	5	Nelson .. .. .	35
Expenditure .. .. .	6	Marlborough .. .. .	35
Statement of Capital .. .. .	7	Westland .. .. .	35
Inspection of Offices .. .. .	7	Canterbury .. .. .	35
Land-drainage Operations .. .. .	7	Otago .. .. .	35
Staff Employment .. .. .	7	Southland .. .. .	35
Departmental Changes .. .. .	8	APPENDIX III:—	
Head Office .. .. .	10	Land-drainage Operations .. .. .	36
Report on Cognate Subjects .. .. .	11	APPENDIX IV:—	
APPENDIX I:—		Sand-dune Reclamation .. .. .	38
Settlement of Crown Lands—		APPENDIX V:—	
North Auckland .. .. .	12	Report on Snowstorms, Southland .. .. .	42
Auckland .. .. .	14	TABLES:—	
Gisborne .. .. .	15	Table 1.—Lands of the Dominion, Position of	
Hawke's Bay .. .. .	17	(approximately) .. .. .	44
Taranaki .. .. .	18	2.—Selections during the Year .. .. .	45
Wellington .. .. .	18	3.—All Lands held on Lease .. .. .	45
Nelson .. .. .	19	4.—Lands-for-settlement Lands .. .. .	46
Marlborough .. .. .	20	5.—Endowment Lands leased and ad-	
Westland .. .. .	22	ministered by Land Boards .. .. .	46
Canterbury .. .. .	23	6.—Receipts, Arrears, and Postpone-	
Otago .. .. .	24	ments .. .. .	46
Southland .. .. .	25		

Sir,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 5th August, 1924.

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report on the settlement of Crown land for the year ended 31st March, 1924.

I have, &amp;c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,

Under-Secretary.

The Hon. A. D. McLeod, Minister of Lands.

---

## REPORT.

---

### REVIEW OF PAST YEAR.

THE past year has, on the whole, been a satisfactory one from the farmer's point of view, and much steady progress has been made. Perhaps the outstanding feature of the period was the remarkable success of the wool-sales held in the Dominion. Overseas buyers were strongly represented, competition was exceedingly keen, and values reached the prices obtained under the commandeering, each succeeding sale appearing to afford evidence of a yet firmer market. Local mills competed freely with foreign buyers for the finer wools; but the most pleasing feature was the remarkable rise in value of the coarser wools. The result of the series of sales was altogether satisfactory to the sheep-farmer, and the extra value to the whole Dominion of the season's wool-clip will be a potent factor in the revival of the pastoral industry. Lamb and mutton values have also generally been well maintained, and altogether the pastoral industry has experienced a profitable year. There has been a substantial increase in the number of sheep in the Dominion, as on the 30th April, 1923, there were 23,081,439, whilst on the 30th April, 1924, it was estimated that there were 23,584,789, showing an increase of half a million.

The volume of dairying products has again been well maintained, and, despite a fall in prices and a somewhat fluctuating market, this industry continues to expand and to hold its high position amongst the producing and exporting industries of the Dominion. No other branch of farming offers a surer means for the settlement of a large rural population, and a strong and healthy dairying industry is essential to the progress of subdivision and settlement. Strong competition from other dairying countries must be faced, and can best be met by improved farming methods and a more rigorous culling of herds. A tendency has been noted in many cases for dairy-farmers to revert to sheep, either wholly or partially, and this is a matter that demands careful watching. In those cases where farmers kept a few cows to supplement their returns it is no doubt natural that, now wool and mutton are on a more payable basis, they should wish to return to sheep; but it is inadvisable to use first-class dairying-land for sheep-grazing only.

The beef-market has not been altogether satisfactory. A considerable number of North Island cattle, drawn principally from Wellington Province, were shipped to Melbourne, and this had the effect of bringing about a temporary improvement in local values, which, however, was not maintained for any length of time. The demand for store cattle has been poor; but there are signs of a shortage and a permanent rise in prices.

Unfortunately, the year was not a good one for agricultural operations. A wet autumn and winter greatly reduced the cereal area, and the yield both of wheat and oats has been below the average. The rainfall was unevenly distributed, and in addition crops in Canterbury were subjected to the most severe north-westerns experienced for many years.

Disastrous floods occurred during the autumn of 1923 in Marlborough, north and middle Canterbury, and in portions of Otago, notably the Taieri Plains. Roads and bridges were extensively damaged, and the flooding of large areas of agricultural and pastoral lands resulted in severe losses to the farmers concerned, though fortunately the stock mortality was not unduly high. Early in March last the district surrounding Napier experienced a phenomenal rainfall, resulting in a serious flood, details of which are given in the special report on Hawke's Bay.

An exceptionally heavy snowfall occurred during August in parts of the Otago and Southland back country; but the losses in sheep were fortunately not so severe as at first anticipated. This snowfall, so far as Southland is concerned, is the subject of a special article in the report (see Appendix V).

The problem of unpaid rents has again been a serious one, and has occasioned much anxiety; but the position will be much improved when the revaluation of soldier holdings has been completed. The whole subject is dealt with more fully under its appropriate heading.

Crown tenants now on the books of the Department number 35,734, occupying an area of 20,226,633 acres. A large proportion of this area is held under pastoral tenures in the South Island. No

estates are being acquired at present under the Land for Settlements Act, and new selections have been confined to unselected portions of estates previously acquired, various areas of Crown and national-endowment land, and subdivisions of blocks acquired from the Natives by the Native Land Purchase Board, and opened under the Land Act for public application.

#### LEGISLATION.

THE following is a brief summary of the legislation affecting the operations of this Department which was passed during the year 1923 :—

*Discharged Soldiers Settlement Amendment Act, 1923.*—This Act comprises two Parts, the first of which provides the machinery necessary for enabling relief to be given to discharged-soldier settlers, and the second contains certain provisions which experience showed to be necessary for the purpose of facilitating the administration of the principal Act. The first Part of the Act authorizes the setting-up of the Discharged Soldiers Dominion Revaluation Board, and of such number of District Revaluation Committees as may be necessary to deal with applications from discharged soldiers for reductions of rent and of mortgages, and for relief with respect to arrears of rent, interest, &c. Any reductions of rent or mortgages are to date from the 1st July, 1921, or the date of lease or license, or of the advance, whichever date is the later.

*Rangitaiki Land Drainage Amendment Act, 1923.*—The purport of this Act is to increase the number of classes in which lands subject to the principal Act can be classified by the arbitrators for rating purposes, and to authorize reclassification *from time to time* of such lands for such purposes, and the adjustment of rates accordingly.

*Finance Act, 1923.*—Sections 4 and 5 authorize the Minister of Finance to borrow a further sum not exceeding £50,000 for the purpose of carrying on works under the Hauraki Plains Act, 1908, and a further sum not exceeding £50,000 for the purposes of the Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910. Section 9 provides that instead of all expenses in connection with the administration of the Scenery Preservation Act, 1908, being paid out of the Consolidated Fund as heretofore, they shall be paid out of moneys to be appropriated by Parliament for such purposes out of the Ordinary Revenue Account of the Consolidated Fund. Provision is also made that any unexpended balances of loan moneys or of revenue received under that Act as on the 1st April, 1924, were to be transferred to the said account.

*Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1923.*—This Act, which contains 111 sections and two schedules, is a series of special enactments, all of which deal with matters of local interest. Fifty-eight of the sections were promoted by Departments of State, the remainder by local authorities and private institutions.

*Regulations.*—The principal regulations issued during the year were those issued under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, prescribing forms of applications, valuations, and certificates for the purpose of giving effect to provisions relating to applications for relief from discharged soldiers.

#### PURCHASE OF LAND FOR SUBDIVISION.

The Department is approached from time to time to purchase estates in favoured localities for subdivision, this, of course, being the function of the Land Purchase Controller under the Land for Settlements Act. Experience has proved that unless lands are acquired for subdivision at a price based on average sheep values, it is not possible to cut up estates into dairy propositions and offer same for selection at suitable rentals. The good lands suitable for dairying in the Dominion are generally firmly held, and it is only possible to acquire same at a price which immediately presents difficulties when subdivision is proceeded with.

The policy of the Department for closer settlement must be on sound lines regarding all purchases for subdivision, and so long as the sheep industry continues in its present flourishing condition it will be well nigh impossible to acquire desirable and suitable lands for closer settlement.

Again, the question of actual subdivision of a property bought at what would appear a reasonable figure presents difficulties as the overhead charges are at once multiplied, and the final result of the subdivision is that it is difficult to maintain the original value as a whole, either in pounds, shillings, and pence, or on carrying-capacity.

#### LANDS FOR SELECTION.

During the year 593,771 acres were taken up under all tenures by 2,088 selectors, the average holding being about 284 acres. There is a good demand for land in favourably situated localities, but attractive Crown lands are naturally becoming less in area as the settlement of the country progresses.

During the year under review the principal blocks offered were the Waipiro Block, in the Gisborne district, comprising nine sections of a total area of 7,503 acres. There was a good demand for the sections, and the whole of the applicants could not be satisfied. In the Hawke's Bay District 35,435 acres were offered in four pastoral runs, but there was no demand. In the Marlborough District the principal block offered was the Snowflake Run, containing 11,430 acres, and although the run was selected there was no competition. In the Canterbury District one run of 6,061 acres was offered.

Doubtless the most important blocks offered during the year were the pastoral-run subdivisions in the Otago Land District. Six of the subdivisions of the Benmore Runs were offered for license by auction, the area offered being 53,984 acres. Ten subdivisions of the Mount Pisa Block, of a

total area of 128,522 acres, were offered, and there was keen competition for this country, although on account of its altitude it was not thought that it would be so attractive. 35,579 acres of pastoral land in the Teviot Settlement and Block were also opened, and, although most of the blocks were disposed of, the competition was not so keen as in the case of Mount Pisa. In the Southland District one pastoral run containing 12,900 acres was offered, and disposed of at the upset rental.

The balance of the sections offered during the year comprise mostly scattered sections in various localities, including forfeited sections.

The following table shows approximately the area at present available for selection and being prepared with a view to placing on the market as early as possible :—

Land District.	Area open and available for Immediate Settlement.	Area under Survey for Settlement.	Area to be surveyed for Early Settlement.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
North Auckland .. .. .	20,736	17,577	5,600
Auckland .. .. .	86,000	30,020	67,380
Gisborne .. .. .	21,753	30,479	57,656
Hawke's Bay .. .. .	39,407	Nil	7,784
Taranaki .. .. .	22,000	18,300	16,200
Wellington .. .. .	33,758	Nil	7,779
Marlborough .. .. .	8,463	Nil	Nil.
Nelson .. .. .	56,215	Nil	54,005
Westland .. .. .	140,139	833	68,200
Canterbury .. .. .	11,163	Nil	Nil.
Otago .. .. .	23,183	59,840	5,516
Southland .. .. .	6,000	20,000	Nil.
Totals .. .. .	468,817	177,049	290,120

Further particulars of the principal blocks proposed to be dealt with in future will be found in the annual reports of the respective Commissioners of Crown Lands, printed in Appendix I.

#### UREWERA BLOCK.

In acquiring the Urewera Block it was not expected that the whole, or even the greater portion, of the country would be suitable for settlement; and one of the principal objects in its acquisition was to prevent possible alienation to private persons, in order that the rougher portions, unsuitable for farming, could be permanently reserved as a safeguard against denudation of the higher slopes. By this means it is hoped to secure the permanent conservation of the headwater streams, thus regulating rainfall run-off, and in a large measure preventing disastrous floods on the flat and prosperous country to the north near the sea-coast of Whakatane and Opotiki Counties.

As it was recognized that great care would have to be exercised in opening any areas in Urewera, a small Commission was appointed in 1922 to go carefully into the question of whether disastrous results would be likely to follow the denudation of this steep and broken forest country, whereby floods in the Whakatane and Waimana Rivers would be accentuated and the fertile settlements of Waimana and Opouriao endangered, and the extensive reclamation schemes on the Rangitaiki Plains jeopardized. It is therefore the intention, as the best portions of the block are ascertained, to consider the question of reserving the balance for (a) State forest, (b) provisional State forest, and (c) climatic, scenic, or water-conservation reserves. It will therefore be seen that the Government is fully alive to the possible danger, and a too-heavy denudation of the forest on these lands will be prevented, but at the same time a fair portion of the block will be selected for settlement where it is considered that no special danger would arise from the cutting of the forest, and where the lands have a fair chance of holding grass and being successfully occupied.

The total area in the Urewera Block acquired by the Crown is approximately 345,000 acres, and it was estimated that portions of the block were adapted for settlement and might eventually be located and surveyed for disposal. A closer investigation will, however, require to be made to locate more precisely the areas so suitable. In April 28,563 acres were opened for selection. These lands are generally hilly country with small areas of flat and easy undulating land, and the soil is a fair-quality pumice overlying slate or sandstone, and is mostly covered with heavy bush, the altitude ranging from 400 ft. to 2,700 ft. above sea-level. The bulk of the sections lie along the Waimana River, and are accessible from Waimana, Opotiki, or Whakatane. Only three sections were applied for, and it was decided to withdraw to balance of the block from sale with a view to seeing if it might not be better to retain it under forest.

#### REVALUATIONS.

During the year ten Crown leaseholds were revalued under section 15 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1915. The capital values were reduced as a result from £26,830 to £18,825, and the annual rentals from £1,214 to £860. The total revaluations made since the 11th November, 1913, up to the 31st March last numbered 493, with a reduction in capital value from £1,191,562 to £950,372, and in annual rental from £54,074 to £43,090.

## NATIONAL ENDOWMENT.

The area in the national endowment was reduced during the year by 51,174 acres. Fuller particulars are given in parliamentary paper C.—14.

Of the area set aside, 6,897,765 acres were held on lease or license at the 31st March by 4,455 tenants, paying an annual rental of £138,780, while 1,692,240 acres (partly, however, covered by existing leases) had been set aside as provisional State forests.

## FORFEITURES AND SURRENDERS.

Crown tenants numbering 432 had their holdings forfeited for non-compliance with the conditions of their leases and licenses. The area was 222,480 acres, and the annual rental £16,190. In addition 175 tenants surrendered their leases over an area of 140,672 acres, with an annual rental of £5,393. These figures appear large; but, as was the case last year, a considerable proportion comprised lands held under miscellaneous and temporary leases and licenses, while several large pastoral runs swelled the total area. Nevertheless the figures indicate a certain healthy tightening-up of conditions generally, and also an increasing inclination on the part of those tenants who for various reasons have been unable to make a success of their holdings to make way for stronger men.

## RECEIPTS.

Receipts have been well maintained, and total from all sources £1,329,074, an increase of £120,652 over last year's figures. This, of course, excludes Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account receipts. The sum of £421,665 was derived from ordinary Crown lands, £514,358 from lands held under the Land for Settlements Act (including Cheviot Estate), £163,169 from the national endowment, and £124,014 from the education endowment.

Seven districts have returned increases. Taranaki has again shown a falling-off in the amount received for the purchase of West Coast Settlement Reserve lands, while Nelson shows a considerable reduction owing to the revenue from coal leases being now collected by the Receiver of Coal-mines Revenue. The creation of the Gisborne District has naturally reduced the returns from Hawke's Bay. Cash received for purchase of freeholds has shown a marked increase on last year's figures. The following table shows the relation of freehold revenue to total receipts during the last few years:—

	Number of Freeholds acquired.	Amount yielded therefrom. £	Total Receipts. £
Year ending 31st March, 1921 ..	878	320,025	1,735,483
"    1922 ..	335	71,520	1,215,040
"    1923 ..	249	57,809	1,208,422
"    1924 ..	373	104,076	1,329,074

It may be remarked that the freehold tenure generally appears to be more appreciated in the North than in the South Island.

## REBATES.

For prompt payment of rent 16,671 Crown tenants were granted the usual rebate in terms of section 116 of the Land Act, 1908, and section 55 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1908. The total amount granted was £46,633.

## POSTPONEMENTS.

Postponements of payment of rent were granted to 344 tenants during the year, involving £56,663. At the 31st March £54,942 remained postponed on account of 313 tenants. A great number of former postponements have been brought to charge, and, unfortunately, the majority of these now figure under the heading of arrears.

## ARREARS.

Rents in arrear at the 31st March amounted to £544,448, an increase of £186,223 from last year. A large proportion is owing by discharged soldiers holding Crown leases, and the position in this respect will show a great improvement when the work of the District Revaluation Committees and the Dominion Revaluation Board bears fruit. As regards the civilian settlers, no doubt a great many who paid high goodwills are having a hard struggle and will require sympathetic treatment, while a certain proportion of the weaker men are gradually being displaced. The following shows the progressive increase in the arrears of rent owing to the Department during the last few years:—

	£
Year ending 31st March, 1920 .. .. .	51,801
"    1921 .. .. .	63,460
"    1922 .. .. .	167,838
"    1923 .. .. .	358,225
"    1924 .. .. .	544,448

The Department has made every effort to effect a reduction; but the position is admittedly a difficult one. It might be placed on record that a great number of tenants generally regard the Crown as the last debtor that should be paid, and this attitude is extremely difficult of removal, and accounts in no small measure for the volume of arrears. However, judicious pressure will be applied where necessary, and no effort will be spared to improve the position. In passing it may be mentioned that

on the 31st March the Department had on its books 35,734 tenants, with an annual rent-roll of over £1,220,000. The problem of arrears appears to have been more acute in the purely pastoral districts, and now that the prospects of the sheep-farmer are so decidedly bright it is fair to assume that a large volume of arrears will be gradually extinguished.

## EXPENDITURE.

*Summary of Expenditure approved during the Year ended 31st March, 1924.*

Name of Vote or Account.	Net Amount voted.	Gross Expenditure.	Recoveries.	Net Expenditure.
<i>Consolidated Fund.</i>				
Vote Lands and Survey (Subdivision I) ..	£ 155,902	£ 248,281 17 2	£ 119,235 19 7	£ 129,045 17 7
Vote Lands and Survey (Subdivision II)	29,167	26,447 16 1	571 3 9	25,876 12 4
Land for Settlements Account expenses ..	10,005	4,983 1 5	1,019 15 8	3,963 5 9
Land for Settlements Account (Lands for settlement of discharged soldiers) expenses	6,780	2,621 3 3	140 18 10	2,480 4 5
Scenery Preservation Account .. .. .	6,968	3,335 2 10	215 3 2	3,119 19 8
Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account: Expenses of management	50,000	60,062 11 5	2,687 19 7	57,374 11 10
Totals .. .. .	258,822	345,731 12 2	123,871 0 7	221,860 11 7
<i>Public Works Fund.</i>				
Roads to open up land for settlements ..	104,900	49,547 4 5	361 11 5	49,185 13 0
Totals .. .. .	104,900	49,547 4 5	361 11 5	49,185 13 0
<i>Other Accounts.</i>				
Land for Settlements Account .. .. .	40,704 0 9	27,760 15 3	12,943 5 6	
Land for Settlements Account (Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account)	36,553 9 9	21,332 2 6	15,221 7 3	
Rangitaiki Land Drainage Account (section 7, Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910)	41,396 4 9	866 7 9	40,529 17 0	
Rangitaiki Land Drainage Account (section 8, Rangitaiki Land Drainage Act, 1910)	201 14 0	1 12 0	200 2 0	
Hauraki Plains Settlement Account (section 5, Hauraki Plains Amendment Act, 1922)	9,173 2 10	61 4 1	9,111 18 9	
Hauraki Plains Settlement Account (section 93, Reserves, &c., Act, 1916)	83,109 0 2	4,075 0 9	79,033 19 5	
Swamp Land Drainage Account (section 95, Reserves, &c., Act, 1916)—				
Kaitaia .. .. .	12,776 13 9	34 8 3	12,742 5 6	
Waihi .. .. .	16,057 9 2	42 16 8	16,014 12 6	
Poukawa .. .. .	110 15 4	..	110 15 4	
Hikurangi .. .. .	14,905 6 0	5 4 5	14,900 1 7	
Mangawai Kauri-gum Reserve .. .. .	..	100 0 0	..	
General .. .. .	1,662 14 3	4 6 6	1,558 7 9	
Swamp Land Drainage Account (section 2, Swamp Land Drainage Amendment Act, 1922)	3,394 16 6	..	3,394 16 6	
Kauri-gum Account .. .. .	14,225 0 0	..	14,225 0 0	
National Endowment Account .. .. .	8,741 19 9	..	8,741 19 9	
Native Land Settlement Account (surveys, &c.) ..	38,339 12 8	973 13 0	37,365 19 8	
Native Land Settlement Account (section 19, Land Laws Amendment Act, 1922)	2,941 19 4	0 8 9	2,941 10 7	
Cheviot Estate Account (section 19, Land Laws Amendment Act, 1922)	1,481 19 7	..	1,481 19 7	
Hunter's Soldier Assistance Trust Account ..	44 2 1	..	44 2 1	
Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account ..	1,679,356 1 6	..	1,679,356 1 6	
Refunds, deposits, &c. . . . .	35,596 14 8	..	35,596 14 8	
Totals .. .. .	2,040,772 16 10	55,257 19 11	1,985,514 16 11	
Grand totals .. .. .	2,436,051 13 5	179,490 11 11	2,256,561 1 6	

It will be seen that the expenditure is an increase on that of previous years, the net expenditure for 1922-23 being £2,011,840. This is largely caused by operations under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account.

## STATEMENT OF CAPITAL.

The following statement shows the capital controlled by the Lands and Survey Department at 31st March, 1924, and revenue transactions during the financial Year ended 31st March, 1924.

Account.	Capital, 31st March, 1924.	Accrued Revenue.	Revenue Charges.
	£	£	£
Lands and Survey Department—General .. ..	7,485,700	384,985	363,240
Land for Settlements .. ..	10,862,400	519,000	467,400
Land for Settlements (Discharged Soldiers Settlement) ..	3,222,050	131,600	157,000
Cheviot Estate .. ..	373,480	27,850	11,950
National Endowment .. ..	5,057,100	151,125	177,645
Native Land Settlement .. ..	2,213,250	74,900	18,650
Hunter Soldiers Assistance Trust .. ..	19,850	800	275
Primary Education Endowment .. ..	2,294,300	113,950	114,670
Secondary Education Endowment .. ..	119,100	9,350	9,425
Scenery Preservation .. ..	101,650	2,200	2,000
National Endowment Trust .. ..	19,500	420	..
<b>Totals .. ..</b>	<b>31,768,380</b>	<b>1,416,180</b>	<b>1,322,255</b>
Rangitaiki Land Drainage .. ..	472,900	16,000	16,900
Swamp Land Drainage .. ..	331,000	..	..
Kauri-gum Industry .. ..	75,000	33,000	32,250
Hauraki Plains Settlement .. ..	60,500	22,550	20,550
General Purposes Relief .. ..	35,000	1,750	1,575
<b>Totals .. ..</b>	<b>974,400</b>	<b>73,300</b>	<b>71,275</b>
Discharged Soldiers Settlement .. ..	20,074,665	952,725	1,058,885
<b>Grand totals .. ..</b>	<b>52,817,445</b>	<b>2,442,205</b>	<b>2,452,415</b>

This is the first time that it has been possible to afford such information, and the statement is of the utmost value as indicative of the magnitude of State operations in connection with the lands of the Dominion.

## INSPECTION OF OFFICES.

During the year the whole of the twelve district offices have been visited by the Inspector, and particular attention has been paid to the inspection of the accounts and revenue sections. The large volume of work in connection with advances under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, in addition to the collection of land revenue, makes it necessary to have a complete system of internal check, and one of the most important of the Inspector's duties is to see that this check is continuously applied. For this purpose frequent visits have to be paid to the various offices, and this means continual travelling on the part of the inspecting officer. The organization and control of the staff is a difficult matter in some of the district offices on account of the inadequate accommodation provided, but despite this disadvantage the work has been carried out expeditiously owing to the energy and diligence displayed by the members of the staff.

In addition to the departmental inspection, the offices are occasionally visited by Inspectors from the Treasury and the Public Service Commissioner's Office, who have always found the work carried out to their satisfaction.

An inspection was made of the Chief Drainage Engineer's Office at Auckland, whilst the drainage-works at Hauraki Plains and Waihi Swamp were also visited for the purpose of checking the preparation and payment of wages, and to see that the system of recording the receipt and issue of stores is being properly carried out.

## LAND-DRAINAGE OPERATIONS.

The Land Drainage Branch of the Department has been actively engaged during the year, not only in the completion of the many large schemes now in progress, but also in the preliminary investigation of several new projects for the unwatering of large areas of swamp country.

For the year ended 31st March, 1924, 1,700,298 cubic yards of spoil was excavated, as against 1,335,140 yards for the previous year. The up-to-date excavating plant now in the possession of the Department has been the great factor in the progressive increase in the work of excavation during the last few years.

Fuller particulars of the work of the Branch are given in Appendix III.

## STAFF EMPLOYMENT.

On the 1st April, 1923, there were 619 permanent officers in the Department and 36 officers temporarily appointed, making a total of 655. During the past twelve months 53 new appointments (chiefly junior officers) were made to the permanent staff and 15 appointments to the temporary staff,

whilst 9 officers were transferred from other Departments. As against this increase of personnel 9 officers were transferred to other Departments, 5 officers died, and 58 officers retired on superannuation or resigned, leaving the staff of the Department at the 1st April last composed of 609 permanent officers and 51 temporary officers, or a total of 660, being an increase of 5 for the year.

As usual, the officers have responded willingly to extra demands upon their services caused by pressure of work.

#### DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES.

##### *Deaths.*

Reginald Palmer Greville, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor for the North Auckland District, died very suddenly on the 6th September, 1923. He entered the Department in 1878, and for many years worked as a surveyor in the Wellington and other districts, and in addition he was for a few years on the staff of the Geological Survey. When the North Auckland Land District was formed, in April, 1919, he was appointed to be the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, and filled that position until his death. The hard, onerous work consequent upon the creation of a new office and new district, coupled with the great number of applications for land and advances from discharged soldiers in the district, gave Mr. Greville and his staff an unexpectedly great amount of work to deal with, and it speaks volumes for the energy and acumen displayed by him that the operations of that branch of the Department entrusted to his control were dealt with in a highly satisfactory, expeditious, and efficient manner. Mr. Greville never spared himself in the execution of his duties, and his business ability, coupled with his unceasing care, was reflected in the excellent manner in which matters were dealt with in his district. In addition to his arduous duties in connection with the administration of Crown lands and of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, Mr. Greville carried out those devolving on the Kauri-gum Superintendent, and directed the administration of the Kauri-gum Branch from its inception in 1914; whilst he was Chairman of the Royal Commissions on the kauri-gum industry in 1914 and 1921, and in 1916 was sent on a special mission to the United States and Canada in connection with the kauri-gum industry. Mr. Greville's untimely death caused the Government to lose the services of one of its most capable officers.

Frederick James Harrop, draughtsman and computer in the Auckland Office, died suddenly on the 25th April, 1923. He previously acted as Land Transfer Draughtsman in the New Plymouth Office, but owing to failing health had been transferred to Auckland. He had been in the service of the Department since 1892, and did good work on the Land Transfer, Titles, and Native Branch of the Department, and showed himself a zealous and faithful officer.

Arthur Leslie Lomas, a draughtsman in the Wellington Office, died on the 11th February, 1924, through illness originally caused through his war service. He was a good draughtsman with a thorough knowledge of Land Transfer work, and gave every attention to his duties.

Daniel Joseph Corcoran, Crown Lands Ranger in the Otago District, died on the 27th November, 1923, after a short illness. He had formerly been an officer in the Government Life Insurance Department, and from there was transferred to the Valuation Department, being appointed a Crown Lands Ranger for the Southland District in January, 1917. He proved himself to be a conscientious and hardworking officer.

Ronald Keith Charles Adams, a draughting cadet in the North Auckland Office, died on the 2nd October, 1923, after a brief service of two and a half years, during which time he proved himself a steady and reliable officer. He showed promise of becoming a good officer.

##### *Retirements.*

Harry May Skeet, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor for the Auckland District, retired on superannuation on the 1st November, 1923, after a career of about forty-nine years, commencing in 1874. In the early days of his service he carried out extensive explorations, triangulations, and other classes of surveys through dense forest in broken country in the South Auckland and Taranaki Districts, and after his transfer to administrative positions, first as Chief Draughtsman and then as Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor in the Southland and Auckland Districts, he displayed marked energy in promoting the interests of land-settlement, whilst his efforts to place discharged soldiers on the land were indefatigable. As Chairman of the Land Board, and as member of the many Commissions on which he sat from time to time, his views and sound judgment were of great value.

Robert Thomas Sadd, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor for the Otago District, retired on superannuation on the 1st November, 1923, after a service of forty-eight years of hard work as a surveyor and later as Chief Draughtsman, and Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands. Whilst acting as Commissioner in the Nelson, Hawke's Bay, and Otago Districts he carried out his onerous duties in a highly satisfactory manner, and also whilst acting as Chairman of various Land Boards; and when acting in a similar capacity on the Royal Commission set up to inspect and report upon the pastoral lands of the South Island in 1920 he performed the duties entrusted to him in a painstaking and thorough manner. Like many of the old officers who have recently retired, his period of service in the field in the early days of his career caused him to undergo many hardships that were unavoidable in those days.

Henry Dugald McKellar, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor for the Nelson District, retired on superannuation on the 1st August, 1923, after forty-two years' service. As a field surveyor and subsequently as Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands he carried out his duties to the best of his ability, and showed himself a hardworking, conscientious, and painstaking officer.

David McBeth Calder, Chief Draughtsman in the Dunedin Office, retired on superannuation on the 1st May 1923, after a service of forty-three years. He had formerly been a member of the field staff,



and as District Surveyor in Naseby and whilst carrying out surveys in the Otago District he showed himself a good reliable officer. When transferred to the office staff and as Chief Draughtsman his work was very satisfactory, and he was of great assistance to the Chief Surveyors under whom he worked.

Charles Ernest Archibald, Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue, Dunedin, resigned from the 31st March last after a service of thirty-seven years. He had formerly been on the staff of the Wellington, Auckland, and New Plymouth Offices; and also acted as Chief Clerk, Receiver of Land Revenue, and Secretary to the Land Board in the North Auckland Office. During his period of service he proved himself to be a zealous, capable, and hardworking officer. He held a commission in the New Zealand Defence Forces, in which he showed marked energy and ability.

William James Munro, Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue in the Christchurch Office, resigned on the 31st March last, after a service of thirty-five years. He had formerly been in the Auckland Office, and subsequently had been Chief Clerk in the Napier and New Plymouth Offices. The conscientious and hardworking manner in which he carried out the duties entrusted to him were always appreciated by the Commissioners under whom he served, and he had also an excellent record as Secretary to the various Land Boards with which he had been connected.

Maurice Crompton Smith, Chief Draughtsman, Head Office, resigned from the 31st March last, having been an officer of the Department since January, 1882. Mr. Smith was formerly a surveyor in the Auckland District, but was transferred to the Wellington Office in 1892. He was appointed Chief Draughtsman in the Wellington District Office in 1909, having previously acted for a year in a similar capacity at New Plymouth, and in 1914 was transferred to the Head Office. Mr. Smith showed himself a most excellent officer, and his intimate knowledge of old titles and the technical work of the Department was of very great value to the Government. With his exceptional ability he worthily continued the fine record of his family which had commenced in 1853, when his father (the late Stevenson Percy Smith, Secretary for Crown Lands and Surveyor-General) joined the staff of the Chief Surveyor at Taranaki; whilst it may also be mentioned that his grandfather (the late J. S. Smith) was Commissioner of Crown Lands and Receiver of Land Revenue for Taranaki between 1865 and 1874. His quiet and unassuming manner and his great fund of technical knowledge will be much missed. He was also Secretary to the Surveyors' Board since 1914, and still retains that position.

Hamilton McKellar Bannister, Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue in the Wellington District Office, resigned and retired on superannuation on the 1st August, 1923, after a service of forty-one years. Mr. Bannister first joined the Wellington Office, and was subsequently promoted to be Chief Clerk in the New Plymouth Office in 1902. He was transferred to the Wellington Office in 1912 in a similar capacity, and during his long and intimate connection with the land work of the Department he proved himself to be a most capable and hardworking officer, who never spared himself in the exercise of his duties, whilst his quiet, obliging manner caused him to be highly esteemed by both the staffs and the public. His work as Secretary of the Taranaki and Wellington Land Boards was also very much appreciated by the members of those bodies.

Archibald Douglas Burns, Chief Draughtsman, Nelson, retired on superannuation on the 31st July, 1923, after forty-four years' service. He was a reliable and energetic officer.

T. K. Thompson, Land Transfer Draughtsman, Auckland (31st July, 1923); J. R. Strachan, Land Transfer Draughtsman, Wellington (31st December, 1923); T. G. Sole, draughtsman and computer, New Plymouth (31st October, 1923); Andrew Wilson, District Surveyor, Auckland (30th November, 1923); A. D. Newton, Surveyor, Auckland (30th November, 1923); H. A. Warner, draughtsman and computer, Auckland (31st October, 1923); Arthur Stretton, draughtsman and computer, Auckland (31st December, 1923); and Henry Townshend, draughtsman, Auckland (31st October, 1923) all retired on superannuation after faithful and conscientious service extending in most cases over a long period of years.

*Senior Appointments, Promotions, and Transfers.*

Officer appointed.	Previous Position.	Position to which appointed.	Date.
R. S. Galbraith ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Invercargill	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Dunedin	1/11/23
W. F. Marsh ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Napier	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland	1/11/23
H. J. Lowe ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland	1/11/23
J. Cook ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Blenheim	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth	11/12/23
V. I. Blake ..	Chief Draughtsman, Napier ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Gisborne	1/4/23
K. M. Graham ..	Chief Draughtsman, Wellington..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Invercargill	1/11/23
J. Stevenson ..	Chief Draughtsman, Hokitika ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Blenheim	1/12/23
J. D. Thomson ..	Chief Draughtsman, Auckland ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Napier	1/12/23
N. C. Kensington	Chief Draughtsman, Blenheim ..	Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Nelson	1/8/23

*Senior Appointments, Promotions, and Transfers—continued.*

Officer appointed.	Previous Position.	Position to which appointed.	Date.
D. M. Wilson ..	Chief Draughtsman, New Plymouth	Chief Draughtsman, Auckland ..	1/12/23
E. H. Farnie ..	Draughtsman and Computer, Gisborne	Chief Draughtsman, Gisborne ..	1/4/23
W. Stewart ..	Surveyor, Wellington .. ..	Chief Draughtsman, Christchurch	1/5/23
J. H. Treseder ..	Land Drainage Engineer, Whakata	Chief Draughtsman, Dunedin ..	24/5/23
T. Cagney ..	Surveyor, Gisborne .. ..	Chief Draughtsman, Hokitika ..	..
W. D. Armit ..	Surveyor, Auckland .. ..	Chief Draughtsman, New Plymouth	..
P. R. Wilkinson	Surveyor, Auckland .. ..	Chief Draughtsman, Blenheim ..	..
A. F. Waters ..	Surveyor, New Plymouth ..	Chief Draughtsman, Nelson ..	..
P. W. G. Barlow	Surveyor, Auckland .. ..	Chief Draughtsman and Land Transfer Draughtsman, Napier	..
F. H. Waters ..	Surveyor, Christchurch ..	Chief Draughtsman, Wellington..	12/12/23
J. H. W. Wardrop	Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue, Gisborne	Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue, Nelson	..
H. W. C. Mackintosh	Accountant, Auckland .. ..	Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue, Wellington	16/8/23
R. W. Cumming	Senior Clerk, North Auckland ..	Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue, Gisborne	..
T. Tudhope ..	Senior Clerk, Napier .. ..	Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue, Napier	..

The following officers were transferred to other Departments:—

W. S. Hardy, Chief Clerk and Receiver of Land Revenue, Nelson, appointed Chief Clerk, State Forest Service.

E. Pearce, Accountant, Invercargill, appointed Stores Auditor, Dunedin.

## HEAD OFFICE.

The correspondence during the year showed no signs of slackness, but rather the reverse, caused largely by the work of the Dominion Revaluation Board, entailing an extra amount of correspondence. Every effort was made to keep the work up to date, and extra hours had to be worked in nearly all branches so as to cope with the abnormal correspondence. Although the staff was fully taxed, yet the opportunity was taken of inaugurating a system of coloured tags for the various files, so as to ensure that correspondence was not being put away in the wrong place, and also to lessen the work of searching for files in the office.

The method has been to allot a distinctive coloured tag to each series, of which there are now about thirty: as, for instance, Series 3 (personal files) has a blue tag; Series 26 (soldiers' files) a red tag; and so on. The scheme has been extended to the district offices; and, in fact, the system of using coloured tags originated in the North Auckland Office, but was only used for five or six series of files, not for the whole series, as is now the case.

The work of transferring files from the old numbers to the modern series system has also been continued, with the result that the index of correspondence is now more complete as time goes on.

As usual, the printing of land-sale plans, departmental forms, &c., and the gazetting of various Proclamations, Orders in Council, notices, and documents, occupied a considerable part of the time of the Sales Branch, but with the cordial co-operation of the Government Printing Office all this class of work has been kept up to date.

The quarterly issues of the Crown Lands Guide and the publication of the monthly posters were attended to. The advertising of Crown lands in this way is very convenient, both to the district officers and to the general public, who are thus, by the exhibition every month at all post-offices in the Dominion, kept fully informed of forthcoming sales and ballots. As all suitable Crown land is prepared for settlement at earliest opportunity, it is always the endeavour to fix the dates of sales as soon as possible after particulars are supplied. There are also occasional sales of timber, flax, &c., whilst leases of educational and public reserves are offered periodically.

The scrutiny of recommendations for allotment of lands without competition under the various provisions of the Land Acts, and also of applications to transfer, sublease, &c., before laying them before the Minister, is carefully attended to.

Inquiries from abroad relative to land available for general selection, inquiries concerning early land claims, naval and military grants, &c., were quite as numerous as in previous years.

The work of the Titles and Reserves Branch has been very heavy during the past year. Several cases of overlapping titles involving considerable search and investigation were dealt with, together with many problems arising out of river-bed lands and riparian rights. This branch also deals with matters relating to Native reserves, landless Natives' claims, &c., while the administration of the various classes of public reserves, and, in particular, public domains, entails careful attention and a thorough appreciation of the basic principles underlying the various statutes.

Consequent upon the passing of the War Disabilities Removal Act, 1922, there has been a falling-off in the applications for licenses to acquire land under section 5 of the War Legislation and

Statute Law Amendment Act, 1918. As the law now stands, persons of enemy origin who have been naturalized in New Zealand do not require a license before entering into any contract for the acquisition of land. It is only persons who are still subjects of former enemy States—*i.e.*, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, or Bulgaria—who require such licenses.

In the Accountant's Branch the work has materially increased in volume and importance for some years past, principally owing to the ramifications of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, and to the work arising out of the various drainage operations, and the investigation of the economic values of Crown properties based on estimated production and cost.

Applications and recommendations in support of relief for Crown settlers owing to alleged financial hardship are carefully scrutinized, and it is only when it is clearly evident from the financial statement of the position of a property and the prospective productive capacity for the immediate ensuing season that a measure of relief is essential that such is finally recommended for approval.

Administrative matters connected with the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act and amendments, the realization of securities for loans under this Act, the resale of abandoned properties financed under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, and the many legal technicalities constantly arising in connection therewith are dealt with in this branch. Losses on the realization of properties and stock are also investigated, and the Department's legal remedy against defaulting mortgagors is determined from the reports submitted.

The accounts of the Lands Department have ever been of a complicated nature, owing to the many enactments of the Legislature dealing with the disposition of land revenue and the administration of Crown lands. In accordance with the decision that balance-sheets be prepared for all phases of the activities of the Government, the accounts of the Department have undergone a complete reorganization. The inauguration of a complete system of departmental accounts involving the preparation of commercial balance-sheets has thrown a considerable amount of work on this branch of the office. The Department controls capital assets valued in all at over £50,000,000. It need hardly be stated that the control of accounts and other matters arising out of the financial administration of these assets is a work of considerable magnitude. The table herein (see *ante*) shows the capital controlled by the Department, the revenue earned, and the revenue charges.

The statement of expenditure previously given, and the reference to the receipts for the financial year under review, will show the actual cash handled during the year, but this does not form any reliable index to the volume of work dealt with. All recommendations for the expenditure of public moneys are carefully scrutinized, and a considerable volume of correspondence, much of which involves considerable legal knowledge, passes through this branch during the year.

#### REPORTS ON COGNATE SUBJECTS.

As in former years, separate reports are required to be laid before Parliament in connection with many of the operations carried out by the Department. They comprise—

*Surveys.*—The report by the Surveyor-General on the work of the survey (or technical) branch of the Department is submitted in parliamentary paper C.-1A.

*Swamp-drainage.*—The report required by the Swamp Drainage Act, 1915, is contained in parliamentary paper C.-4.

*Discharged Soldiers Settlement.*—The annual report under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, is furnished by the Department in parliamentary paper C.-9.

*Scenery-preservation.*—The statutory report containing details of reservations and statement of accounts appears in parliamentary paper C.-6.

*Advances for Roading of Crown Lands.*—The necessary report submitted in accordance with section 63 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1913, appears in parliamentary paper C.-7.

*Draining Operations in Hauraki Plains.*—A report by the Chief Drainage Engineer on this subject appears in parliamentary paper C.-8.

*Public Domains.*—A brief summary of the year's operations is given in parliamentary paper C.-10.

*Rangitaiki Land Drainage.*—The annual report on the operations in the Rangitaiki Plains is given in parliamentary paper C.-11.

*Kauri-gum Industry.*—The annual report of the Kauri-gum Superintendent on the year's operations is given in parliamentary paper C.-12.

*National Endowments.*—The annual report required by section 11 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1920, appears in parliamentary paper C.-14.

## APPENDICES.

### APPENDIX I.—SETTLEMENT OF CROWN LANDS.

#### EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS.

##### NORTH AUCKLAND.

(H. J. LOWE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

*Conditions and Progress of Settlement.*—The year just passed has been fairly satisfactory to the farming community regarding demand and prices for primary produce. In the southern part of the district the winter months were very severe, and where there was no provision made for winter feed the dairy cows suffered most. The rainfall was ample during the usually dry months, with the result that the grass has been plentiful and the crops have come away satisfactorily. Inspections made by my rangers in various parts of the district show that conditions on the dairy farms are not as favourable this season as last. The aggregate quantities of milk and cream received at the factories are greater than last year, and the returns of nearly all factories show an increased output. This, however, is accounted for by the fact that more land has been brought in and a greater number of cows of improved quality have been milked.

A striking illustration this summer has been the value of paspalum on gum lands. In the case of factories deriving supplies from districts where paspalum takes a minor place amongst the pastures the output has rapidly fallen; but, on the other hand, where cows are depastured principally on paspalum the quantity of dairy-products has increased.

Generally speaking, the hay crops have been lighter this year than last. Considerable alarm has been caused in the district owing to apparent sterility amongst dairy cattle, which, if not remedied, will be serious for farmers concerned.

A pleasing feature this year was the rise in wool, and many of the settlers who were dairying when wool was low have again reverted to growing sheep. The rise, unfortunately, did not benefit the whole of the growers, as following the slump many settlers were in need of ready money and consequently were obliged to sell early, before prices hardened.

The bulk of the stiff northern lands available for settlement is not a poor man's country. Capital is required to bring it into profitable cultivation. A selector taking up this class of country cannot hope in the course of a year or eighteen months to get a return by dairying unless he is in a position to plough this land, give it at least twelve months' fallowing, and grow a green crop for ploughing in to supply humus to the soil before sowing down in grass. Cheap money, cheaper manure, and better transit facilities are required to enable selectors of this class of country to weather the first two or three years.

*The Dairying Industry.*—The production of butter and cheese shows an increase over that of the previous year. The output of butter and cheese from the dairy companies in this district for the season ended 31st March, 1924, amounted to 13,452 tons of butter and 734 tons of cheese. Butter-prices showed considerable fluctuation, and rose from 144s. per hundredweight in May, 1923, until the maximum of 216s. was reached during December and January, since when it has receded to 150s. per hundredweight. Cheese, which was 94s. in May, 1923, rose to a maximum of 124s. in September, and then gradually declined to 84s. per hundredweight. Two dairy factories in this district have been destroyed by fire during the year—the New Zealand Dairy Association factory at Pukekohe, and the East Tamaki, near Papatoetoe. The Pukekohe factory has been replaced by a new and up-to-date one at Paerata. A new concrete factory is under construction at Waimauku, and extensive alterations are being made to other factories in the district consequent on the increased supply of butterfat.

*The Stock-market.*—Satisfactory prices have been maintained for stock with the exception of store cattle, which are almost unsaleable; but it is predicted that a permanent rise will take place as from this winter. During the last two years all the bull calves and a large percentage of heifers have been killed at birth. This must affect the market in the near future. Sheep of all ages have done well this season, and a good return from this portion of the district's industry is assured. As everything points to fair prices being maintained, I expect that many more sheep will be raised.

*Pigs.*—The demand and prices for pigs has been fair, and there should be no trouble quitting at a satisfactory price all which can be raised.

*Poultry.*—The poultry industry does not appear to have made much headway, prices of all foods being still too high to show much profit. The trial shipment to London of 1,600 cases of eggs was a success in every way. If the standard of quality can be maintained and the arrivals timed for the period of the year when the greatest scarcity prevails in England, this business should prosper.

*Fruit.*—Good crops of fruit have been obtained this season, and though the retail prices are high the grower does not get much profit. Spraying-materials, fruit-cases, and marketing appear to absorb the majority of this. Many growers are recognizing this and turning their attention to cows. Most orchardists now milk a few cows and supply cream to the local factories.

*Freezing Operations.*—The average prices for New Zealand frozen meat obtained during 1923 were—Mutton, 8½d.; lamb, 11½d.; beef (fores), 3½d.; beef (hinds), 4¾d. The exports of New Zealand mutton and lamb were much less than in 1922. On the other hand, beef was some 71,000 quarters in excess. The development in the chilled-beef trade again has had its effect on the demand for the New Zealand article.

The quantity of stock killed for the period 1st April, 1923, to 31st March, 1924, was as under:—

	Southdown.	Moerewa.
Cattle .. .. .	6,536	6,486
Sheep .. .. .	6,026	9,985
Lambs .. .. .	60,892	47,634
Calves .. .. .	3,202	453
Pigs .. .. .	147	82

*Land Board Work.*—During the year the Land Board held thirteen ordinary meetings, occupying in all thirty-five days. The total number of items on the order papers amounted to 2,188, of which 1,146 were in connection with Crown lands business, and the balance, 1,042, related to soldier-settlement. An election for the elective member of the Board was held in June, 1923, the successful candidate being Mr. F. J. Dargaville, of Dargaville. Mr. V. Trounson, who was the settlers' representative since the inauguration of the district, did not seek re-election.

*Freeholds.*—During the year the number of ordinary Crown holdings made freehold was ninety, the total area being 9,139 acres. Under the heading of land for settlement seven holdings, totalling 25 acres, were freeholded, and one national-endowment holding of 3,900 acres.

*Revenue and Arrears.*—The total revenue for the year was slightly in excess of last year, being £51,279, whilst arrears showed an increase to 461 settlers, of a total amount of £24,418. Seventy-five per cent. of the arrears are, however, on account of rents due from discharged soldiers on settlement lands.

*Land open for Selection.*—The total area opened during the year was 14,976 acres, consisting for the most part of isolated sections. A number of sections previously opened for selection by discharged soldiers were withdrawn and offered for general selection.

The Birdwood Block, near Swanson, which was formerly a kauri-gum reserve, and has been ploughed and grassed by the Department, was offered for selection. The block contained 267 acres, all being selected except two sections.

Part of Waari Settlement, near Henderson, containing 106 acres, and subdivided into twenty-one sections, was withdrawn from soldier selection and offered for general application. These sections are eminently suitable for fruitgrowing and market-gardening, &c., fourteen of them being selected.

The Koheroa Block, containing 2,204 acres, situated near Pokeno, was also withdrawn and offered for general selection. Response, however, for these sections is still poor, only two of the eight sections offered going off. The reason is not apparent.

During the year effort was made to help to relieve the housing shortage, building sections adjacent to the city being offered for sale at auction, the response being very good. Eighteen sections in the Prescott Settlement, at Penrose, containing one-fifth of an acre each, were offered, twelve being sold. Part of Eccleston Settlement, at Otahuhu, containing twenty-one quarter-acre sections, were sold at auction, bidding being brisk. Nine sections at New Lynn and two at Onehunga were also easily disposed of.

In this connection, twenty-four education-reserve sections at Remuera were offered for lease for building purposes, all of them being taken up. Rural education reserves comprising twenty sections were also offered, only five being disposed of. For some reason these leases of rural land do not seem to be popular.

Ninety-one seaside sections at Orewa Beach, near Silverdale, were offered for sale at auction, and fifty-two were sold.

*Lands for Future Disposal.*—The principal areas for future selection comprise the following: Omaunu Block, situated in Whangaroa County, comprising 2,200 acres, which will be opened when necessary road deviation is completed. Tokawhero Block, of 2,033 acres, in Bay of Islands County, will be opened when roading completed. Kerikeri Block, of 7,000 acres, in Bay of Islands County, awaiting draining and roading. Omahuta Block, of 2,150 acres, is now being rescheduled for survey. Whangaiti Block, of 1,795 acres, situated in Whangarei County, to be opened when roading completed. Pakiri Block, of 1,500 acres, in Rodney County, to be opened when roading completed.

In addition there are several areas which could be opened provided cheap money and manure were available, viz.: Te Kuri, 18,000 acres; Riverhead, 9,000 acres; Paikauri, 8,900 acres; and Kapiro, 17,500 acres. Also the Cadman and Carrol Settlements, situated near Ellerslie, comprising in all some 154 building sections, will be opened provided the necessary street-formation is sufficiently advanced.

Our other Crown land consists of hill-tops of so poor and stony a nature that no one but a man possessing good neighbouring flats would care to tackle them, as they would only grow a very sparse lot of danthonia and brown-top and would not pay of themselves alone.

Other areas contain milling-bush, which is yearly growing in value, and, being the very best crop that will ever grow on these lands, the most should be made of it. The amount of bush-clad high elevations in this district is limited, and most of it should, I think, be kept for climatic purposes.

*Settlement of Gum Lands.*—A great deal of our vacant land in the north consists of gum lands, most of it easily approachable in the summer-time by well-graded earth roads, but so far as I can see the only way to successfully open and settle these lands is by making use of section 11 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1919. What is required is cheap money, cheaper manure, and better

transit facilities for getting same to the land at all times. Experiments made by this Department upon Birdwood Block, and by the Agricultural Department near Whangarei, go to show that it takes quite three years to establish a sole of grass, at an expenditure of £8 to £12 per acre at present prices of seeds, manure, &c., and that it is then necessary to expend from 12s. to £1 per acre per year for many years to maintain that sole of grass. At present this is prohibitive to the man of small or no means, and the man of means can better invest elsewhere. I do not therefore advocate putting these lands upon the market until the time arrives when the provisions of the above-quoted section can be put into operation.

Up to date an area of 5,495 acres of gum land has been selected by 147 selectors under section 20 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1912; while 265 gum-washing areas, totalling 5,109 acres, are held, the royalty from which for the year amounted to £1,412 3s. 3d.

*General.*—During the past season this branch sustained a severe loss by the death of my predecessor, who controlled it for the first five months—April to August—spending almost the last days of his life in an exhaustive review of the finding of the Inquiry Board, and leaving behind documents of the greatest assistance to this office. The next two months it was ably controlled by a Deputy and the senior officers. I was in charge for the last five months, during which period I managed to visit all the soldier special settlements except one, all the gumfields, and almost every corner of my district.

#### AUCKLAND.

(W. F. MARSH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

*General.*—The past year, although in some respects better than its predecessor, has not been such as to restore confidence to the farming community.

The dairying industry has suffered from the effects of an unusually wet winter, followed by a late cold spring, to which succeeded an early but short and very dry summer. The result was that dairy stock, which had come through the winter in poor condition, had barely reached their full capacity before the dry summer reduced the milk-yield, and although this has been followed by an early, warm, moist autumn, with abundant growth of feed, it has not counteracted the effect of the check experienced. The total result has been that the returns for the spring and summer were considerably below the average, and the improved autumn returns were hardly sufficient to restore the balance.

Sheep-farmers have had a fairly successful year, although the good prices obtained for sheep and wool were counterbalanced by a short supply of lambs for sale, and those who needed to stock were compelled to do so at high prices.

Producers of fat stock had a somewhat better year than the previous one, but ruling prices make this section of the industry unprofitable in relation to the value of the land required for the purpose. There appears to be a probability that home consumption will shortly overtake the supply of fat cattle, and that there will be a shortage in the near future. Store cattle are in short supply but are not in demand, and are generally only being kept for the purpose of keeping fern in check.

There is a fair demand for dairy stock, and recent clearing sales show good competition and satisfactory prices realized for tested herds as against lower values for cows of similar type that have not been tested. This indicates an increasing recognition of the value of testing as a means of getting rid of the "boarder," and suggests a hope that, in the absence of regulations on the subject, the natural operation of the law of supply and demand will bring about the extinction of that useless and deceptive animal.

The demand for land for farming purposes is very limited, owing probably to uncertainty as to the future of the farming industry, and the effect which the termination of the moratorium will have upon financial arrangements in regard thereto. A demand appears to be arising for land suitable for commercial afforestation, and the demand for town lands is good. Applications for approval of transfers are still coming before the Land Board in cases where the mortgagee has been compelled to take his property back in satisfaction of his mortgage, and probably does so in a depreciated condition owing to the place having been abandoned by the purchaser, or the latter having been unable, by reason of restricted finance, to work the holding properly.

*Lands opened for Selection.*—Only 4,281 acres of lands were opened for selection during the year, consisting principally of reofferings of lands previously opened. The disposal of the first portion of the Urewera lands is fixed for early in the coming year, an area of about 28,000 acres being gazetted for opening on the 28th April. This land is situated principally in the valleys of the Waimana River and its tributaries. The opening of other areas of available land has been held over by reason of the expenditure required to road most of the lands, which are not of good quality, and therefore not attractive, particularly in view of the limited demand now existing.

The total number of new tenants placed on the books during the year was 696, representing an area of 77,820 acres. Out of these numbers, however, only forty-eight selectors, and an area of 15,337 acres, could be described as settlement selections.

*The Freehold Tenure.*—During the year 11,078 acres were sold under freehold title to 143 purchasers, the bulk of this being by conversion from various tenures carrying the right of freehold. In addition, 236 lessees under different tenures commenced the purchase of the freehold of their holdings by deferred payments.

Lessees in the Native townships of Taumarunui and Te Kuiti continue to avail themselves freely of the right of acquiring the freehold of their sections from the Crown, following on the purchase by

the latter of the Native interests. The deferred-payment system is principally in favour for this purpose. Applications by a large number of lessees in the Native township of Otorohanga to be granted similar facilities were received just before the close of the year.

The holders of mining titles (residence and business sites) in Te Aroha are availing themselves fairly freely of the right of purchase; but very few applications are being received from Rotorua.

*Revenue.*—The total revenue received for the year was £301,549, including £135,080 under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Acts. This shows an increase of about £30,000 on the figures for the previous year. The total number of tenants on the books of the district is now 5,426, occupying an area of 1,148,046 acres and paying a rental of £120,515 per annum. A large number of tenants have been added to the books by the purchase operations in Native townships above referred to. The arrears of rent at the close of the year amounted to £69,770, owing by 1,283 lessees. A very substantial portion of this amount is owing by discharged soldier tenants, who have not been pressed pending the findings of the Revaluation Board. The position of other tenants who are in arrear is known to be due in the majority of cases to the effects of the slump and to *bona fide* inability to pay.

*Land Board Work.*—Meetings of the Land Board have been held on twenty-seven days during the year, the total number of items dealt with being 2,092. Although the volume of business shows a decrease from the high-water mark of the soldier-settlement years, it is still very considerable, and many of the cases demanding the attention of the Board are of extreme difficulty, involving very careful consideration. I have found the experience and local knowledge possessed by the members of the Board of great assistance to me since I took charge of this district.

*Lands to be opened for Selection.*—For the reasons already indicated it is difficult to forecast what areas it will be found possible to place on the market during the coming year. Apart from the first offering of the Urewera lands, there is a considerable amount of work yet to be done to determine what further areas in that locality can be made available for settlement without creating danger of damage to the country by erosion, &c., that would far outweigh the value of the land that might be brought into profitable occupation. There is a considerable area of country between the Waikato River and the Hauraki Plains yet to be offered, but this is generally of inferior quality, and will require roading before it can be opened. In the country extending eastwards from the line of the Main Trunk Railway towards Taupo there are large areas under exploration to obtain the necessary topographical information for roading and subdivision, work which must occupy some time before effective proposals for settlement can be framed. The pumice areas of the Rotorua-Taupo district require the provision of adequate means of access before they can be successfully settled, especially in view of the prime necessity for landing fertilizers on the land at a reasonable price, without which successful occupation cannot be anticipated. From the above it will be seen that the settlement of most of the remaining areas in this district depends upon the provision of sufficient access, and a reasonable prospect of assured finance to the settlers who are to undertake the task of breaking in these new lands.

*Office-work.*—The year has been one of very steady activity in the office, a large volume of work having been dealt with. The staff has done its work conscientiously and well.

## GISBORNE.

(V. I. BLAKE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

*Inauguration of New District.*—At the beginning of the year the new Gisborne Land District, long desired by the people of the district, came into being. The initial meeting of the new Land Board gave a clear indication of the local interest taken in the creation of the district, and was most encouraging to the staff of the new office. All the public interests in Gisborne were represented at a welcome tendered to the new Board. After such a happy start the work has proceeded smoothly, and has grown very much greater. For example, the Board work at the last meeting of the year was three times as heavy as that dealt with at the initial meeting. Although the Board has had to take decisive steps in many cases where settlers were badly in arrear with rent, &c., it is safe to say that as a whole the settlers appreciate the establishment of the new district. The work of the district has been smoothly and expeditiously carried on, thanks very largely to the efforts of the capable office staff created on the inauguration of the new office. The gradual improvement of the arterial roads is making Gisborne more and more a centre for a large district, and in time to come no doubt the boundaries of the land district will have to be extended. Most of the Urewera country, for instance, with the advent of direct road connection, will have its outlet in Gisborne. The utter lack of even ordinary harbour facilities has been and is keeping Gisborne back; but a move is at last being made in the direction of providing a proper harbour. The saving to wool-growers alone would be enormous if wool could be sold and shipped at Gisborne instead of having to be shipped to Napier for sale. The delay in completion of the compilation of the new deeds registers of that part of the Auckland Registration District included in the new land district has caused some inconvenience, but this will no doubt soon be straightened out.

*General Conditions of Settlement.*—The year has been one of markedly improved conditions as far as sheep-farmers are concerned. Prices for wool have exceeded all expectations, being considerably more than double those of last year. This is pleasant to record, as sheep-farmers, who predominate in this district, have had a hard time for the past two or three years. The wool-prices, of course, have had their effect on the market prices of sheep. Large yardings have been the rule, and the prices for pedigree sheep in particular have been very good. Bush farmers had a favourable

season, good burns being the rule. In fact, the earlier part of the season was so dry that serious bush-fires broke out in the Matawai and other parts of the district, causing considerable losses of fencing, buildings, and stock. Dairy-farmers have had a fairly good season, but butterfat yields and prices have not come up to the sanguine expectations of some. Too many settlers seem to be content with cows that do not give the normal minimum return of butterfat per year. It is difficult to induce some settlers to cull their herds and gradually build up a standard dairy herd; but this must be done if a success is to be made of dairy-farming, more particularly on the high-priced lands of the Poverty Bay flats. Cows which do not come up to the proper standard must be got rid of, as they are only retarding the progress of the dairy industry. One other aspect of farming requires attention: it is only with difficulty that some settlers can be induced to make provision for fodder crops both for winter and summer. A settler who neglects this obvious provision is, of course, only courting disaster.

Evidence of the very inflated prices paid for land in this as in other districts in past years is not wanting. In many cases where pressure has been brought to bear the vendor has been forced to resume possession and to let his mortgage go. Land is gradually coming back to a price at which it can reasonably be expected to be made to pay. The Board has exercised a rigid inspection in all cases of transfer which came under its notice, and unless satisfied that the purchaser could make a success consent has been refused. Another inevitable result of inflated prices has been the reduction in size of holdings below the area which will give a fair return. On high-priced dairy land it may be taken as an established fact that twenty-five cows is the absolute minimum number which will pay unless the farmer does outside work, and it is also considered by local experts that a sheep-farmer must be able to run at least a thousand sheep in order to make anything like a reasonable income. Many subdivisions will never carry these minimum numbers, and the result can only be that they will come back on the vendor's hands sooner or later unless amalgamation with an adjoining holding takes place.

Noxious weeds have been kept fairly well in check; but in parts of the district, especially the southern portions, blackberry is becoming a serious menace. Thanks to the energy of the Rabbit Board, rabbits are kept well in check, and there are very few in the district.

*Land opened for Selection.*—During the year the Tapatu Block, 6,047 acres, and the Waipiro Block, 7,503 acres, were opened for selection. In the former case there was not much competition, and one section remains unselected. The type of successful applicant, however, is good, and on the favourable terms under which the block was opened success is only a matter of time. In the case of Waipiro the competition was much keener, but the Board was forced to reject a large percentage of the applicants as being either financially unsuitable or lacking experience. The land is valuable, and the areas are large, and only men with capital and experience can hope to succeed. The Board very carefully estimated the minimum capital required to work each section, and applicants who had not that capital, or guarantees equal to it, were rejected. This, of course, caused some heartburning, but it could not be avoided; it is necessary in many cases to protect applicants against themselves. The Waipiro Block is now occupied by settlers of a very fine type.

*Revenue and Arrears.*—During the past six months the Board has had most of its time taken up with endeavours to reduce the very large amount of arrears outstanding. Owing to the fact that many of the settlers have got the peculiar idea that payment of money due to the Government does not matter much, collection has been difficult, but the activity of the Board has at length impressed selectors with the fact that obligations must be met. In many cases, however, forfeiture had to be resorted to before settlers realized the position. The usual concessions in the way of postponement were, of course, granted where deserved. It is very evident that many settlers, particularly soldiers, have been meeting their liabilities to financial institutions instead of paying rent. Such settlers have had the fact impressed on them that the Crown is entitled to its fair share of the proceeds of their farms. Again, very few settlers remember that they must make provision to meet postponed rent when it falls due. The revenue for the year amounted to £72,947, but as the district is new there is no way of making comparisons with past years. With improved prices now ruling, next year's revenue should show a marked increase.

*Board Work.*—The work of the Board has gradually grown, and towards the end of the year two-day meetings were the rule. Mr. G. Donovan, of Motu, was elected as the tenants' representative. All the members have shown most praiseworthy attention to the interests of the district, and the Board has worked together very happily. Difficult problems had to be dealt with at times; but the Board has never shirked its obvious duty, however unpleasant, once that duty was clear. Drastic action was necessary in many cases, particularly in dealing with defaulters. The cordial co-operation of the legal firms in the district must be acknowledged.

*Unproductive Bush Lands.*—During the year many holdings in the Opotiki part of the district reverted to the Crown through abandonment or forfeiture. In looking for a reason for this it becomes evident that the cause was largely the fact that holdings contained a big percentage of very steep bush country which could not be made productive. If cleared the country slipped very badly, and if left in its natural state it of course gave very little return even when it was possible to fence. Quite a large percentage of the Crown land in this part of the district would appear to be far more suitable for forestry purposes than for settlement. A comprehensive report of the whole situation is to be made, and it is thought that one solution of the problem will be an amalgamation of holdings, after the higher parts have been resumed by the Crown. It would appear to be obvious that most of the holdings in this part of the district are too small to give tenants any reasonable chance of making a living. The problem is a big one, but it must be tackled.

*Lands remaining for Selection.*—The lands which should be opened for selection during the ensuing year include the following blocks: Tuparoa Consolidation, 6,000 acres; Paraeroa, 1,460 acres;



Urewera, 3,320 acres; Tahora, 8,000 acres. Most of these blocks are bush-clad, and it is possible that in some cases further forest reserves will have to be cut out. Except in the case of the Tuparoa Consolidation and Paraeroa, the prices will be low, possibly averaging £1 10s. an acre. A large area of forfeited bush leaseholds on the Opotiki side will also require to be dealt with later on when the report previously referred to is received. A very considerable amount of road-formation will be necessary in the case of the Tahora Blocks, and it is open to question whether the quality of the land justifies the large expenditure necessary if such roading is to be carried out. The total area to be opened next year is approximately 30,000 acres. In addition to this area about 21,750 acres are at present open for selection.

Amongst the blocks which will be available for disposal subsequent to 1924 are Waipaoa No. 5, 11,600 acres; Poroporo, 4,380 acres; Tangihanga, 4,460 acres; Oamaru 1c, 4,810 acres; part of Urewera, 30,000 acres; and Tapuwaeo, 2,400 acres: a total of 57,650 acres. A further area of 30,000 acres in the Urewera country will probably be set aside for forest reserves.

## HAWKE'S BAY.

(J. D. THOMSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Matters in connection with farming activities and land-settlement in Hawke's Bay may be generally reported as satisfactory. The prices for wool and dairy-produce have been the cause of much jubilation among producers, and an improvement in the financial position of the farming community is evident. There have been certain factors to militate against the improvement, principally climatic conditions, which, of course, are for the most part local. The splendid prices obtained for wool were in many cases offset by the fact that the drought and extreme heat of summer, following a very wet winter, affected crops and pastures of southern Hawke's Bay to such an extent that frequently stock had to be sold at very low prices, the farmer not being able to carry them; and those with plenty of feed naturally reaped a substantial benefit. Then the disastrous floods in the districts immediately surrounding Napier on the 11th March resulted in heavy losses in the areas affected. Dairy-produce was affected by the dry spell, but with the warm rains in March came an increase in the milk-yield. The milk cheques, however, were substantially lowered by the reduced output in the hot summer months. Orchards also suffered to a certain extent, and the output of fruit has not meant any fortunes to orchardists in the district during the year.

Apart from the aforesaid advance in prices and the effect of the weather on farmers, there is little of note to report. Transfers are not very frequent, and certain among these have had the effect of placing holdings in the previous owners' hands. Taken all round, however, land transactions have been quiet and steady, and there is a tendency to settle down and farm a property rather than to make a deal. Fortunately in this district there are few cases of farms being abandoned, although hanging on has meant considerable hardship in many cases. But with the improvement in prices has also come an improvement in prospects, and the farming community generally are on the way to complete recovery from the effects of the disastrous slump of the past three years.

*Freeholds acquired.*—During the year seven licensees, holding under occupation with right of purchase, exercised their right to purchase the freehold of the lands held by them. The area thus made freehold was 3,480 acres, and the price realized was £5,660. No doubt as the Crown tenants recover gradually from the effects of the recent slump they will take fuller advantage of their rights to make their farms freehold.

*The Recent Flood.*—The central farming portion of the Hawke's Bay Land District has been doubly unfortunate this season as regards weather and climatic conditions. Cold, bleak, wet weather marked the early months of spring, followed by an unusually dry summer and early autumn; then the break-up of the drought was immediately followed by a most disastrous flood, bringing desolation and heavy losses in stock to a number of hardworking settlers—Crown tenants on the Pakuratahi, Tangoio, and Beattie Settlements suffering equally with the private owners in the Esk Valley, Pakowhai, Moteo, Taradale, and Meeanee. The privately owned property, however, being mostly on the flat, received a thick coating of a good mud deposit, which will very shortly act as a most excellent top-dressing, and though the immediate loss in feed is severe, the ultimate gain will more than compensate the present ordinary losses.

On the hilly sheep-country numerous slips occurred carrying away boundary and interior fences, and unfortunately the small areas of flat land were smothered with sand, gravel, boulders, and debris, and will take years to make up. However, it is cheering to note that the settlers have set to with a will to do all that is humanly possible to restore their holdings to their former reproductive state.

*Land Board Work.*—Twelve meetings of the Land Board have been held in Napier during the year, and the total number of items dealt with was 556. This is not so great an amount of work as in the last few years; but of course the subdivision of the Hawke's Bay Land District has affected the business to a certain extent, and applications for soldiers' advances and postponements have greatly decreased.

Mr. J. A. Kerr has been appointed to the Board *vice* the late Mr. L. McKay, and Mr. H. H. Dewes *vice* Mr. A. J. Cameron, who is a resident of Gisborne. I should like to express my appreciation of the interest and enthusiasm shown by members of the Board, and the assistance rendered by them in the consideration of the many perplexing problems that have to be faced at the present time.

*Revenue and Arrears.*—The total revenue for the year was £256,569, of which £104,355 was received for the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Advances Account.

The total number of tenants at the close of the year was 1,541, occupying an area of 640,238 acres, and returning an annual rental of £146,946.

The amount of arrears of rent on the 31st March, 1924, was £72,057, owing by some four hundred selectors. About three-fourths of this amount is owing by discharged-soldier settlers on lands set apart under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act. Arrears of payments on soldier mortgages are also heavy, comprising—Farms, £23,027; dwellings, £3,684; and current account interest, £5,818: a total of £32,529. Every effort has been made consistent with the sympathetic attitude of the Department towards soldiers to secure payment of the arrears, and, while a considerable amount of revenue has been recovered by judicious pressure, the position is far from satisfactory. Of course, the activities of the Revaluation Board affect the position considerably, and it is to be hoped that many who are playing a waiting game at present will move in the matter of their arrears before many months have passed. Climatic conditions have also affected payments considerably, as the drought of the summer months was a set-back to many Crown tenants. The figures for the Hawke's Bay District are none the less striking because of the high rentals paid by many Hawke's Bay settlers. Annual rentals running into three figures are more the rule than the exception, and naturally the amount of arrears very soon assumes a formidable figure when fed by such rentals.

The matter of arrears is one which has caused and is causing the Land Board and office staff no little anxiety and work, and it is felt that the only possible course open is to continue to exert pressure on every individual settler. There is a feeling also that there are a large number of men in debt to the Department who can pay and would pay if compelled, and lack of adequate inspection prevents the office from taking the necessary action. The full-time services of an officer in the office and one in the field would, I believe, be well worth while, and would result in a big reduction in the amount outstanding. In the meantime the matter of arrears is kept well in view, and will remain so, and by persistent pressure on individuals payment will be secured wherever possible.

## TARANAKI.

(J. COOK, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

*Conditions and Progress of Settlement.*—The prices for primary products have been well maintained during the year, and the increased price for wool has improved the financial position of many settlers. Good prices have been obtained for sheep; but cattle, which are so necessary for crushing fern and second growth on many Taranaki farms, have to be kept mainly for that purpose and not for profit. The noxious weeds menace has not been so pronounced as last year, ragwort being kept more in check, especially in the coast districts, by the depredations of a caterpillar; but the peripatetic blackberry and assorted varieties of ferns, with their various allies, are still in evidence.

*Revenue and Arrears.*—The revenue for the year was £77,460, as against £104,543 last year. A further fall in the receipts from the purchase of west coast leases largely accounts for this. The rents for education reserves totalled £10,478, and those from Crown sections £24,580. An endeavour has been made to keep the arrears as low as possible, and every selector's case has been treated on its merits.

*Land remaining for Selection.*—This is practically all rough grazing-country, difficult of access, and it is not likely that any of it will be selected unless the beef-market takes a turn for the better. There are still some sections available on the Huatoki Settlement, near New Plymouth, averaging about 6 acres. With a good bus service these would offer some attraction to a man with a growing family, when the farm and dairy work could be distributed. To the young married man working in town they offer some inducement at first, but the selector is soon disillusioned. The sections are too small to make a living off, and too large for a man to keep in order in his spare time. It is doubtful whether poultry-farming on a large scale can be made to pay; fruitgrowing as an industry has yet to be made a success in Taranaki; and the continuous westerly winds in spring and summer restrict operations of bees. The unselected sections on the settlement soon become overrun with weeds and are a menace to the land in the vicinity. Taken all round, it is doubtful whether the purchase of the land for cutting up into small holdings is justifiable. The restrictions on some of the sections have now been removed, and they may be selected by civilians.

*Freeholds and Cash Lands.*—There was a falling-off in the amount received for the purchase of west coast leases, the total amount received being £14,852, in addition to which £4,132 was received for the purchase of other freeholds.

*Land Board Work.*—The number of cases dealt with by the Land Board remains about the same as last year. The sittings are now usually limited to two days. The number of cases dealt with were as follows: Soldier cases, 342; ordinary transfers, 117; applications, miscellaneous items, 318: total, 777.

## WELLINGTON.

(T. BROOK, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

East of the main dividing-range a dry season was experienced, and the pastures suffered so much that a decided fall in the prices of stock occurred; but early autumn rains brought an abundance of feed, and values were quickly restored. In the northern portion of this district the season was very wet, and a good deal of the bush felled during the year has not been burned.

Grain and root crops that were sown early yielded well, but late-sown crops suffered through the dry weather, and many were scarcely worth harvesting.

The prices received for wool should go far towards clearing off the liabilities incurred by sheep-farmers during 1921 and 1922. Some of the Crown tenants who had got behind with their payments have been able to reduce their arrears, but there is room for much improvement in this respect. Last winter a large number of fat cattle were exported from Wellington to Australia, and this brought about an improvement in the value of beef-cattle. This, however, was only temporary, and prices have again receded.

Dairy-farmers have had a fair season. With the markets fluctuating as they have been doing during the year it is difficult to say what the returns for the year will be. A substantial bonus at the end of the season is usually forthcoming, but indications point to this year's bonus being much smaller than usual. Increased returns from dairying must be sought along the lines of improvement in pastures and a higher standard in the quality of the milking-herds, but progress in these directions is very slow, largely through want of capital. The annual loss due to cows failing to come to profit is very heavy, and although neglect is often a contributing cause we find many of the most progressive and capable farmers among the unfortunate losers.

The difficulty experienced in securing financial accommodation and the present high cost of effecting improvements are delaying progress. Very little bushfelling is being undertaken, and this is likely to continue until easier conditions prevail. In portions of the district fern and second growth are causing much anxiety.

I deeply regret having to record the death of Mr. Joseph Dawson, who had been a member of the Wellington Land Board for the past twenty years. The deceased gentleman was a pioneer settler of sterling character, and his knowledge and experience of settlement conditions were highly valued by his fellow-members. The vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Dawson has been filled by the appointment of Mr. Alexander Stuart, of Marton. Mr. Stuart did valuable work as Chairman of the Advisory Board appointed to report on the conditions of soldier settlement in the Wellington Land District, and he takes a keen interest in all matters affecting the welfare of the farmers. His appointment has given very great satisfaction.

## NELSON.

(N. C. KENSINGTON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Quite a number of new selections were made during the year, the number of holdings taken up on permanent tenures being forty, and the area selected totalling approximately 9,800 acres. The general outlook has been much brighter, chiefly on account of the good prices obtained for all classes of wool, and the satisfactory prices for butterfat. With every prospect of good wool-prices holding, it may reasonably be expected that unimproved Crown land will receive more attention. In this connection it is hoped to open for selection some 10,000 acres of good limestone country at the south-western end of the district. This land is handy to the Westport-Greymouth coastal road now under construction. The past season has been an exceptionally good one from a pasture point of view, and most farmers are facing the winter with excellent prospects.

*Statutory Inspection of Leaseholds.*—A large number of inspections have been made by Crown Lands Rangers, which included a number of ordinary inspections of Crown leases. These showed in nearly all cases that the improvements effected were well in excess of requirements.

*Dairying Industry.*—The past year's operations has shown an increase in factory returns. The dairying industry is considerably increasing in the central and western parts of the province. In the Maruia district great headway is being made, and with the establishment of a butter-factory at Station Creek and the selection of available settlement land a large butter-output should result.

*Fruit Industry.*—With the present Government guarantee the fruit industry is on a sounder basis. Those who have managed to keep their orchards in good order are at the present time able to successfully carry on. Unfortunately, many could not stand the heavy expense of spraying, and the necessary cultivation, consequently in many cases the orchards were cut out. It is difficult to judge what the actual position of the fruit industry will be in the future, as so much depends on the condition of shipments arriving in England.

*Timber Industry.*—This shows an improvement since last year. The principal sawmills are operating on the west coast of the district, with several small mills operating in the Collingwood, Takaka, and Waimea Counties. There are large areas of Crown lands in the Karamea district carrying good timber, but the uncertainty of water carriage appears to affect the establishment of large mills. The timber from these lands forms an invaluable asset towards the cost of future road-making, which is a necessity when opening these lands for settlement. It is hoped when the timber is disposed of that a considerable sum will be set aside for this purpose, as these lands when opened for settlement will not stand the heavy loading necessary to form suitable roads.

*Westport Colliery Reserves.*—During the year a number of sections in the Town of Westport have been taken up on permanent tenures. There are still a number of vacant sections in the town, and these will be offered when conditions are favourable.

*Education Endowments.*—Several new selections of education reserves were made during the year. Many holders of education leases of rural lands on expiry have accepted a renewal based on 5 per cent. of the unimproved value of the land. Expiring lessees of education reserves in the Town of Westport have received a renewal fixed by arbitration.

*Tarakohe Cement-works.*—These works, commonly known as "Golden Bay," were closed for a considerable time, but resumed operations during the year, and are now working steadily.

*Onakaka Ironworks.*—These works started operations during the year, and a large quantity of pig iron was smelted. Further necessary works are now being carried out, including a tramway from the works to the wharf. The past operations may be considered very satisfactory as forming a basis for future developments.

*Land Board.*—During the year twelve ordinary meetings of the Land Board were held, occupying in all thirteen days, the total number of items dealt with numbering 796. Mr. R. Patterson was re-elected as Crown tenants' representative, and Mr. G. Macmahon was reappointed for a further term. As Chairman, I desire to thank all the members of the Land Board for their cordial co-operation during the time I have acted in this capacity.

*Revenue Arrears.*—The revenue received during the past year totalled £70,389; of this £23,943 was from ordinary Crown tenants, and £46,446 was on account of discharged soldiers settlement. These figures show a decrease of £13,000 on the previous year, but this is accounted for by the revenue from coal leases now being collected by the Receiver of Coal-mines Revenue. The amount of arrears by ordinary Crown tenants at the 31st March was £8,751, showing a decrease of approximately £2,000 on the previous year. Discharged-soldier settlers show an increase in arrears of £19,000, the total arrears being £50,206.

*Roads.*—The roading problem is a matter of great moment at the present time. Many settlers acquired holdings many years ago and still have not a reasonable road to their homesteads. The principal trouble in all these cases is that the land could not stand the loading of the high cost of roading, consequently only poor access could be provided. Now that the land is in a productive state it is only reasonable that the settler should agree to further loading if he desires better access, and this is suggested in most cases, and met by the existing legislation in adding on the amount to the capital value and charging 5 per cent. as additional rental.

*Lands opened for Selection.*—No large blocks have been opened up during the year, the sections opened up being principally isolated ones in different parts of the district. A total area of 14,243 acres was opened for selection, representing thirty-three holdings. A large number of sections are still available, and a total area of 56,215 acres, comprising 110 holdings, are shown in the Crown Lands Guide as open for selection.

*Freeholds acquired.*—During the year sixteen tenants acquired the freehold of their sections.

## MARLBOROUGH.

(J. STEVENSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The progress of the settled Crown lands for the past year shows an improvement, and, although slow, is sound. The majority of Crown tenants have more than fulfilled the conditions of their leases.

During May of last year there occurred one of the worst floods that Marlborough has ever experienced. In the Wairau Valley it was very severe, and in consequence cropping operations were considerably hampered owing to farmers being unable to get on to and work the ground in order to get their crops sown in time. Further south the country also suffered severely, and a good deal of erosion took place in all the rivers. On the Clarence River half of the fine traffic-bridge was completely washed away. For quite a long time through traffic was completely suspended; then passengers were ferried across the river in a small boat, cars going as far as the river and other cars meeting them on the other side. Latterly a punt has been erected, capable of taking cars across, and through traffic has been resumed. Great damage was also done in the Hapuku Valley, and, although the traffic-bridge was not interfered with, the whole of the approaches on the south side were completely washed away. Through traffic is now maintained only by a duckboard arrangement from the new river-bed on to the end of the traffic-bridge. Going farther south, the Kowhai and Conway Rivers both suffered severely from the flood, and considerable erosion has taken place.

Following the flood a drought set in, starting in October and lasting right through the summer months, which gave the farmers a very anxious time, as, besides wanting rain for the crops, there was always constant danger from fires. In the Awatere Valley quite a number of grass-fires started, and it was only by the strenuous efforts and vigilance of the settlers that these were extinguished and they were able to save their homesteads. Round about Kaikoura the fires were most severe, and great damage was done to pasture and fencing, and several settlers suffered a severe loss in stock. In one or two instances the homesteads were burned down, and although the settlers had great difficulty in getting their families away from danger, I am glad to say that no lives were lost. Notwithstanding those setbacks from both flood and fire it is pleasing to note that the settlers are still quite cheerful.

It is noticeable that whilst the rabbits are being kept in check in north Marlborough, they are on the increase in the southern part of the district, not only on Crown land but on the freehold as well. I am of the opinion that it would pay the State to set up a division of expert officers to collaborate with the sheep-farmers to make a special study of the rabbit and his habits, with a view to his ultimate extinction. Undoubtedly, the increase of the rabbit accounts in a great measure for the shortage of sheep on the pastoral country, and I am satisfied from information supplied to me that the shearing averages have been reduced by more than 50 per cent. in our back country during the last twenty years.

Noxious weeds, and especially blackberry, show no sign of being on the decrease, especially on the wetter lands and poorer class of hill country in the district; on ploughable land it can be dealt with economically, but on the other lands it is becoming a bit of a problem.

Danthonia is gradually being established on the higher country. It is a persistent grower, and its value on the hill country is becoming more and more recognized; but more judicious burning and

sowing, particularly on the Sounds country, must be resorted to. The greater portion of the cleared land in the Sounds is gradually reverting to fern and scrub, and had the value of danthonia been as well known in the past as it is now less indiscriminate burning would have been done. Danthonia is considered the grass showing the best return in this class of country, where successfully established.

During the year six sections were opened for selection in the upper Opouri Valley, and, though the applications were not numerous, disposal by ballot was effected to a good class of settler. This settlement is as yet in its early stages, but shows promise of every success.

Hillersden Settlement is now well established, though some of the settlers experienced a trying time during the slump. With the excellent prices obtained for their wool and sheep this year they have had a good season, and, considering the present prospects, should feel very secure.

*Dairying.*—There are six dairy factories operating in Marlborough. Owing to the recent fall in prices for butterfat, factories are only paying about 1s. 2d. to 1s. 3d. this season, whereas last season 1s. 7d. to 1s. 9d. was obtained. Dairying does not appear to be on the increase in this district. Systematic herd-testing would prove of great benefit to the dairy-farmers of Marlborough, but I know of no cases of this being carried out, though in some instances the purchasing of pedigree bulls has greatly improved the herds in power of collective return.

*Wool and Sheep.*—Climatic conditions in Marlborough are excellent for the production of wool; the clip in point of weight and texture was good, and sheep-farmers have experienced a splendid year. Marlborough has established two Dominion records for the prices obtained for wool this year—viz., Richmond Brook merino, at 33d. per pound, and Mr. Ryder, Goat Hills Soldier Settlement, 30½d. for halfbred wool.

An interesting experiment was started this year by the Associated Auctioneers deciding to commence an annual sale exclusively of merino sheep. The inaugural sale was held at Bankhouse Station on the 20th February, when about six thousand mixed merinos were yarded. The attendance was large, and good prices obtained. Mr. W. G. Rudd realized 55s. for a good line of four-tooth ewes; other four-tooth ewes brought 51s.; these were top prices. The result of the sale was considered to be very satisfactory, and it is expected there will be a yarding of at least thirty thousand next year.

The annual ewe fair was held in Blenheim on the 27th February, when eight thousand sheep were submitted, and practically all lines sold; prices ranging from 23s. to 33s. 3d. for two-tooth ewes, sound-mouthed ewes from 23s. 6d. to 28s. 7d., full- and broken-mouthed ewes from 8s. to 22s. The net result of the sale was considered to be very good.

Marlborough's output of store sheep finds a ready market at Addington, realizing from 3s. to 5s. per head more than in the local market. The early completion of the South Island Main Trunk Railway would be of great benefit to the mutton-raisers, for stock could then be trucked to Addington expeditiously and without loss of condition, and Marlborough would have no fear of being isolated from its principal market, as it now is.

*Freezing-works.*—The only freezing-works operating in this district are situated at Picton. They have a capacity of about 150,000 carcasses of mutton for the season. Practically no beef is dealt with. A report issued early in March shows that only about 50,000 carcasses had been handled. This suggests that the works are quite capable of dealing with the normal output here.

*Agriculture.*—The climate of Marlborough is an excellent one from an agricultural point of view. In quality of wheat, oats, barley, peas, clover, and lucerne-seeds, &c., this district ranks amongst the foremost in the Dominion. The May floods seriously affected this season's crops, farmers not being able to work their ground for a month, and in some cases two months, afterwards. Then followed the dry spell, which entirely spoilt a great many crops. This season the crops generally are below the average both in quantity and quality, though the prices show a considerable advance on recent years. The district has produced, approximately, 55 tons of lucerne-seed, over 2,000 sacks of red-clover seed, 10,000 tons of oaten chaff; wheat, barley, and peas very much below the average yield, peas being only about one-third of the usual output.

*Orchards.*—Approximately there are about 800 acres in commercial apple-orchards, the crop this year being about an average one, and prices, locally, about 30 per cent. higher than for some years past. The industry, however, lacks a stable market. Marlborough orchardists are an enthusiastic and industrious class, who have shown that they can produce the fruit. Here again the climatic conditions are excellent for producing the finest quality of apple. The major portion of the crop this year is being shipped to overseas markets.

*Poultry and Bee Farming.*—Poultry and bee farming is only carried on in a small way in this district; the prospects do not appear to be too promising, owing principally to the uncertainty of successful marketing.

*Timber.*—There are fourteen sawmills operating in this district, with an approximate output of about 8,000,000 superficial feet. The demand for timber is on the increase, and in consequence a number of small mills have been erected to go over bush that was supposed to be of no value and worked out years ago. Our source of supply is very limited, and will not last many years longer; and, as no systematic scheme of afforestation has been started in Marlborough, consumers will in the near future require to look further afield for supplies.

*Flax.*—There are four mills operating this season. The quality of the fibre is excellent, and prices good. The sources of supply are mainly the Marshlands and Tua Marina swamps and the Wairau River bed. As this is an active season the coming one will not be so productive, seeing that it takes three years for a new crop to grow.

*Lime-works.*—The lime-works at Ward, owned by Mr. Thompson, give promise of filling a long-felt want. For many years he had been periodically working a deposit of soft lime, but owing to the lack of a regular demand had closed down. Last year, however, individual farmers guaranteed orders to the extent of 1,000 tons a year for two years, and on the strength of this Mr. Thompson is erecting

a complete crushing plant capable of dealing with the requirements of the district. At the present time the plant is crushing a fine sample, which is delivered on the trucks at Ward at £1 5s. per ton in 6-ton lots.

*Mining.*—Two gold-mines are operating in the district—namely, the Deep Creek, and the lately opened Queen of Sheba Mine at Mahakipawa. Also, there are still a certain number of small ventures going on in the Wakamarina Valley, and a few in the Wairau Valley.

*Land Board.*—The Board held twelve ordinary and one special meeting during the year, 440 items being dealt with, 109 of which were soldiers' cases, 81 ordinary transfers, and 250 miscellaneous cases. During the year the term of Messrs. A. McCallum and James Boyd's appointment as members of the Land Board expired by effluxion of time, and both were reappointed for another term.

*Revenue.*—The gross revenue received during the year amounted to £80,843, an increase of £1,883 on that of the preceding year. This includes £23,692 received under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account. Rebates granted for prompt payment amounted to £3,122. Arrears of rent amount to £21,166, and postponements of rent in force at the end of the year amount to £3,502.

*Land for Closer Settlement.*—The Clarence Valley is about the only area of Crown leasehold that would lend itself for closer settlement. I recently made a trip through this country, and was greatly impressed with the large area of really fine land it contains, both agricultural and pastoral. The land has been overrun with rabbits, and they have eaten out everything. At one time they have been so numerous that vast areas have been absolutely denuded of all vegetation, and they took complete possession, runholders apparently abandoning their holdings. In the end the rabbits apparently starved themselves out. They are still to be seen here and there in limited numbers only, and will have to be carefully dealt with as the land gradually comes back into pasture. At the present time the land takes the seed well, and responds in a remarkable way to grass, clover, and lucerne treatment. In my opinion the potentiality of the land in this valley is very great. It would not be a very costly undertaking to construct a road from Keckerangu up the Clarence to tap this country, and eventually continue it right through comparatively easy country to connect with the present Hanmer Springs Road in the upper reaches of the river. It would open up an immense area of fine pastoral country which at the present time is practically isolated for want of access. If this road is constructed the land is capable of being subdivided into suitable areas that would settle quite a number of families.

There are a few freehold properties that might be acquired for closer settlement in Marlborough; but to purchase at the prices asked by the owners, as disclosed to the Land Purchase Board for Soldier Settlement, would not make successful settlements.

In conclusion, I have to thank a very keen and efficient staff for the attention they have given their duties during the year.

## WESTLAND.

(W. T. MORPETH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

*Conditions and Progress of Settlement.*—Weather conditions in Westland for the year ending 31st March, 1924, have been exceptionally good, and very favourable to farming operations. The rainfall for the year was 93.59 in. for Hokitika, which is about 26 in. below the average. There were 2,095 hours of sunshine—one of the best records in the Dominion. Turnip crops have been very good. Potato crops suffered somewhat from blight, and owing to unfavourable weather conditions at the time not so much hay was saved this year as usual. The farming community in this district should realize the value and importance of producing ensilage for winter feed.

An indication of the gradual expansion of the dairying industry in Westland is the establishment of the new Central Dairy Factory in Hokitika. This factory is an up-to-date building with every modern convenience and appliance, including an elaborate cold-storage plant. The range of suppliers extends as far north as the Taramakau Settlement, and south as far as Waitaha. I understand that the Matainui Dairy Factory at Wataroa, and the Inter-Wanganui Factory at Herepo, are contemplating a change of policy—the new proposal being to drop the production of cheese altogether and concentrate on butter.

Compared with last year, prices for stock have gone back a little, but there is a notable advance in wool. Summer prices for ox beef were 26s. to 31s. 6d., heifer beef 20s. to 27s. 6d., and cow beef 18s. to 24s. a hundredweight. Winter prices were respectively 28s. to 38s., 28s. to 33s. 6d., and 20s. to 27s. 6d. per hundredweight. Wether mutton summer prices were 5½d. to 6½d. per pound, winter prices 6d. to 7½d. Ewe mutton, 5d. to 6d. and 5½d. to 6½d., summer and winter prices respectively, and lamb 6d. to 7½d. per pound. Butterfat fetched 1s. 7d. per pound. Crossbred wool, 13d. to 19d., and three-quarter-bred 13d. to 22d. per pound. Store sheep ran from 14s. to 25s. 6d. a head, and store cattle from £2 to £8 10s. for steers, and £1 10s. to £6 for heifers.

*Lime-works.*—The lime-works at Ross and Kokatahi are in active operation. The importance of these industries can hardly be overrated, particularly in Westland. In the renewal of worn-out pastures ploughing is usually considered to be an essential operation. In many parts of Westland, however, experience has proved that better results are obtained by liming and top-dressing only, and that owing to local soil conditions ploughing does more harm than good. This view, of course, seems quite contrary to precedent, but it is nevertheless strongly held by many experienced dairy-farmers in this district. There is no doubt whatever that exhausted pastures have temporarily crippled many soldier settlers, and that the maintenance of the feed in healthy condition is of vital importance. The difference between exhausted and healthy pastures is, in fact, the difference between failure and success.

*Timber.*—Considerable progress has been made in the timber industry during the past year. Three new sawmills have started, and there are at present eighty mills operating in the district. There is no doubt that this is to a great extent the result of the railway connection with Canterbury opened up in August, 1923, by the completion of the Otira Tunnel. At the present time there is a good demand for rimu and kahikatea, which the sawmillers have no difficulty in meeting. The total output of sawn timber for the year was 64,924,030 superficial feet, being an increase of 17,715,433 over last year. The timber comprised 43,057,830 sup. ft. of rimu; 21,545,200 of kahikatea; *Fagus fusca*, 170,600; silver-pine, 83,000; totara, 41,300; and matai, 26,100. Of this output 36,671,208 sup. ft. came off Crown lands, 19,557,191 from private land, and 8,695,631 from provisional State forest.

The total quantity of timber exported beyond New Zealand during the year was 23,570,757 sup. ft., consisting of rimu, kahikatea, and *Fagus fusca*, which shows an increase of 2,211,026 sup. ft. over last year's figures. In addition to the above quantity exported from Westland, a total of 1,842,239 sup. ft. was sent to Australia via Greymouth from the Nelson District.

The following quantities of timber were railed to the east coast through the Otira Tunnel: Quarter ending 30th September, 1923, 2,406,600 sup. ft.; quarter ending 31st December, 1923, 7,149,200 sup. ft.; quarter ending 31st March, 1924, 8,126,800 sup. ft.: total, 17,682,600 sup. ft.

Timber prices per 100 sup. ft. f.o.b. Greymouth are as follows: Rimu—Clean heart, 30s. to 32s.; dressing-quality heart, 25s. to 26s.; building heart, 20s. to 21s.; clean O.B., 20s. to 21s.; dressing O.B., 18s. to 19s.; O.B., 13s. 6d. to 14s. 6d. Kahikatea—Firsts (average), 25s.; seconds (average), 15s. 6d.

*Gold-dredging.*—The American Gold-dredging Company, operating at Rimu Flat, obtained 11,960 oz. of gold during the year. An area of 20½ acres was dredged. The expected developments at Callaghan's did not materialize, but it is understood that the company may shortly undertake further gold-mining operations on an area just south of Ross. The Rimu Flat operations are expected to continue for at least thirty-five years to come.

*Land open for Selection.*—No land was opened for selection by ballot during the year. An area of 2,248 acres was taken up under various tenures on permanent titles.

*Land Board Work.*—Twelve monthly meetings were held during the year as scheduled, occupying one full day each. The Board dealt with eighty-three applications for land, 131 transfers, fifty-five applications by discharged soldiers for advances, transfers, postponements, &c., together with an exceptionally large volume of miscellaneous work.

*Revenue and Arrears.*—The total gross revenue from all sources (including Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account) during the year amounted to £31,633. The rent roll amounted to £8,894, and arrears of rent £1,100, being a slight decrease compared with last year's figures. A fair proportion of the amount is due by discharged soldiers. Every effort is being made to still further reduce the amounts outstanding.

*Land remaining for Selection.*—An area of 3,625 acres of bush land has been scheduled for offering, and will be open for selection shortly after the end of the present financial year. The land is situated on the Old Marsden Road, near Greymouth. It is level and hilly, of fair quality, and will be offered on the renewable-lease tenure. Drainage operations at Harihari, under the control of the Chief Drainage Engineer, in respect of an area of 833 acres of Crown land, are almost complete, and, a scheme of subdivision having been approved, the land should be available for occupation in the near future. The area appears to be drying up well. The preliminary field-work in connection with an investigation of large swamp areas in the far south has now been completed, and plans and reports are in course of preparation.

## CANTERBURY.

(G. H. BULLARD, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

*Conditions and Progress of Settlement.*—The past season generally seems to have been a fair one for the pastoral country, but for the agricultural, dairying, and fruitgrowing industries the season has been generally rather adverse. The weather conditions in north and mid Canterbury could be summed up by saying that there was too much rain in the autumn and winter, and too little in the spring and early summer; and this was aggravated by an unusual prevalence of nor'westers, which on the lighter lands licked up much of the little moisture that was left in the ground.

In north Canterbury some of the farms close to the coast suffered a great deal from the floods, both from the washing-away of the surface soil and the deposit in its place of sand and gravel. The very wet weather in many cases prevented autumn cultivation, and, except in favoured localities, it had to be left till the spring; and when the weather did clear it became so dry that spring-sown crops suffered from lack of moisture, and the yield of oat crops was generally disappointing, and in some cases they were not worth cutting, and were simply fed off with stock. Nearer the foothills, where showers occur more often, conditions were better. Earlier-sown wheat crops were fair, but those put in later returned very poor yields. Autumn- and winter-sown crops were helped by a good fall of rain in December, but there is a considerable falling-off as against the usual yield of the district. The chaff-market, owing to the short yield, promises to be good, and the higher price in consequence is causing some farmers to turn their attention to the use of tractors for much of the cultivation work, on account of the added expense and extra land needed to keep a team. Barley and linseed crops have been very disappointing. Potatoes, where the conditions allowed them to be saved, should be profitable, but the May floods rotted them on many low-lying farms. Attention is still being given to the increase of lucerne plots, and on suitable land a good stand is a useful provision for tiding over a dry spell. On small farms peas are a popular crop, and prices for them have been good. Grass-seed yields have

been low, but the quality generally good. The year was also not a good one for the dairy industry, owing to cows suffering first from the wet winter and later from the dry summer, and in some few instances in mid and south Canterbury settlers had to send their cows away to be grazed elsewhere. The prices received for butterfat were fair, but this is counterbalanced by the lower yield due to the dry weather. The one bright feature is the good returns received for wool, and the large proportional increase in the price of the coarser wools. The excellent prices received for the finer wools should help landholders in the back country to better their positions and make up the leeway left by the slump conditions. Lambing percentages in the back country generally are said to have been fair, with no serious losses. In the Mackenzie country, however, it is stated they were lower than usual. On the pastoral-agricultural farms on the lower lands, with the mild weather at lambing-time, losses were small and averages good, and the lambs did well considering the severe winter. The opening of the works earlier than usual enabled farmers to dispose of their fat milk lambs before the dry spell, but the poor quality and meagre results from the rape and turnip crops prevented many farmers from finishing their later lambs properly, and a good many of second quality will be exported. A large number of sheep were shipped from the east coast of the North Island to be sold in Canterbury, and a number of sheep from the west coast were also placed on the Addington market. Store sheep on the whole have realized high prices, but this has prevented farmers weak financially from stocking up as fully as they should. Overcropped and weedy land still continues to give trouble, and bankruptcies, as a result of paying boom prices for farms, still continue.

Orchards suffered from heavy gales, and in some cases from the excessive wet in winter. There is very little unused Crown land in Canterbury, so that any increase in the number of farmers can only take place by the subdivision of existing properties, many of which on the lighter lands are now too small, and subdivision of most of the pastoral country has been carried far enough for the present.

The rabbit pest still gives cause for anxiety, but there are signs that more systematic and simultaneous work to check them will be undertaken.

The tenants of education reserves generally are fulfilling their conditions, and lessees, as the old leases fall in, are being given in most cases fresh leases for twenty-one years with rights of renewal.

*Land Board Work.*—The usual monthly meetings of the Board have been held, and have occupied from two to three days each. The Chief Clerk and Secretary to the Board, Mr. Munro, a capable and zealous officer, has retired on superannuation, and his place has been taken by Mr. Palmer, from the New Plymouth Office.

*Revenue.*—It is satisfactory to again record a further increase of £16,760 of ordinary revenue collected over that of twelve months ago; but I do not anticipate much, if any, further increase next year, on account of the indifferent season.

---

## OTAGO.

(R. S. GALBRAITH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The season in Otago last year was very unfavourable for farming operations. The winter, which was the longest and coldest experienced for many years, was followed by an exceptionally dry spring, summer, and autumn. The ground became very hard, and the various cereals which were sown got no chance to come away. Oat and wheat crops were decidedly poor and the yields very light. Much of the grain was eaten off by stock in spring and early summer, and a shortage of chaff has been created. This commodity is likely to be scarce and dear during the winter now approaching, but, fortunately, many farmers held over stacks of sheaves from the previous season, and these stacks will help to ease the situation arising from the failure of the past season's oat and wheat crops.

Barley crops were up to the average, and as the price for this product is steady the growers did well. The area suitable for the purpose is, however, limited, and is situated around the lakes district. On the subject of grain-growing in Otago there are two important aspects that should be mentioned. First, the tendency in the past has been to crop land year after year without returning to the soil the essential ingredients, and the consequence is that too much land is now nearing the point of exhaustion. This remark applies to a considerable area in north Otago, and raises the question whether the State should permit even freehold owners to misuse their land. The second aspect is that certain light land which has been cultivated and cropped should never have been turned over at all. After producing perhaps two average crops much of this class of land has gone back into a barren and weed-producing state and has become almost worthless. Had it not been disturbed at all it would have remained useful and profitable grazing-country. Turnip crops have suffered through want of moisture, and stock, especially sheep, will suffer during next spring unless the winter proves to be a mild one.

The dairy-farmer has had a hard time during the year. The shortage of feed caused by the drought reduced the milk-supply to a point far below the average, and, although the price of dairy-produce has been payable and steady, the gross returns have been disappointing.

The fruit-farmers of Central Otago had a set-back this year with their apples. The excessive heat of the summer blistered this fruit to some extent, and the abnormally high winds caused an excess of windfalls. Stone-fruits, however, yielded well and brought good prices, so that the fruit season terminated satisfactorily. Lucerne is being more extensively grown in Central Otago, especially where water is obtainable for irrigation. Lucerne is a very profitable crop, and particularly valuable in Central Otago, where the winters are long and cold.

The settlers whose chief means of livelihood is sheep-farming have had a very good year. Wool brought exceedingly high prices, the coarse wools showing a relatively higher increase in value than the fine wools. But the total production was probably less than that of the previous year. Early fat lambs commanded a very good market, but the season was not favourable to a large supply. The



heavy snowfall in the early winter of last year caused the high-country pastoralists a good deal of anxiety, but, fortunately, the losses proved to be lower than anticipated, except in cases of overstocking. The increased wool-prices, however, more than compensated for the snow losses.

*Lands selected.*—The number of new selectors, including purchasers for cash, was 159; area, 242,748 acres. Included in these figures are six pastoral runs, with an aggregate area of 53,984 acres, which represent the Otago University endowment situated at Benmore, held on pastoral tenure for some years at very high rentals, and reoffered by public auction at upset rentals upon which the purchasers would have a reasonable chance of success. The annual rental under the previous licenses amounted to £3,555; that realized at the auction held in January last came to £2,115. Two large and important blocks of country were opened for selection—viz., Teviot and Mount Pisa. The former was selected partly by returned soldiers and partly by civilians, the latter by returned soldiers only. The total number of straight-out purchasers for cash was thirty; area, 191 acres; cash received, £3,178. The conversions to freehold from other tenures numbered twenty-seven, of which twenty-five were of Crown land and two of land-for-settlements holdings. The area of Crown land thus converted was 3,056 acres, and the cash received £2,617. The number of new selectors, exclusive of cash purchasers, was 129, and the area selected 242,557 acres. Of these, fifty-one selected on temporary tenure, the area being 14,831 acres.

*Revenue and Arrears.*—Despite the unfavourable season, the gross revenue for the year shows an increase of £11,840 over that of the previous year. The arrears, however, also show an increase. The number of tenants in arrear with their payments is only five more than that of the previous year, but the amount outstanding is considerably more.

*Land Board Work.*—The work of the Board has been consistently heavy throughout the year. Seldom could the business be completed in one day. In addition to the monthly meetings, it has been found necessary to hold several special meetings.

## SOUTHLAND.

(K. M. GRAHAM, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The two main factors affecting settlement in this district during the past year have been exceptional weather conditions and the prices ruling for our primary products. During the winter very heavy snow fell in the high country, and this was followed by an unusually long period of hard frosty weather resulting in serious losses of sheep. Pastoralists experienced an extremely anxious time, and it was anticipated that their losses would in some cases be disastrous, but the compensating influences of an early and exceptionally fine spring, combined with the high prices obtained for wool later in the year, have done much to offset losses and restore confidence. A brilliant spring unfortunately developed into one of the driest summers that Southland has ever experienced, and droughty conditions continued right on into the autumn. Similar climatic conditions were prevalent everywhere, though it might be recorded in favour of Southland that the district as a whole withstood the effects and came through the ordeal probably better than any other part of the Dominion. Nevertheless both cropping and dairying suffered to a considerable extent. The dry season was not without some good effects, and it has at least emphasized the necessity for growing green feed for dairy herds in order to profitably carry them along through the milking season.

The prospects for the coming winter appear to be satisfactory, as the root and other winter crops have, on the whole, taken well, thus indicating that an adequate supply of feed for stock will be available.

The high prices ruling for wool have given rise to a tendency on the part of many farmers to change over into sheep-farming in preference to dairying, and this has had the effect of keeping the price of sheep high and making the ordinary or inferior class of dairy cows practically unsaleable.

It is gratifying to be able to record that dairymen in this district are showing an increasing tendency to cull their herds and improve their breed of stock.

Many of our dairy-farmers close to Invercargill are now supplied with electric power and light by the Southland Electric Power Board, using in the meantime the surplus power from the Invercargill Borough steam plant. Good progress is being made in wiring up the whole district, but it will be some months yet before the Monowai power is available. While the scheme is unquestionably an ambitious one, it promises to give the man on the land some of the advantages enjoyed by the town-dwellers, and from a land-settlement point of view anything that does away with some of the drudgery and makes country life more popular is a move in the right direction. A start is just being made by a local drainage Board to straighten and deepen the Waimatuku Creek for a distance of about twelve miles so as to provide better drainage for a large area of land in the western district. A similar project has been in hand for some time in connection with the Waikiwi River, and keen interest is being taken in the results, as there are many other areas of land in Southland which could be benefited by better drainage. Our primary industries have had a successful year, and generally the district can be said to be prosperous.

There has been practically no demand for unimproved bush land, and, as this is principally the only class of land that the Department has open for selection in this district, there has in consequence been no outward expansion of settlement during the year. Until the raising of store cattle becomes more profitable there will be little inducement for settlers to take up bush land unless it is easily accessible, of first-class quality, and adapted to comparatively rapid development for dairying.

Southland requires more population, and provision for increase in settlement under present conditions can best be made by subdividing the larger private holdings of first-class land, leaving the existing large areas of timber-bearing land in reserve until the timber has been milled and the time becomes more opportune for its subdivision and settlement.

## APPENDIX II.—LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS.

No estates were acquired or opened for selection during the year.

SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924.

Name of Estate.	Leaseholds.	Freeholds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are utilized.	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>North Auckland.</i>				
Bickerstaffe .. ..	43	4	Grazing .. .. .	Good.
Bayliss .. .. .	1	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Cadman .. .. .	1	..	Grazing lease only.	
Carroll .. .. .	1	1	Grazing lease only.	
Cradock .. .. .	1	13	Homes and orchards	Good.
Eccleston No. 2 ..	24	2	Homes .. .. .	Good.
Hetana .. .. .	13	77	Homes and orchards	Good.
Kitchener .. .. .	3	9	Homes and orchards	Good.
Koremoa .. .. .	15	..	Dairying .. .. .	Unsatisfactory.
Lawry .. .. .	2	..	Grazing lease only.	
Methuen .. .. .	4	26	Homes and orchards	Good.
Motutara .. .. .	12	..	Dairying and grazing	Fair.
Paerata .. .. .	2	..	Mixed farming ..	Fair.
Pakaraka .. .. .	13	1	Dairying .. .. .	Satisfactory.
Parahi .. .. .	11	..	Grazing and dairying	Good.
Plumer .. .. .	5	16	Homes and orchards	Good.
Prescott .. .. .	11	1	Homes .. .. .	Good.
Puni .. .. .	12	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Remuera .. .. .	25	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Streamlands .. ..	13	..	Dairying .. .. .	Unsatisfactory.
Te Pua .. .. .	5	1	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Tokiri .. .. .	4	..	Dairying .. .. .	Unsatisfactory.
Upokonui .. .. .	4	..	Dairying and grazing	Fair.
Waari .. .. .	26	26	Homes and orchards	Good.
Waimata .. .. .	15	..	Dairying .. .. .	Satisfactory.
Waiteitei .. .. .	9	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Totals .. .. .	275	177		
<i>Auckland.</i>				
Apata .. .. .	8	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Balachraggan ..	22	4	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Clifford .. .. .	9	..	Dairying and mixed farming	Good.
Delaney .. .. .	1	..	Home .. .. .	Fair.
Fencourt .. .. .	25	22	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Gorton .. .. .	10	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Hereford Park ..	2	..	Dairying .. .. .	Unsatisfactory.
Hikuai .. .. .	21	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Horahia .. .. .	6	..	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Horahora .. .. .	10	..	Dairying and mixed farming	Good.
Kaipaki .. .. .	4	..	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Karapiro .. .. .	10	9	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Kopuku .. .. .	5	..	Dairying .. .. .	Unsatisfactory.
Kopuku No. 2 ..	6	..	Dairying .. .. .	Unsatisfactory.
Mangaotama ..	3	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Mangapouri .. ..	5	9	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Mangateparu ..	56	1	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Mangawhero ..	11	15	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Matamata .. ..	103	202	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Matuku .. .. .	11	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Ngahinapouri ..	4	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Ohauiti .. .. .	16	..	Mixed farming ..	Unsatisfactory.
Okauia .. .. .	8	10	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Omeheu .. .. .	11	..	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Opouriao .. .. .	36	67	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Orongo .. .. .	31	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Otamarakau .. ..	8	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Otway .. .. .	11	7	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Pakarau .. .. .	19	3	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Puahue .. .. .	18	..	Dairying and mixed farming	Good.
Pukemapou .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Rangiatea .. ..	12	13	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Rangitaiki .. ..	7	..	Dairying and small farming	Very good.
Reporoa .. .. .	69	7	Dairying and grazing	Fairly good.
Rewi .. .. .	7	5	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Reynolds .. .. .	24	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Rotomanuka .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Selwyn .. .. .	100	138	Dairying and mixed farming	Good.

SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924—*continued.*

Name of Estate.	Lease-holds.	Free-holds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are utilized.	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>Auckland—continued.</i>				
Tahaia .. ..	8	..	Dairying .. ..	Fairly good.
Tainui .. ..	3	..	Grazing .. ..	Good.
Tairua .. ..	23	2	Residence .. ..	Good.
Taniwha .. ..	11	1	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Tapapa .. ..	11	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Tautari .. ..	38	6	Dairying and mixed farming .. ..	Fairly good.
Teasedale .. ..	22	81	Business and residence .. ..	Very good.
Te Miro .. ..	34	..	Dairying and mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Waiare .. ..	4	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Waimana .. ..	24	21	Dairying and mixed farming .. ..	Very good.
Waitakaruru ..	16	1	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Good.
Whatawhata ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Whitehall .. ..	6	14	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Totals .. ..	919	638		
<i> Gisborne.</i>				
Ardkeen .. ..	17	..	Pastoral .. ..	Fair.
Clydebank .. ..	5	4	Pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Glencoe .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Homebush .. ..	14	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Hukutaia .. ..	23	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Kanakanaia ..	7	1	Pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Ngatapa .. ..	27	3	Pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Ohuka .. ..	16	..	Pastoral .. ..	Fair.
Paremata .. ..	6	..	Dairying and pastoral .. ..	Good.
Pouparae .. ..	4	5	Agricultural .. ..	Very good.
Repongaere ..	11	..	Pastoral and dairying .. ..	Fair.
Te Arai .. ..	48	11	Agricultural, pastoral, and dairying ..	Very good.
Waimarie .. ..	13	5	Agricultural and dairying .. ..	Very good.
Wharekaka ..	14	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Wigan .. ..	14	6	Pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Willows .. ..	20	2	Agricultural .. ..	Very good.
Totals .. ..	245	37		
<i>Hawke's Bay.</i>				
Argyll .. ..	57	6	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Beattie .. ..	6	..	Pastoral .. ..	Good.
Clydebank .. ..	15	2	Pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Corby .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Coyne .. ..	1	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Crownthorpe ..	18	..	Pastoral .. ..	Good.
Elsthorpe .. ..	45	8	Pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Forest Gate ..	19	9	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Good.
Glengarry .. ..	23	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Gwavas .. ..	12	..	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Good.
Hatuma .. ..	61	18	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Kumeroa .. ..	13	3	Agricultural, pastoral, and dairying ..	Very good.
Lindsay .. ..	60	9	Mixed farming .. ..	Very good.
Mahora .. ..	26	8	Mixed farming .. ..	Very good.
Manga-a-toro ..	20	6	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Mangatahi .. ..	23	1	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Marakeke .. ..	17	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Omana .. ..	9	1	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Otamauri .. ..	16	1	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Good.
Parinui .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Pourerere .. ..	6	..	Agricultural and pastoral .. ..	Very fair.
Raureka .. ..	10	9	Dairying and fruit-culture .. ..	Very good.
Raumati .. ..	30	3	Pastoral and dairying .. ..	Very fair.
Rissington .. ..	5	..	Pastoral .. ..	Good.
Springhill .. ..	17	1	Mostly pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Sherenden .. ..	21	..	Mostly pastoral .. ..	Good.
Te Kaihi .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Te Kura .. ..	13	..	Dairying .. ..	Very fair.
Te Mata .. ..	13	1	Fruit-farming .. ..	Good.
Tongoio .. ..	12	..	Mostly pastoral .. ..	Good.
Tomoana .. ..	7	7	Fruit and dairying .. ..	Very good.
Waihau .. ..	21	1	Mostly pastoral .. ..	Very fair.
Waipuka .. ..	1	..	Mostly pastoral .. ..	Very good.
Watea .. ..	10	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Wilder .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Totals .. ..	623	94		
<i>Taranaki.</i>				
Araheke .. ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Very fair.
Clandon .. ..	7	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Croydon .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Hawke .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Huatoki .. ..	21	..	Residential and small farming .. ..	Fair.
Huia .. ..	5	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Feeling effects of slump.
Huinga .. ..	9	1	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Karu .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Indifferent.

## SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924—continued.

Name of Estate.	Lease-holds.	Free-holds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are Utilized.	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>Taranaki—continued.</i>				
Katikara .. ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Kohura .. ..	9	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Indifferent.
Kota .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Satisfactory.
Mana .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Indifferent.
Mangamaire .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Marco .. ..	2	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Matane .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Very fair.
Ngutu .. ..	1	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Very fair.
Parkes .. ..	7	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Rahu .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Abandoned.
Ratapiko .. ..	5	..	Dairying and mixed farming .. ..	Indifferent; not recovered from slump.
Spotswood .. ..	16	29	Homestead and small dairying .. ..	Good.
Taitama .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Tariki .. ..	7	1	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Tawhiwhi .. ..	5	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Indifferent; half area being grazed.
Tokaora .. ..	6	10	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Tututawa .. ..	3	..	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Very fair.
Totals .. ..	138	41		
<i>Wellington.</i>				
Almadale .. ..	9	..	Dairying .. ..	Poor.
Aorangi .. ..	27	14	Dairying and fruitgrowing .. ..	Fair.
Ahiaruhe .. ..	10	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Akitio .. ..	5	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Arawhata .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Armstrong .. ..	2	..	Grazing and dairying .. ..	Good.
Bailey .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Bartholomew .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Benge .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Braemore .. ..	3	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Brown .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Bruce .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Callender .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Carrington .. ..	33	2	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Cherry Grove .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Cloverlea .. ..	16	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Corliss .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Coyle .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Devonshire .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Dawbin .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Dixon .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Dyer .. ..	35	4	Grazing and cropping .. ..	Good.
Eaglesham .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Epuni Hamlet .. ..	32	11	Market-gardening .. ..	Very good.
Evans .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Fairfield .. ..	11	..	Grazing and cropping .. ..	Fair.
Falloon .. ..	7	..	Grazing and cropping .. ..	Fair.
Gee .. ..	1	..	Grazing and cropping .. ..	Fair.
Glasspole .. ..	1	..	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Very good.
Graham .. ..	2	..	Dairying and cropping .. ..	Fair.
Greves .. ..	1	..	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Greystroke .. ..	15	..	Dairying and cropping .. ..	Fair.
Hall-Jones .. ..	24	..	Gardening and dairying .. ..	Very good.
Hammond .. ..	2	..	Grazing .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Hardie .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Harper .. ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Haunui .. ..	9	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Haunui No. 2 .. ..	7	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Hawtrey .. ..	34	22	Residential .. ..	Fair.
Heatherlea .. ..	18	8	Dairying, pigs, and poultry .. ..	Very good.
Hill .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Horrobin .. ..	1	..	Mixed .. ..	Good.
Johnson .. ..	1	..	Mixed .. ..	Fair.
Kairanga .. ..	11	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Kiwitea .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Kopane .. ..	14	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Kuku .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Langdale .. ..	14	13	Grazing .. ..	Very good.
Langley Purdom .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Lean .. ..	1	..	Market-gardening .. ..	Good.
Lewis .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Linton .. ..	5	..	Dairying and cropping .. ..	Good.
Little .. ..	2	..	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Good.
Littler .. ..	1	..	Mixed .. ..	Good.
Longbush and Mahupuku .. ..	18	1	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Very good.
Makowai and Extension .. ..	28	..	Grazing and cropping .. ..	Fair.
Makopua .. ..	4	..	Grazing .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Marama-a-mau .. ..	6	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Marshall .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Matamua .. ..	4	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Mangaraki .. ..	18	2	Grazing, pigs, and poultry .. ..	Good.

SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924—*continued.*

Name of Estate.	Lease-holds.	Free-holds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are utilized	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>Wellington—continued.</i>				
Mangawhata .. ..	1	6	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Good.
Motukai .. ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Moroa .. ..	19	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Muhunoa .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
McDonnell .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
McLean .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
McKenzie .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Ngakaroro .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Fairly good.
Neligan .. ..	1	..	Mixed .. ..	Good.
Nesdale .. ..	1	..	Mixed .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Nesdale No. 2 .. ..	1	..	Mixed .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Ngahape .. ..	3	..	Grazing .. ..	Good.
Ngarara .. ..	5	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Normandale .. ..	48	9	Grazing, pigs, and poultry .. ..	Fairly good.
Olliver .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Oliver .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Omapu .. ..	4	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Ohakea .. ..	4	13	Dairying and cropping .. ..	Good.
Oroua .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Otahome .. ..	3	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Oturoa .. ..	7	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Osborne .. ..	5	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Paa Creek .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Paparangi .. ..	33	7	Residential .. ..	Very good.
Paramu .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Perham .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Pihautea .. ..	29	..	Dairying and cropping .. ..	Very good.
Pitt .. ..	5	..	Gardening .. ..	Very good.
Pohehe .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Poroporo .. ..	15	2	Grazing and cropping .. ..	Good.
Pukenamu .. ..	7	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Pukekoa .. ..	9	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Puketoi .. ..	8	..	Grazing .. ..	Good.
Quillinan .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Ruatangata .. ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Raumaewa .. ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Saxon .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Sandilands .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Soland .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Stokes .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Stanley .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Putorino .. ..	15	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Tawaha .. ..	24	1	Grazing and dairying .. ..	Fair.
Tablelands and Hikawera	15	1	Grazing .. ..	Very good.
Tamaihi .. ..	4	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Taikorea .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Te Matua .. ..	9	5	Grazing and dairying .. ..	Fair.
Te Whiti .. ..	7	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Tikotu .. ..	3	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Tiraumea .. ..	17	..	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Tuturumuri .. ..	8	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Te Ore Ore .. ..	8	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Waddington .. ..	15	..	Gardening .. ..	Good.
Wahren .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Waihora .. ..	3	..	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Fair.
Wilford .. ..	42	29	Residential .. ..	Very good.
White .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Waterson .. ..	2	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Westmere .. ..	7	..	Grazing .. ..	Very good.
Woulfe .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Wright .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Youle .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Tapuae .. ..	2	..	Grazing .. ..	Good.
Tauherenikau .. ..	1	..	Mixed .. ..	Fair.
Totals .. ..	910	153		
<i>Nelson.</i>				
Blue Glen .. ..	2	..	Grazing .. ..	Poor.
Braeburn .. ..	21	2	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Glen Rae .. ..	1	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Golden Downs .. ..	3	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Homestead-sites .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Kohatu .. ..	3	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Lake .. ..	4	..	Grazing .. ..	Fair.
Matakitaki* .. ..	1	..	Grazing .. ..	Temporary leases.
Palmer .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Spittal .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Tutaki .. ..	5	1	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Walker .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Wangapeka .. ..	14	3	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Totals .. ..	58	6		

\* Temporary grazing license.

SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924—*continued.*

Name of Estate.	Leaseholds.	Freeholds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are utilized.	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>Marlborough.</i>				
Alberton .. ..	4	..	Agriculture .. ..	Fair.
Blind River .. ..	18	..	Sheep-farming and agricultural .. ..	Good.
Bomford .. ..	1	..	Agriculture .. ..	Fair.
Erina .. ..	12	2	Sheep-farming .. ..	Most unsatisfactory.
Flaxbourne .. ..	130	10	Sheep-farming and agricultural .. ..	Very good.
Goat Hills .. ..	4	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Fair.
Hillersden .. ..	52	7	Sheep-farming and agricultural .. ..	Good.
Hillersden Bush .. ..	3	..	Pastoral and supply of posts .. ..	Satisfactory.
Linkwater Dale .. ..	7	..	Dairying .. ..	Not too satisfactory.
Lynton Downs .. ..	11	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Fair.
Moorlands .. ..	6	..	Agriculture .. ..	Good.
Neville .. ..	1	1	Agriculture .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Northbank .. ..	10	..	Grazing .. ..	Good.
Omaka .. ..	13	..	Sheep-farming and agricultural .. ..	Good.
Puhipuhi .. ..	2	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Very good.
Rainford .. ..	11	..	Dairying .. ..	Excellent.
Richmond Brook .. ..	12	..	Sheep-farming and agricultural .. ..	Very good.
Starborough .. ..	171	14	Sheep-farming and agricultural .. ..	Excellent.
Waipapa .. ..	4	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Good.
Wither .. ..	20	2	Sheep-farming, agricultural, and small farms..	Satisfactory.
Totals .. ..	492	36		
<i>Westland.</i>				
Kokatahi .. ..	8	..	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Highly satisfactory.
Poerua .. ..	23	2	Dairying and grazing .. ..	Highly satisfactory.
Totals .. ..	31	2		
<i>Canterbury.</i>				
Acton .. ..	3	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Very fair.
Albury .. ..	81	1	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Allanholme .. ..	9	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Good.
Annan .. ..	42	4	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Well established.
Ashley Gorge .. ..	7	3	Dairy-farming and grazing .. ..	Well established.
Ashton .. ..	8	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Ashwick .. ..	8	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Good.
Avenel .. ..	16	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Very fair.
Avenel Extension .. ..	11	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Very fair.
Avonhead .. ..	17	..	Small farming .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Avonhead No. 2 .. ..	16	..	Small farming .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Aylesbury .. ..	6	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Bankfield .. ..	9	..	Mixed farming and grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Beach .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Bourndale .. ..	7	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very fair.
Braco .. ..	6	8	Market-gardening .. ..	Well established.
Broadfields .. ..	5	..	Mixed grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain.
Brooksdale .. ..	13	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Bruce .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Buckley .. ..	3	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Buddo .. ..	11	4	Workers' dwellings .. ..	Fair.
Burke's Homestead .. ..	1	..	Homestead-site.	
Chamberlain .. ..	21	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Clandeboye .. ..	10	..	Dairy-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very fair.
Clandeboye No. 2 .. ..	6	..	Dairy-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Fair.
Claremont .. ..	11	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Fair.
Clayton .. ..	6	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Very good.
Coldstream .. ..	11	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Cooper's Creek .. ..	1	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Fair.
Copland .. ..	2	..	Sheep, dairy-farming, and grain-growing .. ..	Good.
Craigmore .. ..	10	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Cricklewood .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Culverden .. ..	57	10	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Good.
Douglas .. ..	32	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Fair; improving.
Doyleston .. ..	5	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Drayton .. ..	15	5	Agricultural .. ..	Improving.
Dromore .. ..	3	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Eccleston .. ..	4	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Epworth .. ..	..	2	.. ..	Now freehold.
Finlay Downs .. ..	5	..	Dairy-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very good.
Four Peaks .. ..	8	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very good.
Fyvie .. ..	4	1	Mixed farming .. ..	Not satisfactory.
Glenmark .. ..	29	1	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Good.
Glentanner .. ..	..	..	Homestead-site .. ..	Fair.
Gorge Road .. ..	4	17	Workers' homes.	
Grange .. ..	3	..	Dairying and grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Hadlow .. ..	3	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Hawthorne .. ..	6	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Heihei .. ..	12	..	Poultry-farming, &c. .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Hekeao .. ..	10	7	Mixed farming .. ..	Well established.

SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924—*continued.*

Name of Estate.	Lease-holds.	Free-holds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are utilized.	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>Canterbury—continued.</i>				
Hewitt .. ..	1	..	Homestead-site.	
Highbank .. ..	70	9	Mixed farming .. ..	Well established.
Hillboro .. ..	3	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Good.
Homebrook .. ..	16	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Homestead-sites .. ..	10	..		
Hornby .. ..	20	3	Agricultural and gardening .. ..	Fair.
Horsley Downs .. ..	10	18	Mixed farming .. ..	Well established.
Isleworth .. ..	13	..	Mixed farming and grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Jungle .. ..	1	..	Dairy-farming .. ..	Satisfactory.
Jungle No. 2 .. ..	1	..	Dairy-farming .. ..	Satisfactory.
Kaimahi .. ..	8	5	Workers' homes and gardening .. ..	Satisfactory.
Kakahu .. ..	5	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Satisfactory.
Kapua .. ..	12	..	Sheep-farming and dairying .. ..	Good.
Kapuatohe .. ..	8	6	Workers' homes and gardening .. ..	Satisfactory.
Keith .. ..	..	1	Mixed farming .. ..	Satisfactory.
Kereta .. ..	4	..	Dairying .. ..	Well established.
Kinloch .. ..	32	..	Dairy-farming and grazing .. ..	Very good.
Kohika .. ..	17	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Well established.
Kohika No. 2 .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Very good.
Kowhatu .. ..	5	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Ladbrooks .. ..	14	..	Dairying and mixed farming .. ..	Improving.
Lambrook .. ..	4	..	Mixed grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Lansdown .. ..	10	1	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Good.
Lauriston .. ..	4	..	Mixed grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Leeston .. ..	5	..	Agricultural .. ..	Well established.
Lees Valley .. ..	10	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Lyndhurst .. ..	15	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Lyndon .. ..	8	1	Mixed farming .. ..	Well established.
Lyndon No. 2 .. ..	9	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Well established.
Macgregor .. ..	1	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Marawiti .. ..	13	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Well established.
Maytown .. ..	9	2	Sheep-farming and dairying .. ..	Good.
Mead .. ..	22	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Well established.
Meadows .. ..	14	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very fair.
Milford .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Mills .. ..	21	..	Small farming and dairying .. ..	Well established.
Morice .. ..	28	3	Dairying and grass-seed growing .. ..	Satisfactory.
Morten .. ..	11	..	Poultry, &c. .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Montford .. ..	9	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Mount Nessing .. ..	11	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very good.
New Park .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Oakwood .. ..	5	..	Mixed farming and grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain.
Ohapi .. ..	6	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Omihi .. ..	..	..	Homestead-site.	
Orakipaoa .. ..	26	1	Dairying, grain-growing, and gardening .. ..	Well established.
Otaio .. ..	9	..	Small farming and dairying .. ..	Well established.
Otarakaro .. ..	4	3	Market-gardening .. ..	Well established, satisfactory.
Papaka .. ..	9	..	Mixed gardening .. ..	Well established.
Pareora .. ..	28	..	Sheep-farming and dairying .. ..	Good.
Pareora No. 2 .. ..	27	7	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Patoa .. ..	1	3	Grazing and small farming .. ..	Satisfactory.
Pawaho .. ..	8	17	Market-gardening .. ..	Satisfactory.
Peaks .. ..	10	2	Mixed gardening .. ..	Satisfactory.
Puhuka .. ..	9	1	Workers' homes .. ..	Well established.
Punaroa .. ..	15	2	Dairying, sheep-farming, and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Raincliff .. ..	1	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Rakitairi .. ..	21	1	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Rapuwai .. ..	5	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Rautawiri .. ..	6	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Riverina .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Roimata .. ..	11	18	Workers' homes .. ..	Satisfactory.
Rollesby .. ..	1	..		Uncertain.
Rosebrook .. ..	11	3	Small farming and dairying .. ..	Good.
Rosewill .. ..	153	8	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Well established.
Ruapuna No. 2 .. ..	15	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Very good.
Scargill .. ..	9	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. ..	Moderate.
Seafield .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Satisfactory.
Seaforth .. ..	7	..	Small farming and dairying .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Sherwood Downs .. ..	26	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Good.
Springwell .. ..	6	..	Mixed farming and grain-growing .. ..	Uncertain yet.
Stoke .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Strathmore .. ..	3	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Studholme Junction .. ..	4	..	Small farming and dairying .. ..	Good.
Takitu .. ..	5	..	Sheep-farming .. ..	Well established.
Tamai .. ..	16	24	Workers' homes .. ..	Satisfactory.
Tara .. ..	8	1	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very good.
Tarawahi .. ..	11	17	Workers' homes .. ..	Satisfactory.
Teschemaker .. ..	12	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. ..	Very good.
Timaunga .. ..	17	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair; improving.
Timaunga Extension .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.

SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924—*continued.*

Name of Estate.	Lease-holds.	Free-holds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are utilized.	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>Canterbury—continued.</i>				
Tripp .. .. .	25	..	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. .. .	Fair.
Valverde .. .. .	11	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Fair.
Waiapi .. .. .	11	4	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. .. .	Well established.
Waikakahi .. .. .	190	13	Sheep-farming and grain-growing .. .. .	Well established.
Waimate .. .. .	34	..	Sheep-farming and grain and fruit growing .. .. .	Good.
Wairere .. .. .	7	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Fair.
Waitohi Peaks .. .. .	10	..	Sheep-farming .. .. .	Uncertain yet.
Wharenui .. .. .	17	8	Workers' homes .. .. .	Well established.
Winchester .. .. .	10	..	Sheep-farming, grain-growing, and dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Woodlau .. .. .	6	..	Mixed farming and grazing .. .. .	Uncertain yet.
Workers' homes .. .. .	3	..		
	1,895	245		
<i>Otago.</i>				
Airedale .. .. .	12	..	Dairying and general farming .. .. .	Good.
Ardgowan .. .. .	67	3	Dairying and general farming .. .. .	Good.
Arnmore .. .. .	5	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Only fair.
Airemore .. .. .	1	..	Grazing .. .. .	Good.
Awamoa .. .. .	1	1	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Very fair.
Barnego .. .. .	22	2	Dairying and general farming .. .. .	Good.
Bellamy .. .. .	15	..	Grazing .. .. .	Poor.
Cardrona .. .. .	1	..	Grazing .. .. .	Indifferent.
Clareview .. .. .	5	..	Dairying and general farming .. .. .	Fair.
Clifton .. .. .	10	..	General .. .. .	Indifferent.
Conical Hills .. .. .	45	1	Grazing and general .. .. .	Poor.
Crosshill .. .. .	6	..	General and mixed .. .. .	Very fair.
Croucher .. .. .	1	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Dalmain .. .. .	3	..	Grazing .. .. .	Poor.
Duncan .. .. .	4	3	Dairying .. .. .	Poor.
Earnsclough .. .. .	27	..	Fruit-farming .. .. .	Very fair.
Elderslie No. 1 .. .. .	35	1	General farming .. .. .	Good.
Elderslie No. 2 .. .. .	16	..	General farming .. .. .	Fair.
Galloway .. .. .	10	..	Fruit and homestead-sites .. .. .	Fair.
Gladbrook .. .. .	41	3	Dairying .. .. .	Very fair.
Glenn .. .. .	4	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Indifferent.
Greenfield .. .. .	36	7	General farming .. .. .	Good.
Hilderthorpe .. .. .	19	..	General and workers' homes .. .. .	Poor.
Janefield .. .. .	20	2	Dairying and fruit-farming .. .. .	Very fair.
Kauroo Hill .. .. .	42	3	General farming .. .. .	Very fair.
Kelso .. .. .	4	..	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Kurow .. .. .	11	3	General farming and dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Lakeview .. .. .	1	..	General farming .. .. .	Fair.
Maerewhenua .. .. .	76	..	General farming .. .. .	Good.
Makareao .. .. .	33	..	General farming .. .. .	Good.
Makareao Extension .. .. .	3	..		
Maraweka .. .. .	8	..	General farming .. .. .	Very fair.
Matakanui .. .. .	3	..	General and grazing .. .. .	Fair.
Meadowbank .. .. .	11	..	General farming .. .. .	Good.
Melville Park .. .. .	7	..	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Poor.
Momona .. .. .	9	5	Dairying .. .. .	Very good.
Oakleigh .. .. .	1	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Very fair.
Otanomomo .. .. .	25	1	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Otekaike .. .. .	64	1	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Plunket .. .. .	18	1	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Pomahaka .. .. .	27	1	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Poplar Grove .. .. .	20	2	Dairying .. .. .	Fair.
Pukeawa .. .. .	14	2	Mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Pukenui .. .. .	6	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Puketapu .. .. .	9	2	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Rugged Ridges .. .. .	1	..	Grazing .. .. .	Very fair.
Steward .. .. .	51	2	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Fair.
St. Helens .. .. .	3	..	General farming .. .. .	Good.
Tahawai .. .. .	7	1	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Taumata .. .. .	9	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Teaneraki .. .. .	23	..	Dairying .. .. .	Good.
Te Puke .. .. .	4	..	General farming .. .. .	Fair.
Teviot .. .. .	24	1	Grazing .. .. .	Fair.
Tilverstowe .. .. .	7	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Fair.
Tokarahi .. .. .	79	1	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Tokoiti .. .. .	4	..	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Totara .. .. .	27	..	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Wairuna .. .. .	17	..	Mixed farming .. .. .	Fair.
Waitahuna No. 1 .. .. .	2	1	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Indifferent.
Waitahuna No. 2 .. .. .	6	1	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Indifferent.
Windsor Park No. 1 .. .. .	37	2	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Windsor Park No. 2 .. .. .	10	..	General and mixed farming .. .. .	Good.
Westcott .. .. .	8	..	General farming .. .. .	Fair.
Totals .. .. .	1,117	53		



SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENTS ESTABLISHED UPON ESTATES ACQUIRED AND DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924—*continued.*

Name of Estate.	Lease-holds.	Free-holds.	Principal Purpose for which Holdings are utilized.	Remarks as to Present Position.
<i>Southland.</i>				
Allenby .. ..	5	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Ardlussa .. ..	6	..	Pastoral .. ..	Poor.
Beaumont .. ..	8	2	Mixed farming .. ..	Unsatisfactory.
Campbell .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Doubtful.
Crichton Park .. ..	4	2	Pastoral .. ..	Good.
Edendale .. ..	105	46	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Ermendale .. ..	10	2	Mixed farming .. ..	Poor.
Fortification Hill .. ..	6	..	Pastoral .. ..	Good.
Glenham .. ..	37	7	Mixed farming .. ..	Very good.
Knowsley Park .. ..	9	..	Pastoral .. ..	Poor.
Lambert .. ..	1	..	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Lamont .. ..	6	..	Dairying .. ..	Fair.
Maori Hill .. ..	16	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Merrivale .. ..	45	10	Mixed farming .. ..	Good.
Merrivale No. 1 .. ..	8	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Merrivale No. 2 .. ..	7	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Monte Cristo .. ..	4	..	Dairying .. ..	Doubtful.
Otahu .. ..	8	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Ringway .. ..	3	3	Mixed farming .. ..	Fair.
Stalker .. ..	8	1	Dairying .. ..	Very good.
Strathvale .. ..	9	..	Dairying .. ..	Good.
Teihoka .. ..	4	..	Mixed farming .. ..	Doubtful.
Waiariki .. ..	7	..	Pastoral .. ..	Poor.
Waikiwi Town .. ..	29	13	Suburban building-sites .. ..	Good.
Totals .. ..	349	86		
Grand totals .. ..	7,052	1,568		

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS.

NORTH AUCKLAND.

(H. J. LOWE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The only settlement opened during the year was Eccleston Settlement, situated at Otahuhu. Some eighteen building sections were offered on cash or deferred payment, and twelve were disposed of.

As the city tramway system has now been extended to Ellerslie (Harp of Erin) it is hoped to proceed with the necessary street-formation of the Cadman and Carroll Settlements. Cadman Settlement comprises 31½ acres, which has been subdivided into 143 sections, and Carroll Settlement 11 acres and fifty sections.

*Waimata Settlement.*—Quite a large area of ground has been stumped and ploughed and has been in crop during the summer. The settlers who had supplementary crops of turnips, millet, and Italian rye for their dairy cows did not feel the dry spell, and the returns from the cows have been most satisfactory. Nearly all the settlers are milking on the flats and running dry sheep on hilly country. All the cows of the settlement have been officially tested during the year by the dairy company's official tester, with gratifying results. A fair amount of bush has been felled and sown down in permanent English pastures during the year, and miles of subdivisional fences erected and new drains put in on the flats. Over four thousand sheep were shorn in the wool-shed at the homestead, and they are milking over three hundred cows on the settlement. Altogether, things look very prosperous at Waimata, and there seems no doubt that every one of the settlers will make good. It is a great pity that we have not all our soldier settlers settled on this class of country.

*Awakino Settlement.*—Past seasons have taught the settlers the necessity of putting in good deep drains, as the swamp that drains through most of this settlement is a large one with a big catchment area. New subdivisional fences have also been erected, and a start has been made in stumping and clearing the ground for cropping, so that next season they will be able to grow summer feed for their stock. Over two hundred cows are being milked on this settlement by the settlers. On some of the hilly country they are running store cattle and breeding-ewes. The cows are all under official test, and the returns have been satisfactory. Altogether things look very prosperous in Awakino, and on this class of country any settler will make good if he is a worker.

*Upokonui Settlement.*—A large area of bush has been felled, burnt, and sown down in English grass, and new subdivisional fences erected. The settlers this year purchased a few good breeding-ewes, and as soon as they breed up a flock will sell the cows and go in mostly for sheep, just keeping sufficient cows to pay the store bills and keep the place in order. Unless they run sheep and cattle on this class of country, in a few years it will all be back in fern. Mixed farming is the only thing to keep the country in good order.

*Pakaraka Settlement.*—A fair amount of gorse has been cleared during the year, and the ground ploughed up and a few crops taken off. Owing to the volcanic rock being so close to the surface on

some of the sections it is impossible to cultivate the ground, but where the rock is not so close or near the surface very good work has been done. The settlers are all dairying, and the cows generally are in good condition. Very little permanent improvements have been effected during the year.

*Puriri Settlement.*—Fair progress has been made on this settlement during the year. A large area of ground has been stumped, and, as the stumps were mostly puriri, this has been a stupendous undertaking. The new stumped ground has been ploughed, and crops of autumn seed-potatoes have been grown with good results, and the ground is now in fallow for the sowing of early potatoes, or in Italian rye and turnips for winter feed for the cows. New subdivisional fences have been erected, and a little bush felled, burnt off, and sown down in English grasses. New drains have been put down on some of the low-lying sections to take off the storm-water, and by doing this it has been possible to plough up the ground and take crops off it. The settlers are all now comfortably housed, and are milking, cropping, and getting the ground ready to grow potatoes for the early market. The country requires to be liberally top-dressed every now and again, so as to get the best result from the English grasses. Provision has been made for the cows, and stock generally are looking well.

*Waiteitei Settlement.*—Very little progress has been made during the year. Some of the settlers on the good portion of the settlement have stumped, ploughed, and brought in a fair area of land, and on the flats some good crops have been grown. New subdivisional fences have been erected and large areas of the poor ground have been ploughed and are now in fallow. A few acres of scrub have been felled, sown, and put down in English pastures. The results from the cows have not been at all satisfactory, except on one or two holdings.

*Streamlands Settlement.*—New fences have been erected and new drains have been dug so as to connect with the large main drains that were put through the settlement last season. The large main drains have been cleared out, and the settlers are now feeling the benefit of these drains, as all the storm-water soon leaves the flats. A fair amount of ground is gradually being brought into permanent English pastures. The land is cleared of scrub and blackberry during the summer months, and surface-sown in autumn. This has only been made possible by draining. All the settlers are milking, and provision has been made for feed for the stock.

*Motutara Settlement.*—Good progress has been made on many of the sections. A fairly large area has been stumped, cleared, and ploughed on one section, and the results from the crops grown have been most satisfactory. Subdivisional fences have been erected, and new artesian bores have been put down and are giving a good supply of water. A fair amount of ploughing has been done on the sections. Good stacks of hay were well saved during the summer for winter feed for the stock. The settlers are all milking with only two exceptions, and one of them expects to milk as soon as he can breed up a good line of his own heifers. The stock generally are looking well.

*Koremoa Settlement.*—Very little progress has been made on this settlement during the year. The drains have been cleared out on the flats, and a few chains of new drain dug towards the far end of the settlement.

*Remuera Settlement.*—The stone has been removed, stumps cleared, and a large area ploughed and crops taken off during the year on some of the flat sections. The new ploughed ground has grown excellent crops. New drains have been dug on the flats to connect with Lake Omapere, and now that the outlet of the lake has been lowered the water is gradually leaving the flats, but it will be some time before the ground adjoining the lake will be fit for English grasses. Subdivisional fences have been erected. Provision has been made for winter feed for the stock, and they are all looking fairly well. The grass land on Remuera requires a liberal supply of manure to get the best results, and this class of country responds very quickly to top-dressing.

#### AUCKLAND.

(W. F. MARSH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Including those occupied by discharged soldiers, there are fifty-one settlements in this district, on which there are at present 919 settlers, occupying 178,843 acres under lease, while 638 settlers, occupying 120,738 acres, have already acquired the freehold of their sections. A few of the more recently established settlements are still struggling against adverse conditions, not having yet surmounted the difficulties created by the slump and other circumstances. The large majority of the settlements, however, especially of the early ones, are in a thoroughly sound and prosperous condition, and comprise some of the best dairy farms to be found in the district.

#### GISBORNE.

(V. I. BLAKE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

All the settlements in the district—except, of course, soldier settlements—are old-established ones, and the lessees still continue, as a rule, to make good. In a few instances the Board has had to come to the rescue of men who bought in at a large goodwill, but the remaining original selectors are all on a sound footing. It is abundantly evident that these old land-for-settlements purchases were sound propositions.

#### HAWKE'S BAY.

(J. D. THOMSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No additions were made during the year to the lands for settlements in Hawke's Bay, and no change of any importance has taken place. Transfers of holdings are not frequent, and generally the settlements are in a very satisfactory state.

## TARANAKI.

(J. COOK, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No new estates have been purchased this year, and the condition of those already purchased remains practically unchanged. Piu Estate still remains unselected, and parts of Kohura and Tawhiwhi Estates are in the same position.

## WELLINGTON.

(T. BROOK, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

There have been no new settlements purchased during the year. The older settlements are well developed, and continue in a satisfactory position. Several residential sections in the Wilford Settlement at Petone were offered by auction during the year and met with a ready sale.

## NELSON.

(N. C. KENSINGTON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No new settlements were opened up during the year. The Maruia, Matakitaiki, and Tutaki Settlements have recently been revalued, and with good market prospects ahead it is expected when they are again opened for selection that there will be a good demand for this class of land. It is hoped to have them on the market before the spring.

## MARLBOROUGH.

(J. STEVENSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No new estates have been acquired this year. The older settlements are well established, and have generally benefited by the increased prices now ruling for primary products. The estates specially acquired and disposed of for soldier settlement are dealt with under that heading.

## WESTLAND.

(W. T. MORPETH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The only settlements in the Westland District are Kokatahi and Poerua. Both these have been very successful. All the settlers are engaged in dairying. They are in a flourishing condition, most of them being now practically independent.

## CANTERBURY.

(G. H. BULLARD, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No estates were purchased under the Land for Settlements Act during the past year. Soldier settlements are dealt with in a separate report. The pastoral and pastoral-agricultural farmers have had a good year, but the same cannot be said of agricultural and dairy farms, excepting in localities where the rainfall is fair. As most of these lands command fairly large goodwills, tenants, excepting those who have paid large goodwills, will pull through. There have not been many applications to purchase the freehold; and in some cases of transfer of properties where values had been reduced the conceded rent was remitted on account of difficulties caused by the weedy state of the land.

## OTAGO.

(R. S. GALBRAITH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No fresh estates in this district were acquired under the Land for Settlements Act during the year. The settlers on the settlements acquired in the earlier years of the enactment have done, and are continuing to do, well. Their holdings are now worth much more than the original capital values, and sales of the leases are effected at substantial goodwills. There have, however, been fewer transfers during the year than is usually the case. A regrettable feature about land-settlement generally is that too many successful settlers sell out of their holdings, either to retire in the towns and cities or to acquire larger holdings at increased prices, and thus begin again the hard work and worry of trying to meet heavy financial obligations. It is remarkable that so few lessees take advantage of the provisions of section 25 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1920. Only two lessees—one on Tokarahi, the other on Windsor Park Settlement—acquired the fee-simple of their holdings during the year. The explanation, probably, is the widespread belief that a leasehold can be disposed of easier than a freehold. Perhaps it can. Certainly, less capital is required. The estates purchased since the war have not been so successful, if success is to be measured by the financial well-being of the tenants. It may be accepted as a fact that there are now but few private properties in Otago of suitable size and quality of land that could be acquired by the Government at a price at which even practical, thrifty, hard-working settlers could hope to do well.

## SOUTHLAND.

(K. M. GRAHAM, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No estates were purchased under the Land for Settlements Act during the year under review, and there is nothing outstanding to report.

Several selections are recorded in the Waikiwi Town Settlement, and as the demand justifies it more of the sections will be made available. There were no conversions to freeholds of settlement lands during the year, but the holders of four deferred-payment licenses completed purchase. There was one exchange from deferred payment to renewable lease.

Of the older settlements, Beaumont was always considered a doubtful success, and time has proved that several lessees failed to recover from the slump years and the consequent tightening-up of control of financial assistance by mercantile firms. We now have four of these sections on our hands. The question of grouping these holdings and of possible reductions in rentals is being looked into. Several sections on Merrivale No. 1 and Merrivale No. 2 were revalued during the year, and it is hoped that by the help thus afforded the settlers will eventually succeed.

## APPENDIX III.—LAND-DRAINAGE OPERATIONS.

(O. N. CAMPBELL, Chief Drainage Engineer.)

DRAINAGE operations have been steadily maintained during the past year, and several new propositions have come under view, the principal of these being the investigation of the possibilities of drainage of the swamps lying between Eureka, Ohaupo, Hamilton, and Taupiri, an area of approximately 100,000 acres. Many special reports and inspections have been made, among these being Aratapu Swamp, Hungahunga drainage area, Whakaki Swamp (Hawke's Bay), Lake Wairarapa district, Kohukohu Domain, Section 42, Block V, Opoc Survey District, Te Matai water-supply, Pye's Pa water-supply, Rotongaro outlet drain, Waipa drainage area, Strathvale and Allenby Settlements (Southland), Te Pu Kaharoa water-supply, &c. Works done by local authorities out of grants and subsidies have been examined and passed, and vouchers for the sum of £4,431 17s. 9d. have been passed for payment in respect thereof.

Separate reports, as required by statute, have been made on the Hauraki Plains area, Rangitaiki Swamp, and six areas administered under the Swamp Drainage Acts.

The following is a short report on general works carried out by the branch :—

*Pakihiki Lands (Westland).*—At the end of last year an outfall drain was in the course of construction—16 chains being then completed—on the area at Kumara selected for purposes of experimental drainage. This construction was continued for another 11·80 chains, and about an acre of the area, isolated by the drain, stumped and left ready for experimental cultivation by the Agricultural Department. Unfortunately the area was not ready in time for winter ploughing, so the Agricultural Department postponed operations until the coming winter. The expenditure on the above was £201 13s. 6d.

*Westland Surveys.*—From the middle of October until the end of February a survey was conducted over the Bruce Bay district, and the possibilities of about 12,000 acres of bush and swamp land investigated. The plans of this are not fully completed, but nevertheless the results are disappointing, for the swamp areas are very scattered, and, while the smaller ones are usually a good class of swamp, the larger ones are of indifferent quality. There seems scant prospect of any development until the timber crop has been milled to allow of the bush country and the swamps being developed together.

At the beginning of March a survey was commenced of the Kongahu Swamp, near Karamea, Buller County; but so far the survey is not sufficiently advanced to give an authoritative opinion on the potentialities of this area. The area is practically all alienated land, the survey being undertaken with a view to laying a scheme of drainage before the settlers, and ascertaining their desire to avail themselves of the provisions of the Swamp Drainage Act. It is a good healthy-looking peat swamp of some 2,000 acres in extent, and, being adjacent to one of the finest dairying areas on the coast, is well worthy of a thorough investigation into the possibilities of drainage.

An inspection has also been made during the year of swamp areas at Barrytown, Rotomanu, and Lake Rotokino. On the two first mentioned areas drainage is fairly simple, and much is being done by the individual: outlets being easy of provision, especially when the settlers affected co-operate on their construction. Both these swamps are of very good quality, and should amply repay the settlers for their development.

The Rotokino Swamp is also a very fine area; but its drainage calls for a comprehensive scheme, and, as the settlers are not unanimous in their desire to avail themselves of the provisions of the Swamp Drainage Act, no active operations are being undertaken there at present.

The expenditure for the year was £286 10s.

*Kahuwera Additional Loan Block.*—The construction of a drain, 81 chains in length, through Section 4, Block IV, Totoro Survey District, was completed in May, 1923. This will provide an outlet for several sections, the occupiers of which were unable to improve the swamp portions of their holdings under the conditions prevailing prior to the construction of the drain. The total cost of the work was £298.

*Reporoa Settlement.*—The work on this area has been practically completed, and from now on the expenditure will be due to the necessity for maintaining the roads and drains, although the drains in some parts of the peat swamp will require further deepening as the country consolidates. During the winter very severe floods, the worst for many years, were experienced, and as a result some of the roads and drains were damaged, necessitating a fairly heavy expenditure in repairs. Since then the Waiotapu Stream has been dragged again by means of a horse-drawn harrow, so as to remove the growth of weeds. This effected a very big improvement in the carrying-capacity of the stream, and it is evident that this work must be carried out every year so as to keep the flood-level as low as possible. The construction of the Paeroa Road, at the back of the settlement, was completed. This necessitated the erection of several bridges and culverts, along with the necessary fillings. The expenditure on this area for the year was £1,239 18s.

*Motutangi Swamp.*—In February of this year a party commenced taking the necessary levels for the drainage of the above swamp, in the North Auckland District. Portions of the area are very promising, being covered with raupo, but no large scheme of drainage should be attempted unless provision is first made for the planting of the sand-drift areas on the outlet end of the area. The sand in this direction is encroaching rapidly, and if not taken in hand the Motutangi Stream will be completely blocked. Should the levels and peat-sounding prove that the drainage of the area is feasible, then it will be possible to call tenders for the construction of the main outfall. The expenditure to date is £71 10s. 5d.

*Tokatoka No. 3 Additional Loan Block.*—The expenditure this year has been confined to metalling which work is now being carried out under the direct supervision of the County Engineer within whose area the block lies. Limestone foundations are now laid on all roads to be metalled, and consequently each soldier settler has a hard road access. Altogether there were 6 miles 4 chains of metalling to be done, and this has now been completed with the exception of a length of 2 miles on which a wearing-surface of blue metal has still to be laid. Expenditure for the year was £1,221 3s. 6d.

*Hamilton Swamp.*—In January the field-work was commenced on the large area of undeveloped and partly-developed swamp lands lying generally to the east and north-east of Hamilton. This area is under the control of several Drainage Boards, but owing to the depth of peat the results obtained have up to the present not been too successful. The work in hand is confined to the obtaining of all data that will be useful in drawing up a report on the drainage of this area. The obtaining of levels is of necessity the first requisite, but in this class of country soundings must be taken at frequent intervals in order to ascertain the depth of peat, so that an estimate can be made as to the probable amount of consolidation. So far 30 miles of levels have been carried out, at a cost of £305 17s. 7d. The work will be continued as far north as the area under the control of the Mangawhara River Board, after which the field-work of the Rukuhia area will be commenced.

*Kerepechi-Kaihere Road.*—The metalling of this road in the Hauraki Plains area was carried out under a pound-for-pound subsidy, and 1½ miles was completed. Expenditure was £1,766 13s. 8d.

*Hereford Park Water-supply.*—Installation of ram and piping on the above works was completed in July, 1923, and a successful trial was at once made. A satisfactory supply of water was obtained at the reservoir on the hill, but after the ram had been working some weeks it gave trouble, at first with silt coming down from intake, but latterly from bolts continually breaking. Stronger bolts are to be tried early in the coming year, but in the event of these not holding a stronger make of ram will be required. Expenditure for year was £136 9s. 11d.

*Waiare Water-supply.*—Material for this water-supply installation has been delivered on the ground, and tank-stand has been erected in Mrs. Shippon's paddock. Delivery-pipe from ram-site to tank-stand has been laid, a wire cable being stretched across the stream to support the pipe-line above flood-level. Ram and part of the drive-pipe have been lowered to ram-site, but excavation of rock has proved rather more difficult than was anticipated, and the job has consequently been delayed. Installation should be complete early in the coming period. Expenditure for the year was £433 7s. 8d.

*Omeheu Water-supply.*—At the request of the settlers in the Omeheu Soldiers' Settlement (Rangitaiki district) a scheme for a water-supply by pumping from the Rangitaiki River was put in hand by the Department. A contract was let for the erection of a 6,000-gallon reservoir and windmills, and the laying of a main pipe-line to serve the various sections. This work is almost complete, and a very satisfactory supply of good water is now available. To ensure a regular supply it has been deemed necessary to install an auxiliary engine and pump, and this work is now in hand. The total length of main pipe-line is 101 chains, and at present there are sixteen leads from this. The expenditure for the year was £712 10s. 2d.

*Orongo Settlement.*—50 chains of road were metalled, and the roading of the block, comprising 3 miles 57 chains of metalled road and 163 chains of formed clay road, is now completed. The work of ploughing and cultivating has been continued when weather conditions were favourable, and 219 acres were ploughed with tractors, 227 acres cultivated, and 158½ acres sown in grass. Unfortunately, wet weather made spring sowing impossible. The grass-seed sown during autumn has been somewhat injured by the heavy rain which occurred early in April, but the establishment of a good pasture is assured if the settlers will keep the fescue under control. Parts of this alluvial land are still very soft, and in these localities the drains require constant deepening. 13 miles 37 chains of drains have been cleaned and deepened. The expenditure for the year was £5,260 14s. 9d.

The following particulars give the aggregate of the principal operations carried out over all the works under the direction of the branch :—

Cleaning drains .. .. .	394 miles 1 chains.
Widening and deepening drains .. .. .	122 " 38 "
Constructing new drains .. .. .	27 " 51 "
Dredge cuts .. .. .	47 " 60 "
Reforming roads .. .. .	3 " 61 "
Forming new roads .. .. .	24 " 38 "
Metalling roads .. .. .	2 " 64 "
Remetalling roads .. .. .	0 " 75 "
Fencing roads .. .. .	11 " 16 "
Clearing road-lines .. .. .	1 " 72 "
New stop-banks .. .. .	3 " 49 "
Repairs to stop-banks .. .. .	7 " 0 "
Levels taken .. .. .	252 " 0 "
Traverses run .. .. .	58 " 65 "
Artesian wells sunk .. .. .	3 (number).
Flood-gates built .. .. .	11 "
Concrete culverts built .. .. .	5 "
Box culverts .. .. .	5 "
Pile bridges erected .. .. .	20 "
Sill bridges erected .. .. .	29 "
Concrete bridges erected .. .. .	2 "
Sleepers .. .. .	13,000 "
Fascines for roads .. .. .	19,440 bundles.
Metal for roads .. .. .	6,904 cubic yards.
Spoil excavated by floating and dry-land excavators	1,700,298 "
Rock-excavation .. .. .	32,946 "
Scoop excavation .. .. .	11,800 "

*Office.*—The total expenditure of all kinds which passed through the books was £212,582. Of this amount the sum of £73,295, in payment of wages, &c., was paid out of Thames and Whakatane Imprest Accounts. Payments through the Auckland branch of the Treasury amounted to £90,133. The number of piecework contracts let during the year amounted to 324. The number of vouchers passed through the books was 4,229. The total amount of revenue received during the year (apart from rates) was £2,823 Os. 2d., the principal item being Patetonga tram freights, £621 17s. 2d. Inward correspondence numbered 8,980, outward 13,440.

*Collection of Rates.*—The total amount received during the year was £11,138, apportioned as follows: Hauraki Plains, £7,698; Rangitaiki Swamp, £3,440. A reclassification of the Hauraki Plains area was made early in the year, and the 1923-24 rates were based thereon. Very few objections to this were received, thus showing the soundness of the new classification. By an amendment of the Act provision has been made for a reclassification of the Rangitaiki area. The total number of assessments made for the year 1923-24 was 1,461.

*Draughting Staff.*—During the year the draughting staff have been kept very busy. The great amount of field surveying, mainly in the Rangitaiki district, has occasioned much plan-work, computations, general searching, and the supply of considerable survey data. Valuable 40-chain plots of the Rukuhia and Ruakura portions of the Hamilton Swamp areas have been made. In addition to this much work was done in the preparation of Proclamation plans and the drawing-up of any necessary agreements and other small matters incidental to the proclamation of land transactions under the different statutes.

On the engineering side the staff has spent considerable time on the checking of various designs, and on the designing of spillways, culverts, weirs, drains, &c. The lithograph maps of the various districts have been kept up to date, and a new map for the Rangitaiki district has been prepared. The photostat has been in great demand for the reproduction of plans for survey information, &c. Approximately 3,500 prints have been made during the year, showing a great saving in labour and cost.

The annual reports upon Hauraki Plains, Rangitaiki Plains, and swamp-drainage works not referred to herein will be found in separate parliamentary papers.

---

#### APPENDIX IV.—SAND-DUNE RECLAMATION.

---

(H. J. LOWE, Commissioner of Crown Lands, North Auckland.)

DURING the year sand-dune reclamation has been carried on in three different localities—viz., on the east coast, between Waipu and Marsden Point; on the west coast, between South Kaipara Head and Motutara; in the far north, between Waipapakauri and Hohoura. Work previously commenced on the Northern Kaipara area, at the back of Te Kopuru, was not proceeded with further, though reports show that the lupin plantations previously established are progressing favourably.

The expenditure on the various areas to date is as follows: Waipu, £2,345 11s. 4d.; Kaipara, £2,432 9s. 2d.; Great Northern, £508 Os. 9d.; Northern Wairoa, £268 6s. 6d.

I attach herewith a report on the work, by Mr. S. Stafford, Overseer in charge of the operations. These works must be classed more in the nature of an experiment, and if the work done is to be protected and proceeded with the trespassing by cattle and the menace by fires will have to be dealt with. The Overseer is carrying out his work very satisfactorily with the means at our disposal, but depasturing on the areas affected should be absolutely prohibited, and some method evolved to deal with the fire menace.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith the fifth annual report of the reclamation of the sand-dune areas.

Operations were commenced in the various localities at the following dates: Waipu, 11th August, 1919; Kaipara, 10th March, 1920; Ruakaka, 21st June, 1920; Northern Wairoa, 2nd May, 1921. The areas were inspected as follows: Waiuku (south of Auckland), 9th November, 1921; Ocean Beach, Whangarei Heads, 15th November, 1921; Waipapakauri and Hohoura, 15th March, 1922.

Reclamation operations commenced at the Great Northern (Waipapakauri to Hohoura), September, 1921, by sowing 2 cwt. of California tree-lupin seed, between Corcoran's land (inland drift) and Stony Crossing, in the vicinity of the "Big Flat," and on 23rd May, 1922, 10 cwt. 3 qr. 23 lb. of California tree-lupin seed was sown, principally on coastal dune areas, and 103 sacks of marram-grass plants were planted out.

## WAIPU SAND-DUNE AREAS.

Area of marram-grass (*Psamma trenaria*) established from 11th August, 1919, to 19th November, 1922, 160 acres (approximately); California tree-lupin (*Lupinus arboreus*) plantations established on coastal and inland dunes, approximately twelve miles.

Green Hill Nursery: An experiment was decided on (1920-21) to establish a nursery to raise pine-trees to transplant on the coastal dunes and other sheltered localities, and also to sow pine-seed (*Pinus pinaster maritima*) and wattle-seed in covered places on sand-dune areas direct. This venture has proved quite successful in both cases.

*Tree-planting Operations* (3rd May, 1923, to 14th August, 1923).—On 7th May a commencement was made to transplant the pine-trees from the nursery beds. The pine-trees, *Pinus insignis*, *Pinus muricata*, and *Pinus pinaster maritima*, were transplanted principally along the coastal dunes, but some hundreds were also transplanted in sheltered localities on the inland drift. Also 126 willow-cuttings were planted out in suitable places on the coastal dunes. The following is the number of pine-trees transplanted: *Pinus insignis*, 1,497; *Pinus muricata*, 1,686; *Pinus pinaster maritima*, 529: total, 3,712.

The pine-trees have been transplanted on the coastal and intervening ridges in conformity with the configuration of the sand-dune area, and cover a distance in a serpentine and circular formation for a distance of 6 miles 32 chains, trees being set apart from 6 ft. to 10 ft. The trees are planted out under the shelter of the established lupin plantations, and this harvesting season the lupin branches have been cleared away, showing that 85 per cent. of the trees planted have established themselves. The distance the pine-trees are planted along the coast-line proper is approximately 1 mile 70 chains.

California tree-lupins (*Lupinus arboreus*): Harvesting, threshing, and sowing lupin-seed, from 6th December, 1923, to 31st March, 1924. On 6th December the harvesting, threshing, and sowing of lupin commenced, and the following is a summary of the work carried out for the above period: California tree-lupin seed harvested from 6th December, 1923, to 15th February, 1924, 4 cwt. 2 qr. The refuse of threshed seed sown, 90 sacks. Lupin branches carrying seed-pods and lupin fascines laid, 601½ chains. Quantity of California tree-lupin threshed seed sown, 3 cwt. 3 qr. 6 lb. The work carried out this harvesting season extends from the Ruakaka River to within two miles of the Waipu River, and is continuous and parallel to the established lupin plantations. The germination of the lupin-seed has been good, and the young plants are making favourable progress.

*Progress of Work and a General Description of the Growth of Plantation.*—The California tree-lupins established on the Waipu sand-dune areas are making splendid growth, and in a few places both the inland and coastal dunes are completely clothed with the lupins. With the exception of approximately 20 chains the lupin plantations extend from the Waipu River to Ruakaka; and across the Ruakaka River towards Marsden Point lupin plantations are also established, but are not doing so well and are not so extensive as on the Waipu coastal and inland dunes.

Marram-grass plantations (*Psamma trenaria*): Seven marram-grass plantations are established from outside Owen's land, at Ruakaka, to in the vicinity of the Waipu Road "turn in" from the beach. The plantations are making good progress both as regards a supply of marram-plants and "holding up" the sand-drift. With the exception of some repair work, no marram-grass planting has been done since the season of 1922.

Green Hill Nursery: During the year, on account of an insufficiency of funds, nursery-work has practically been in abeyance; however, pine-trees of the sort mentioned elsewhere have been planted on the eastern boundary-line. In connection with this work, 2,000 pine-trees are ready to transplant this season.

The following plants and trees planted out on the coastal and inland dunes are making favourable progress: Ice-plants (two varieties), yellow annual lupins, flax (*Phormium tenax*), *Hakea*, *Saligna*, willows (two varieties), *A. lapantha*, black-wattle, and *Ailantus glandulosa*. The above plants and trees have been planted on the Waipu sand-dune areas to test the growth and the suitability on sand-dune areas of the plants and trees in question.

*General Remarks.*—Trespassing stock were impounded on 20th May, 21st July, and 8th August, 1923. The impounding fees collected were forwarded to the Receiver of Land Revenue.

Firing marram-grass: The damage done to marram plantations is becoming a serious menace, and this last two years fully £200 worth of good marram-plants have been destroyed. Last January 24 chains in length and 1 chain wide was completely burnt out at Queen's Plantation, Ruakaka. No evidence could be found as to the perpetrator of the act. The fact that the plants will grow again after being fired does not remedy the destruction, as the plants are not suitable again for planting out for some seasons hence.

## KAIPARA SAND-DUNE AREA.

Area (approximate) of marram-grass established from 10th March, 1920, to 30th November, 1924, 162 acres. California tree-lupin established (approximate), from 10th March, 1920, to 31st March, 1923: Inland drift, five plantations, extending at various localities from the Eagle's Nest northerly, six miles. Coastal dunes, from a point opposite the Eagle's Nest along the coastal dunes northerly to the Otakanini Block, twelve miles. Threshed lupin-seed for shipment to Great Northern sand-dune areas, 10 cwt. 3 qr. 23 lb.

Extension of the Pa marram plantation (Puketapu Block): Reclamation work on this sand-dune area closed down on 31st March, 1923, the worker employed and the overseer proceeding to Waipu to attend to the planting of pine-trees. Returning to the Kaipara sand-dune areas on 17th August, 1923, a commencement was made to dig and prepare marram-plants for a marram plantation, an extension of the Pa marram plantation, and extending across the sand-drift above Messrs McLeod

and Harris's farms. The following is a summary of the quantity of materials planted: Main line of marram, 6 yards wide, 31 chains; second line of marram and cross-sections, 3 ft. wide, 52 chains; connecting lines of marram, 2 ft. wide, 54 chains: total number of chains of marram planted, 137. Total number of bundles of marram-grass plants planted, 1,056. The average weight of the bundles of plants was 40 lb. California tree-lupin seed sown in the vicinity of the Pa extension, 20 lb.

Work in connection with the extension of the Pa marram plantation ceased on 20th November, 1923. From this date to 28th November, 1923, repairs to the Pa marram plantation were taken in hand, and reclaiming-work on the Kaipara sand-dune areas closed down on 30th November, 1923, to 3rd January, 1924.

California tree-lupin.—Harvesting, threshing, sowing lupin-seed, and laying down lupin and tea-tree fascines for the period from 3rd January, 1924, to 31st March, 1924: The principal part of this work was carried out at the Eagle's Nest, the Eagle's Nest sand-dune area being the locality chosen to bring to a finishing-point. The following is a summary of the operations of the work: Produced from 140 sacks of harvested seed-pods, 5 cwt. 1 qr. 3 lb. The refuse of 140 sacks of threshed seed sown on dunes at the Eagle's Nest, 140 sacks. Lupin fascines carrying seed-pods, 242½ chains; tea-tree fascines laid down, 66 chains. Lupin-seed sown (threshed)—At the Eagle's Nest sand-dune areas, 74 lb. seed; on the coastal dune areas from a point opposite the Eagle's Nest and towards the Muriwai Creek, 60 lb.: total, 134 lb. The approximate area covered by the lupin-seed sown would be 448 chains; protecting marram-grass lines to the Kopuranui marram plantation, 6½ chains.

The lupin-seed sown at the Eagle's Nest was resown where the seed had been covered up by drift sand; also on the high localities among the tea-tree and toetoe plants. The seed from the grown lupin-trees will extend year by year to the extending lupin fascines laid down to establish lupin plantations from the lower sand-dune areas of the Eagle's Nest. The lupin-seed sown on the coastal dunes is to extend the lupin plantations to the Muriwai Creek, and to link up with the established lupin plantations south of the Muriwai Creek (Muriwai Domain work) and the Department's lupin plantations north. It is pioneer work to prepare material in the future to reclaim the immense sand-drifts. The lupin and tea-tree fascines laid are an extension of the established lupin plantation, and the extending lines are laid down principally in circular formation.

*Progress of Work, and a General Description of the Growth of Plantations.*—California tree-lupin plantations: The germination of the seed from the lupin fascines laid down in 1923 at the Eagle's Nest has not proved so successful as former development work, and the lupins grown are far apart along the lines of lupin fascines, now formed dunes. The cause was too much drifting sand, which covered the seed too deep to allow it to germinate. This proves the fact that too much liberty cannot be taken in sowing lupin-seed outside of sheltered limits. However, since the lupin and tea-tree fascines have been laid down this season the sand-drift has been checked, and consequently the seed has become uncovered and has started to germinate. Under more sheltered conditions at the Eagle's Nest and the various plantations along the inland drift more favourable developments have taken place.

The coastal dune lupin plantations, west coast: As reported in the last annual report, the lupin plantations in many parts along the twelve miles sown have been covered up with drifting sand, and are now separate plantations instead of being continuous. The lupin plantations that have established themselves are making progressive growth, and one of the plantations, approximately four miles along the coast-line, has completely clothed the coastal dune areas in that locality.

Marram-grass plantation: Seven marram plantations have been established on the inland sand drift, known as the Eagle's Nest, Gregory's, Hoe's, Kopuranui, Puketapu, and Monks. The Eagle's Nest and parts of the Pa plantations are making very indifferent growth. The other plantations, although doing useful work in regard to holding up the sand-drift, have not produced the supply of marram-plants expected for further development-work. To improve the conditions of the Eagle's Nest and parts of the Pa marram plantations, lupin fascines carrying seed-pods have been laid in rows through these plantations, with favourable results. Also, toetoe plants have been planted out at the Pa marram plantation with the same object in view.

*General Remarks.*—The indifferent growth of the marram plantations is caused by the fierce westerly gales, which give a rotary motion to the sand-drift. This, instead of feeding the marram-plants with drifting sand, removes the sand from the marram-grass roots, leaving the root-action of the plants exposed to the climatic conditions. The rows of lupin fascines and toetoe plants put down through these plantations are counteracting the evil, as raised dunes are being formed, the drift sand from which is commencing to cover the marram-grass roots. Another menace to both the lupin and marram plants is the rabbit.

#### GREAT NORTHERN SAND DUNE RECLAMATION (WAIPAPAKAURI-HOHOURA).

Area (approximate) of marram-grass established, 23rd May to 17th July, 1922, 5 acres. California tree-lupin seed sown from September, 1921, to 17th July, 1922, 12 cwt. 3 qr. 23 lb.; area (approximate) sown, eighty miles. From 17th July, 1922, to 15th January, 1924, the reclamation of the Great Northern sand-dune areas was in abeyance.

California tree-lupin: Harvesting, threshing, sowing seed, and laying lupin and tea-tree fascines from the period 15th January, 1924, to 31st March, 1924. The operations of harvesting the California tree-lupin seed commenced on 17th January, 1924, and continued on to 14th February, 1924; from this date to 31st March, 1924, the work carried out was sowing lupin branches carrying seed-pods, the refuse of the threshed seed, laying lupin fascines carrying seed-pods, and laying tea-tree fascines to protect the young lupin-plants in their first stages of growth.



*Statement of Work for the above Period.*—Harvesting and threshing California tree-lupin seed from 17th January, 1924, to 14th February, 1924, 181 sacks; threshed seed produced from 181 sacks, 7 cwt. 1 qr. 19 lb. Sown on dunes in the vicinity where harvested: the refuse of the 181 sacks of threshed seed. Lupin branches carrying seed-pods sown in the vicinity where harvested, 50 sacks. Threshed lupin-seed sown in the vicinity of the following sand drifts—Corcoran's, Gleeson's, Kauri Flat, and the Karaka—1 cwt. 1 qr. 9 lb. Threshed lupin-seed sold to, and to be sown by, lessees of grazing-runs: J. M. Reid, 1 cwt.; Mrs. D. M. Tyman, 2 cwt.; F. Puckey, 2 cwt.: total weight of lupin-seed sold and sown, 6 cwt. 1 qr. 9 lb.

California tree-lupin and tea-tree fascines laid and name of locality.—Waipapakauri "turn in" and vicinity lupin fascines laid, 175 chains; Kauri Flat, 74 chains; Waiharara, 61 chains; Corcoran's, 107 chains; Gleeson's, 30 chains: total, 447 chains. Waipapakauri "turn in" and vicinity tea-tree fascines laid, 60 chains; Kauri Flat, 39 chains; Corcoran's, 6 chains: total, 105 chains.

*Progress of Work and a General Description of the Growth of Plantations.*—California tree-lupin: The operations of the work carried out on the Great Northern is distributed over a wide area both on the coastal-dune areas and inland to where the sand had drifted in to swamps, hills, and valleys. South of the Waipapakauri "turn in" California tree-lupin are established in suitable sheltered places both on the coastal dune areas and as far inland as the sand has drifted—distance (approximate) four miles. North of the Waipapakauri "turn in" the California tree-lupin plantations are established on coastal dune areas and on the limits of the sand-drift inland through the Opoe Survey District, and some four miles into the Hohoura Survey District—distance (approximate) fifteen miles. Where shelter was provided the intervening ridges have been sown with lupin-seed, and flourishing lupin plantations in most cases where the seed was sown are met with.

The following are the local names of the principal plantations established: Coastal sand-dune areas—Hune Hune Creek, Ahipara "turn in," Waipapakauri "turn in," Kauri Flat "turn in," Karaka, Toheroa Camp, Little Waihi, Waihi, Waiharara "turn in," and Huketere. Inland drift limits—In the vicinity of Lakes Rotorua and Waiparara, sand drift near Hilton-Jones's land, Gleeson's and Wright's sand-drift, Corcoran's sand-drift, sand-drift behind Lake Waiparara and extending more or less to Selwyn's Swamp "turn in" and Stony Crossing.

The established lupin plantations growing on the inland drift limits have done remarkably well, and generally speaking far outclassed the lupin plantations on the coastal dune areas, which are, of course, subject to the prevailing westerly gales. In the more exposed places on the coastal dune areas the growth of the lupins is stunted, and in many places, like the tea-tree and mingimingi, growing prostrate. However, reviewing the whole of the growth of the California tree-lupin on the Great Northern sand-dune areas, it can be said that progress has been most satisfactory considering the lupin-seed, or most of it, was sown from May to July, 1922, and the harvesting of the lupin-seed and the reclamation work carried out this year is the production from the seed sown at this date.

Marram-grass plantations: From the 103 sacks of marram-grass plants shipped from Orewa, May, 1922, two marram plantations were established, one in the vicinity of the Waipapakauri "turn in," and the other (six miles north of the last-mentioned place) at Waihi. The plantations have an area (approximate) of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and both plantations have made excellent progress. As flax-plants (*Phormium tenax*) are growing in the vicinity of the sites of the marram plantations, protecting lines of flax-plants were planted. Fully two-thirds of the flax-plants are growing, which are subject to a fierce sand-drift. This conclusively proves that many places on this sand-dune area could be transplanted with the abundance of flax-plants that are growing on the coastal dune areas.

*General Remarks.*—An inspection was carried out at the Great Northern sand-dune areas, on the coastal dunes as far north as Huketere (J. M. Reid's), and on the inland drift limits from Hilton-Jones's and drift near the Waipapakauri "turn in" to the sand-drift at Selwyn's Swamp (near the Big Flat), and thence north to Stony Crossing; and through the sand-drift from the Karaka coast to Gleeson's and Wright's sand-drift inland, and from Little Waihi coast to the sand-drift behind Lake Waiparara and Selwyn's Swamp. The characteristic configuration of the sand-dune areas between the coastal dune areas and to the limits of the inland sand-drift (inspected as referred to above) is that, generally speaking, sand ranges are being formed, and are at present from 50 ft. to 150 ft. in height, about midway, but not continuous in any direction. From these forming sand ranges, in an easterly direction generally, the sand areas become undulating and flat; in area, from a few acres to 400 acres. These latter sand areas show positive signs that, if left alone and free from stock-grazing, in a few years by native growth such as pingao, (*Scirpus frondosus*), silvery sand-grass (*Spinifer hirsutus*), tauhinu-korokio, and toetoe-grass, they would reclaim and become stable. Following, flax-plants, which are a characteristic growth on these sand-dune areas, would make their appearance. In from two to three years sufficient covering would be grown to sow California tree-lupin seed.

If the State is taking up the reclamation of the sand-dune areas as a serious proposition with a view to reclaiming the sand areas to a point for profitable investment, stock of all kinds will have to be removed. It would be sound business for the State to give their earnest consideration to fencing the portion they intend first to reclaim—say, for instance, the sand areas within the limits of the Opoe Survey District.

If continuous reclamation work was carried on free from stock-grazing, as well as firing off the growth on the sand areas within a period of ten years, especially if part of the reclamation work was to transplant flax, the flax would have recovered growth enough for the State to lease the cutting-rights. And if the proposition already in view—that is, to cut up the suitable portions of the coastal dune areas and to lease for camping-sites were given effect to—the proceeds from these two investments would help to bear the cost of reclamation and fencing. And, furthermore, portions of

the Great Northern sand-dune areas (coastal) are sufficiently covered with native growth—silvery sand-grass (*Spinifer hirsutus*), tea-tree, tauhinu-korokio, and flax principally—and the spreading-out of the California tree-lupin established to commence at any season a system of tree-planting.

The Department has an example of the growth that takes place, once trespassing stock is removed, by the native growth that is commencing to reclaim the at-one-time unstable sand-drifts on the Waipu-Ruakaka sand-dune areas. In some of the hollows along the coastal dune areas flax and cabbage-trees (*Cordyline australis*) have made their appearance, as well as tea-tree and introduced grasses and clovers. Both on the coastal dunes and to the limits of the inland drift the silvery sand-grass, pingao, toetoe, and the sand-sedge are spreading out and covering sand that before the removing of stock were open sand-drifts. And before this event, when stock roamed at will on the sand-dune areas in question, the native growth was eaten down to the sand, and in many places completely destroyed.

*The Burning-off Menace.*—The burning-off of the native growth on the Great Northern sand-dune areas is becoming a serious menace to the progress of reclamation work. At Waihi some 5 acres of silvery sand-grass has been fired off, and burnt 6 chains of the lupin plantation. Both on the coastal dune areas and on the land bordering on to the inland sand-drift the tea-tree and other growth is being continually fired. Nor only is the tea-tree being fired off the land bordering on to the inland sand-drift, but it is being cut out and carted away, the tea-tree being a ready means to start a fire. This destruction is going on principally in the vicinity of Lake Waiparara and towards Selwyn's Swamp. The danger of the covering being destroyed is this: that the lupin plantations are in imminent danger of being burnt, and the destruction of the native covering by being cut and burnt provides unfavourable conditions for the extension of the lupin plantations.

It is assumed that there are three causes at work accountable for fires on coastal areas and land bordering on the inland drift: (1) By owners of stock who have cattle grazing thereon; (2) to provide dry firewood for camping-parties on the coast (Maoris and pakehas); (3) by negligent people out of pure mischievousness. The remedy—by appealing to the intelligent part of the community, by notices put up, to act as honorary rangers, with power to prosecute; by the appointment of an official ranger.

#### NORTHERN WAIROA SAND-DUNE RECLAMATION.

Area (approximate) of marram-grass established, 18th May, 1921, to 15th September, 1921, 8 acres. California tree-lupin seed sown, 1st May, 1921, to 14th May, 1921, 4 cwt.

As funds were not available to carry on the work, the reclaiming of the above sand-dune areas, which closed down on 15th September, 1921, has been in abeyance. From a report received from Mr. J. Glink, who resides near the coast, it appears that the plantations are progressing favourably.

SAMUEL STAFFORD,

Overseer in Charge.

## APPENDIX V.—REPORT ON SNOWSTORMS, SOUTHLAND.

(J. J. KEPPEL, Crown Lands Ranger, Invercargill).

AFTER a good deal of rain in the late autumn and early winter, heavy snow commenced to fall about the middle of June, and continued at intervals until the early part of July, when there would be about 18 in. on all the lower pastoral land in the lakes district, with a corresponding greater depth, running to 5 ft., on the higher parts, which are recognized as the summer country. Although probably less snow fell here than in 1918, the position was rendered equally serious owing to the heavy frost which set in holding the snow on the lower levels and the parts which are always considered safe winter country in ordinary seasons. At the request of the Southland Runholders' Association the greater parts of the affected districts were visited to see the actual conditions; and while an isolated case or so was met where the sheep were actually caught on the high country, and again where there was evidence of overstocking, it can be stated that generally the losses must be attributed to conditions over which the runholders had no control. The provision of free railage for stock and feed was appreciated, and in some cases was the means of saving stock; but as a general rule raiing stock from a run to winter feed is only adopted as a last resort, and then always means a big loss, caused by driving and trucking weak stock; and where a run is well back from the railhead and access is bad, cartage of feed to provide for any long period is almost prohibitive.

There were no means of arriving at an estimate of the actual losses at the time; but now that shearing-tallies are available it is safe to say that runholders have had to face a loss of 25 per cent. in some cases, and unfortunately this loss was mostly represented by ewes in a few instances. Against this, however, there is always a yearly loss by various causes of 10 or 12 per cent. on those places in ordinary seasons. Again, the actual loss in deaths does not indicate the true position, as the surviving

sheep shorn a good deal less per sheep last shearing, and the quality of the wool was also affected; but owing to the exceptionally high prices buyers did not hesitate at this. Also, the cost of extra labour during the winter has to be taken into consideration, and the high price of sheep at present for replacement purposes, as well as repair of fencing damaged by snow. Surviving young stock which were being kept for breeding purposes have received a bad set-back, which will be of a more permanent nature than in the older sheep.

Conditions were soon more hopeful: the snow got away steadily, without any flooding in the rivers; a good spell of dry weather was experienced, and the grass made good growth. This continued right through the spring, and did much to check the death-rate, which would otherwise have gone on for some time amongst weak stock. With the high price of sheep everything possible was done on the runs to save further loss, and the work done by managers and shepherds under trying and hazardous conditions is worthy of record. A time like this shows the wisdom of making any subdivisions of high country as easy to work under snow conditions as possible.

Fortunately there are no serious accidents to report, although there are cases where frostbite has caused the loss of a finger or toe amongst those engaged in the work.

The only benefits that can be placed to the credit side of a severe snowstorm are that it effectually checks the rabbits from spreading on the higher land for some time, thereby saving the runholders the cost of poisoning, or other expensive means of eradicating them; it also ensures a good growth of feed on the higher parts of the country for summer use, but will have a tendency in some cases to check the pastoralist from taking the full use of this class of land.

In discussing prospects with the sheepowners at the time, some expressed a feeling that the Crown should make a temporary concession to help them to meet their loss; but whether this will take the form of individual requests or a combined representation of the position remains to be seen. In the event of this request being general and receiving consideration, each individual case would require to be considered on its merits, as altitudes, acreage, and rentals would not be a safe guide in this case. Owing to the hard frosts which followed the snow it was found that some of the comparatively low country which was always considered safe, and rented as such, suffered equally with the higher lands. While a good deal has been done here recently to bring the rentals of runs into line—and this also meant increasing the rents in most cases as well as extending the tenure—these new rents are not yet operating in all cases, and then there are cases where lessees elected to run their old leases out at a comparatively low rental in preference to getting the extended term at an increase. Some few instances of grouping and alteration of boundaries were also approved of, principally with a view to making the holdings more workable under snow conditions, and safer in winter generally.

Table 1.—RETURN SHOWING (APPROXIMATELY) POSITION OF LANDS IN THE DOMINION AT 31ST MARCH, 1924.

District.	Total Area sold or granted and held on Freehold.	Total Area reserved for Public Purposes.	Total Area of State Forests.	Total Area of Provisional State Forests.	Total Area of Crown Lands leased under all Tenures (exclusive of Reserves leased by Crown).	Total Area of Crown Lands available for future Disposal.	Total Area of Native Land.	Land unfit for Settlement, including Area occupied by Rivers, Lakes, Roads, &c.	Total Area in Land District.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
North Auckland ..	2,460,084	268,898	104,809	44,032	459,718	315,522	607,709	217,428	4,478,200
Auckland ..	2,514,866	219,362	59,634	469,028	1,145,615	1,066,096	2,157,767	583,224	8,215,592
Gisborne ..	1,120,145	67,282	171,436	210,475	525,800	117,965	1,071,000	240,369	3,524,472
Hawke's Bay ..	1,529,818	79,087	120,982	..	585,052	111,359	405,603	82,420	2,914,321
Taranaki ..	1,098,679	223,796	69,500	43,026	578,824	116,912	205,217	68,546	2,404,500
Wellington* ..	3,366,425	398,414	456,671	144,908	763,287	364,243	1,425,458	132,494	7,051,000
Nelson ..	630,501	340,634	19,955	1,988,478	821,701	257,219	30,629	625,883	4,715,000
Marlborough ..	782,685	161,375	89,497	120,625	1,509,739	10,842	..	93,237	2,768,000
Westland ..	157,133	308,974	2,187	1,714,022	849,446	362,388	..	469,228	3,863,378
Canterbury ..	3,570,371	1,100,658	310,717	..	4,022,700	11,160	..	462,824	9,478,430
Otago ..	1,965,315	485,813	133,107	334,012	5,479,831	43,525	..	649,454	9,091,057
Southland ..	1,828,405	3,528,516	136,349	593,324	1,549,775	176,163	..	73,780	7,886,312
Totals ..	21,024,427	7,182,809	1,674,844	5,661,030	18,291,488	2,953,394	5,903,383	3,698,887	66,390,262

\* Includes Chatham Islands.

Table 2.—LANDS SELECTED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1924.

Land District.	Cash.		Deferred Payment.		Renewable Lease.		Occupation with Right of Purchase.		Small Grazing-runs.		Pastoral Runs.		Pastoral Licenses in Mining Districts under Special Regulations.		Mining Districts Land Occupation Leases.		Miscellaneous Leases, &c.		Education Endowments.		Totals.		
	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	
North Auckland	21	125	85	222	51	3,604	88	4,874	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	279	18,982	58	1,294	582	29,101
Auckland	60	303	73	53,490	27	9,891	10	4,762	..	..	..	..	3	650	8	34	570	8,494*	5	499	756	78,123	
Gisborne	3	4	..	..	13	17,003	2	2,301	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	21	1	1	24	19,330	
Hawke's Bay	5	13	6	2,684	8	2,168	3	653	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	987	2	6	26	3,690	
Taranaki	12	1,681	3	16	8	2,168	3	653	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	22	551	11	24	59	5,093	
Wellington	19	25	58	3,890	2	602	2	602	2	1,440	1	1,440	..	..	..	..	34	607	7	1,296	185	7,937	
Nelson	3	16	15	5,445	8	1,930	1	185	2	1,213	1	1,779	3	869	..	..	57	3,967	9	411	91	13,885	
Marlborough	2	1	1	11	8	1,930	3	1,331	..	..	2	11,430	..	..	..	..	12	312	..	..	28	15,015	
Westland	..	..	7	414	7	414	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	1,781	11	142	30	25,979	3	11	61	28,327	
Canterbury	4	10	9	1,600	9	1,600	..	..	..	..	3	90,281	..	..	..	..	43	2,623	6	1,139	72	95,664	
Otago	30	191	25	12,946	2	164	2	164	..	32	29	214,035	..	..	16	515	50	14,831	2	17	159	242,748	
Southland	4	2	5	1,533	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	39,222	..	..	..	..	18	3,104	5	10,995	45	54,858	
Totals	163	2,371	247	53,846	232	63,108	111	14,872	3	1,245	39	358,187	16	3,300	35	691	1,133	80,458	109	15,693	2,088	593,771	

\* Includes Thermal Springs District leases.

Table 3.—LANDS HELD ON LEASE AT 31ST MARCH, 1924.

Land District.	Deferred Payment.		Lease in Perpetuity.		Renewable Lease.		Occupation with Right of Purchase.		Small Grazing-runs.		Pastoral Runs.		Pastoral Licenses in Mining Districts.		Mining Districts Land Occupation Leases.		Miscellaneous Leases and Licenses.		Education Endowments.		Totals.		
	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	
North Auckland	167	6,316	445	71,632	658	121,778	974	163,828	..	..	1	553	..	..	2	71	572	109,976	624	42,986	3,454	517,722	
Auckland	967	154,064	433	127,695	1,164	247,514	1,100	330,848	18	80,735	5	62,562	197	58,212	185	5,415	..	39,963*	232	39,360	5,421	1,146,368	
Gisborne	35	19,270	99	43,907	232	105,400	183	123,342	75	212,466	1	186	..	..	..	..	124	18,766	62	39,930	811	563,267	
Hawke's Bay	107	44,327	416	112,813	487	184,859	188	54,202	24	53,934	13	71,588	..	..	..	..	124	66,786	182	51,729	1,541	640,238	
Taranaki	36	4,735	672	182,714	350	105,802	587	263,472	4	3,582	..	..	..	..	..	..	300	13,884	529	50,188	2,480	624,896	
Wellington	320	43,224	1,059	161,264	1,116	190,047	602	231,687	28	26,740	18	128,715	..	..	..	..	583	25,836	507	105,421	4,221	913,517	
Nelson	49	15,085	394	135,185	556	230,713	137	47,851	16	22,311	5	231,479	261	55,614	22	816	457	111,144	121	8,693	2,019	858,995	
Marlborough	33	12,416	563	182,320	272	144,361	91	26,664	114	286,192	47	827,032	..	..	2	200	7	42,101	42	1,409	1,426	1,523,219	
Westland	24	2,959	355	42,330	445	60,941	42	7,952	..	..	77	1,152,032	322	67,293	115	792	50	191,220	101	13,793	2,420	1,539,362	
Canterbury	106	21,574	1,476	252,135	875	362,319	16	2,640	149	474,609	130	2,828,970	..	..	..	..	1,885	230,030	231	70,884	3,905	4,245,046	
Otago	53	11,550	1,329	282,043	838	228,419	209	34,312	418	1,534,748	295	3,341,442	..	..	330	11,688	78	189,162†	442	44,750	5,357	5,683,242	
Southland	102	11,741	552	94,818	363	72,491	262	53,080	20	64,989	72	1,273,643	..	..	47	1,312	446	58,458	794	338,416	2,679	1,970,751	
Totals	1,999	347,261	7,793	1,688,856	7,356	2,054,644	4,391	1,339,878	866	2,760,306	664	9,918,673	780	181,119	703	20,294	185	10,707	1,097,326	3,867	807,559	35,734	20,226,623

\* Includes Thermal Springs District leases.

† Includes agricultural leases. † Includes other endowments administered by Land Board.

**Table 4.**—LANDS DISPOSED OF UNDER THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACTS TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1924.

Land District.	Area acquired.	Area occupied by Roads and Reserves unlet.	Area of Land unlet, including Land forfeited, surrendered, or resumed and not relet, and also Land not yet offered for Selection.	Total Area purchased for Cash and made Freehold to Date.			Total Lands leased to Date.			Rent and other Payments received during the Year.	Total Receipts from Inception to 31st March, 1924.
				Number of Purchasers.	Area.	Price realized.	Number of Selectors.	Area.	Annual Rental.		
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.		Acres.	£		Acres.	£	£	£
North Auckland	40,992	876	5,252	177	1,730	23,306	275	33,134	14,341	8,066	116,645
Auckland ..	352,609	13,202	39,824	638	120,738	267,683	919	178,844	48,009	34,614	735,251
Gisborne ..	76,248	388	1,970	37	6,056	48,124	245	67,832	31,159	27,148	113,947
Hawke's Bay ..	227,376	2,483	..	94	17,270	104,671	623	207,619	79,269	72,459	372,983
Taranaki ..	28,233	246	5,840	41	1,457	34,203	138	20,690	13,869	13,356	142,716
Wellington ..	142,810	1,139	6,400	153	7,656	83,195	910	127,615	93,442	67,268	672,010
Nelson ..	66,433	932	13,396	6	1,635	3,033	58	50,469	4,706	2,947	41,458
Marlborough ..	235,177	2,694	3,505	36	7,657	28,544	492	221,322	35,997	33,492	569,962
Westland ..	5,125	78	..	2	192	116	31	4,855	537	396	12,303
Canterbury ..	605,694	4,176	2,483	245	14,416	115,007	1,895	584,619	169,320	144,854	2,505,262
Otago ..	296,172	3,170	12,367	53	6,277	31,336	1,117	274,358	83,333	69,575	1,144,281
Southland ..	97,200	1,047	1,438	86	11,455	47,643	349	83,260	19,941	18,405	339,320
Totals ..	2,174,069	30,431	92,475	1,568	196,539	786,861	7,052	1,854,617	593,923	492,580	6,766,138

**Table 5.**—ENDOWMENT LANDS ADMINISTERED BY LAND BOARDS AND LEASED AT 31ST MARCH, 1924.

Land District.	National Endowment.			Education Endowments.			Other Endowments.			Totals.		
	Number.	Area.	Annual Rental.	Number.	Area.	Annual Rental.	Number.	Area.	Annual Rental.	Number.	Area.	Annual Rental.
		Acres.	£		Acres.	£		Acres.	£		Acres.	£
North Auckland	390	81,402	6,598	624	42,986	6,117	13	1,872	41	1,027	126,260	12,756
Auckland ..	542	202,976	6,718	232	39,360	3,722	5	1,678	40	779	244,014	10,480
Gisborne ..	72	159,317	7,869	62	39,930	7,580	..	..	..	134	199,247	15,449
Hawke's Bay ..	53	65,025	4,615	182	51,729	8,247	..	..	..	235	116,754	12,862
Taranaki ..	168	69,045	4,816	529	50,188	10,116	20	9,724	888	717	128,957	15,820
Wellington ..	118	66,992	4,652	507	105,421	25,005	28	16,689	750	653	189,102	30,407
Nelson ..	766	288,328	5,970	121	8,693	760	440	15,070	1,422	1,327	312,091	8,152
Marlborough ..	212	542,850	6,582	42	1,409	588	..	..	..	254	544,259	7,170
Westland ..	974	384,550	3,926	101	13,793	629	2	285	6	1,077	398,628	4,561
Canterbury ..	162	1,691,702	41,991	231	70,884	30,537	152	16,907	1,809	545	1,779,493	74,337
Otago ..	765	2,577,715	38,421	442	44,750	5,775	67	176,786	7,782	1,274	2,799,251	51,978
Southland ..	233	767,863	6,622	794	338,416	19,807	17	114,331	2,332	1,044	1,220,610	28,761
Totals ..	4,455	6,897,765	138,780	3,867	807,559	118,883	744	353,342	15,070	9,066	8,058,666	272,733

**Table 6.**—TOTAL RECEIPTS, ARREARS, AND POSTPONEMENTS OF RENT AT 31ST MARCH, 1924.

Land District.	Ordinary Crown Lands.	Land for Settlements.	Cheviot Estate.	National Endowment Lands.	Education Endowment Lands.	Other Endowment Lands.	Miscellaneous.	Total Receipts.	Total Arrears.	Total Postponements.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
North Auckland ..	25,853	8,066	..	6,191	5,802	90	5,277	51,279	24,418	32
Auckland ..	88,134	34,614	..	8,934	2,426	60	32,301	166,469	69,770	7,776
Gisborne ..	27,238	27,148	..	8,901	6,428	..	3,232	72,947	53,851	4,253
Hawke's Bay ..	64,738	72,459	..	4,102	9,454	..	1,461	152,214	72,057	15,249
Taranaki ..	30,150	13,356	..	3,848	10,501	998	18,607	77,460	24,342	198
Wellington ..	66,314	67,268	..	4,704	28,581	623	12,424	179,901	148,598	10,354
Nelson ..	8,389	2,947	..	5,285	698	6,592	33	23,943	8,751	..
Marlborough ..	10,849	33,492	..	11,819	528	..	463	57,151	12,164	3,376
Westland ..	4,481	396	..	15,500	630	6	1,586	22,599	1,100	..
Canterbury ..	33,949	144,854	21,778	43,256	31,705	1,920	711	278,173	81,795	11,343
Otago ..	42,185	69,575	..	42,985	6,187	15,145	1,257	177,334	36,919	1,883
Southland ..	19,385	18,405	..	7,644	21,074	2,801	296	69,604	10,683	479
Totals ..	421,665	492,580	21,778	163,169	124,014	28,235	77,648	1,329,074	544,448	54,943

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (775 copies), £60.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1924.

Price, 1s.]