

1929.

NEW ZEALAND.

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1925

(REPORT ON THE)

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

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

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st July, 1929.

I have the honour to submit a report on land-purchase operations for the year ended 31st March, 1929.

Some 245 properties were considered during the year, but no purchases of particular importance were made. A large number of the properties offered were, from the descriptions, deemed to be unsuitable from the outset; but in many cases full reports were obtained and the offers thoroughly investigated. An area of 253 acres at Rehia was acquired for the purpose of providing additional land for three soldier settlers. The farms held by these men were national-endowment land, and the area purchased was therefore declared to be national-endowment land also by Proclamation issued pursuant to section 49 of the Land for Settlements Act, in order that proper leases might be issued covering both the old and the additional areas. Portion of the Rhodes Estate at Owenga, Chatham Islands, comprising an area of 97 acres, was acquired during the year. This purchase had been under negotiation for some considerable time, its object being to provide home-sites of a few acres each for the fishermen at Owenga. The area has been subdivided into some twenty-one allotments, which will be offered for sale for cash or on deferred payments. It is anticipated that this subdivision will meet a long-felt want by enabling the fishermen to obtain home-sites with sufficient land for gardens and the running of a horse or cow.

Several important purchases, including that of the Westella Estate, near Feilding, have lately been made; but as these do not come within the financial year ending on the 31st March last they are not discussed in this report.

No purchases were completed during the year under the provisions of Part II of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1928, which deals with the acquisition of private land on the group system, and provides machinery whereby any two or more persons may purchase land bought by the Crown on their behalf. However, a purchase has been completed since the close of the year, and as numerous inquiries are being received it is anticipated that the system will, where the circumstances are favourable, be availed of to a considerable extent.

As stated in the annual report on the settlement of Crown lands, a conference of executive officers of the Lands Department, presided over by the Hon. G. W. Forbes, Minister of Lands, was held in Wellington in January. At this conference the question of closer settlement under the Land for Settlements Act was fully discussed, and recommendations were submitted for the Government's consideration. It is considered that an appreciable addition to settlement can be made in areas already occupied, and it is hoped to pursue an active policy in the purchase of suitable properties by negotiation or otherwise. Preference will be given to properties suitable for subdivision for dairying or mixed farming.

The Mataikona Settlement, near Castlepoint, which has been run as a going concern by the Department for some years, was subdivided into six holdings, and offered for selection in November last. All the sections were taken up at the ballot.

Tables are attached giving particulars of the properties considered and lands acquired during the year, together with balance-sheets and statements of receipts and payments.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,
Land Purchase Controller.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

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TABLE A.—NUMBER OF PROPERTIES CONSIDERED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1929.

Land District.	Number.	Area of Estates offered.	Land District.	Number.	Area of Estate offered.
		Acres.			Acres.
North Auckland ..	29	80,443	Nelson	6	8,823
Auckland	44	81,109	Westland	4	3,335
Gisborne	6	10,792	Canterbury	40	84,657
Hawke's Bay	15	41,279	Otago	19	29,551
Taranaki	14	16,851	Southland	18	15,970
Wellington	46	50,997			
Marlborough	4	13,336	Totals	245	437,143

TABLE B.—SUMMARY OF ESTATES ACQUIRED UP TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1929.

Land District.	Number.	Area.	Purchase-money.
		Acres.	£
Auckland (including North Auckland)	100	392,392	1,547,501
Hawke's Bay (including Gisborne)	63	311,436	2,357,100
Taranaki	25	27,628	369,818
Wellington	147	158,729	2,254,218
Marlborough	22	224,090	755,482
Nelson	14	48,821	150,473
Westland	2	5,125	8,343
Canterbury	173	447,597	3,444,757
Otago	73	293,188	1,779,317
Southland	26	90,862	459,916
Totals	645	1,999,868	13,126,925

TABLE C.—RETURN OF LAND PURCHASED AND PAID FOR FROM 1ST APRIL, 1928, TO 31ST MARCH, 1929.

Name of Owner.	Locality.	Price per Acre.	Mode of Acquisition.	Settlement.	Area.	Amount paid.
Burnett, A. (estate of late) ..	Timaru ..	£ 8	By agreement	Rosewill	Acres. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$	£ 10
Langstaff, E. T.	Lower Hutt ..	..	..	Hutt Valley	1	1,200
Finlayson, J. (estate of late) ..	Rehia	5	..	Finlayson	253	1,265
Rhodes Estate	Owenga, Chat-ham Islands	15	..	Owenga	97	1,455
Grace, Dr. M. S. (estate of late)	Gracefield ..	..	..	Hutt Valley	1	20
				Totals	353 $\frac{1}{4}$	3,950

