

## NELSON.

(A. F. WATERS, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

In spite of exceptionally low prices for farm-produce the soldier settlers generally show an optimistic spirit and a determination to make good. There have been practically no soldier settlers abandoning their holdings, as they realize that in a period of uncertainty the man on the land is as well off as any one. A number in favoured localities are doing quite well out of tobacco-growing, and in many cases are paying current charges and gradually overtaking arrears. Generally, however, it has been necessary to make concessions to the soldier settlers to tide them over these trying times.

## WESTLAND.

(T. CAGNEY, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Soldier settlers throughout the district are generally farming their respective properties on a sound and practical basis and in practically all cases their inability to meet their land charges must be attributed to the present stringent economical conditions, and I believe that with a return to something approaching relatively normal prices, and where no private mortgage is involved, their main difficulties would be rapidly overtaken.

As practically all the soldier settlers in this district depend mainly on dairying, the present advance being paid by factories in Westland, on an average of about 7d. per pound for butterfat, leaves little for payment of land charges. The average price for the present season will probably disclose a drop of at least 25 per cent. on last season's price.

Substantial remissions and postponements of charges were given last year, and, in the event of present prices continuing, further concessions will have to be considered or, as an alternative, reduction of capital values, which, however, it is recognized could not be justifiably considered on present-day prices for primary produce, and must be deferred in the hope that prices will eventually return to normal. Meanwhile, the Land Board is prepared to give every reasonable assistance and sympathetically deal with each application for relief on its merits.

## CANTERBURY.

(W. STEWART, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The prevailing conditions have affected our soldier settlers equally with our other tenants, and the Land Board is granting similar relief. The new system of controlling current accounts by seasonal advances reviewed each year has compelled a closer supervision and a review of all cases, and has proved a very useful innovation.

## OTAGO.

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

There is little to add to previous reports on the position of soldier settlers. Where the current account is controlled by this Department it has been found necessary to place the settlers on a definite monthly allowance and study strict economy in running the farm.

## SOUTHLAND.

(B. C. McCABE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

In common with the Crown tenants, the soldier settlers have experienced another trying year, but the great majority are facing the position and carrying on as well as the depressed prices for produce will allow. A large amount of work has been undertaken under the various unemployment schemes, and many areas of unproductive land have been brought into production.

Advantage has been taken of the low price for ewes, and practically all sheep flocks have been culled heavily and aged ewes replaced by sound animals.

Owing to the very low prices offered for oats, few sales have been made, and the crops have been stacked for future use either as supplementary feed in case of a severe winter, or for sale later if a payable price is offering.