

*Hawke's Bay.*

The Commissioner of Crown Lands for Hawke's Bay and Poverty Bay states that settlement advanced rapidly, and that the progress is evidenced by increased revenue, reduction of arrears, the great value of improvements, and the large quantity of stock carried. The seasons have been good; there were good yields of cereal and root crops, and grass was plentiful. Dairying has extended, and after one of the most prosperous years the settlers generally are in a very good position.

*Taranaki.*

The year as a whole was favourable in this district, but floods caused some damage and loss to farmers and local bodies. The felled bush was burnt satisfactorily; pasture was plentiful; good headway was made with improvements. This being the most important seat of the dairying industry, it is almost needless to say that wherever this pursuit is followed the settlers are prosperous and contented. There has been a great increase and expansion in settlement; indeed, in no part of the colony has progress been greater, and it is anticipated that the future will see these good results much exceeded, and that the district will advance until the whole area, including the wild bush lands of the mid-district, are all brought under cultivation, and the back country is covered with homesteads.

*Wellington.*

The position of settlement in the Wellington District is very fully discussed by the Commissioner and Rangers. They show that the progress, position, and prospects of any settlement are mainly dependent upon the class of roads which give access thereto and intersect it. Districts which a few years ago were inaccessible and undeveloped are now well provided with good roads, at least in the summer. In several localities the settlers and local authorities have raised and are raising loans for road-construction, the "thirds" and "fourths" being applied to meet the charges thereof. The roads being completed, the settlers take to dairying with the best of financial results to themselves and families. The report shows that the ordinary settlements, including the special settlements and improved farm and village settlements, are on the whole in a satisfactory position; some are exceptionally progressive and prosperous. There are, of course, cases where these conditions do not prevail, but, taken as a whole, there is every reason to anticipate even a more successful and prosperous future for the Wellington settlers than they have experienced in the past.

*Nelson.*

The Commissioner reports that the Crown tenants' holdings comprise hilly country, best adapted for grazing sheep and cattle; the settlers' general condition and the progress made are satisfactory, and this is confirmed by the prompt payment of rents, the small amount of arrears, and the reduced number of forfeitures and surrenders. An evident impetus has been given to settlement throughout this land district. The large areas of Crown land which have been submitted for selection have afforded an opportunity for the expansion of settlement in several localities, and the inauguration of the same in other parts where hitherto opportunities have not been so plentiful. Scattered throughout the district are vast areas of forest, large tracts are mineral-bearing, the climate is favourable for the production of fruit, hops, &c., and there is every reason to believe that the future of the settlers is of a most satisfactory character.

*Marlborough.*

The settlements in Marlborough are shown to be in a healthy state. The improvement conditions have been amply complied with. Some of the settlements are reported as well established; their present position and prospects are good, except in a few instances where the quality of the soil is not of the best. The subdivision of estates acquired under the Land for Settlements Act in the middle portion of the district, supplemented by the encouragement of settlement wherever possible upon Crown Lands, tends to the establishment of permanent and prosperous centres of industry and cultivation, and an increase in the returns of stock and produce. The proposed extension of the railway will add largely to the rural population, and thereby greatly enhance the wealth and importance of the whole community.

*Westland.*

The Westland Crown tenants have complied fairly with conditions. The amount of rent in arrears is very small. The improvements effected on the holdings are considerably in excess of those prescribed, and, generally speaking, the position of the tenants is very satisfactory. The Commissioner enlarges upon the fact that the seasons have been exceptionally favourable, grass and hay abundant, cereal and root crops good. Cattle, sheep, and horses realised good prices; attention