

Grain crops were grown on 3,994 acres, an average return being obtained from wheat of about 33 bushels per acre, and from oats of about 50 bushels per acre, but only a small portion of the latter has been threshed, owing to low prices offered, and probably the bulk will be used as chaff. Green and root crops, consisting principally of turnips and rape, were grown on 5,250 acres, with good results. The area of pasture laid down in cultivated grasses was 24,302 acres, and 39,492 acres was in tussock and native pasture. Caterpillars made their appearance on the estate, but fortunately their ravages were confined to a comparatively small area. The number of sheep shorn was 80,070, and the lambing averaged about 90 per cent.; the other live-stock on the estate comprised 1,290 head of cattle, 1,141 horses, and 223 pigs.

A little dairying is being done, and good butter was obtainable for 7d. and 8d. per pound locally. In the centre of the estate there is an area of about 4,000 acres, occupied in small holdings, which is very suitable for dairy farming. The railway-station at Mina will tap this land, and butter-fat, if not made up there, where the water is good, could be railed to the dairy factories at Christchurch. It is to be regretted that at present there does not appear to be any movement for reopening the dairy factory.

The landing-slip at Port Robinson is now permanently closed, and the approach thereto *via* the Bluff Road is blocked by landslips; all transport of goods and stock is now by railway.

As regards improvements, the Ranger notes that new houses, and additions to those existing, continue to be built, and are of more pretentious dimensions and architecture than the original dwellings. Fencing, sheep-yards, and other improvements are maintained in good order, and the general working of the estate is commendable. The estimate of the value of improvements is £104,000. Private gardens, orchards, and plantations now occupy 485 acres, 10 acres more than at the time of the last return. Three Domain Boards are interested in 250 acres, part of which is planted. Although the term of compulsory residence has expired in the village settlements on the estate, very little difference in the number residing is noticeable.

ERIC C. GOLD SMITH,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

OTAGO.

The results of the year as regards revenue have been highly satisfactory, the gross estimate having been exceeded. There is a surplus of receipts over the estimated amount sufficient to indicate that the year's transactions in all respects have been of a satisfactory nature.

SETTLEMENT OF ORDINARY CROWN LANDS.

During the year there was opened under various tenures a total area of 699,844 acres. Included in this are the Meadowbank and Kauroo Hill Settlements, acquired under the Land for Settlements Act. The total number of applicants for these estates proves that there is a great demand for land of good quality.

The area of land at present available for selection and open in the Land Guide is 7,794 acres, and an area of 614,385 acres, comprising part of Kawarau Falls, of Nevis, the Morven Hills, Kawarau, Matakau, Linburn, and Ida Valley runs, which will be opened principally under the small-grazing-run system and under the provisions of the National Endowment Act.

THE VARIOUS TENURES.

A reference to the tables will show that, apart from the purchase of the Otekaike runs under the Land for Settlements Act, the cash sales are not very large, nor are there many conversions from leasehold to freehold under the tenures which carry that option.

As there are no further selections of holdings under deferred payment, perpetual lease, lease in perpetuity, and agricultural lease, with the exception of being diminished by a few forfeitures, surrenders, and purchases, the returns show very little alteration, and call for little or no comment.

Of lands opened under the optional system, the occupation with right of purchase continues to be the most popular, and the selections under this tenure for the year were 3,252 acres; and, taking into account purchases and other dealings, the figures for this year show an increase of eighteen selectors and an area of 2,844 over that held at the end of last year.

During the year the "Barewood" University Run (comprising 29,094 acres, exclusive of reserves) was offered in nine small grazing-runs, all of which were selected at ballot, at a total annual rental of £1,094 7s. 10d.

PASTORAL RUNS.

During the year 662,816 acres (excluding endowments) was offered under this tenure twelve months prior to the termination of the existing leases, and there was keen demand for the runs. The particulars appended below show the total pastoral leaseholds purchased:—

Class.	Number selected.	Area. Acres.
Ordinary Crown lands	23	423,531
National endowments	14	239,802
Ordinary endowment	2	25,590
Totals	39	688,923