

establish a temporary pumping plant. All the remaining sections in the Fairfield and Makowai Settlements were selected, and three sections remain vacant in the Tiraumea Settlement, applications for which are now being considered.

It is anticipated that the street-formation in the Hall-Jones Settlement necessary to conform to the requirements of the Lower Hutt Borough by-laws will be undertaken during the coming year, also that drainage-works in the Waddington Settlement will be completed and thus render a number of small areas suitable for market-gardening and occupation by partially disabled men available for selection.

An area of 570 acres on which the military camp at Tauherenikau is situated was also acquired, and has been let to the Defence Department for the duration of the war.

The settlements established in former years continue in a very satisfactory condition. Many of the settlers are purchasing the freehold of their farms, which may be taken as a good indication of their prosperity.

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### NELSON.

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

There are only three estates in this district which have been acquired under the Land for Settlements Act—namely, the Wangapeka, Braeburn, and Lake.

The Wangapeka and Braeburn Settlements are now well established. The tenants on them are in a very prosperous condition, and all are very well satisfied with their holdings. Their principal sources of income are dairying and grazing.

Settlement on the Lake Estate has been somewhat retarded by rabbits, but this difficulty is now being overcome, and the settlers at present on the land are doing well. The chief pursuit of the tenants is grazing sheep and cattle. There appears to be no reason why this estate should not be as successful as the others when its merits become known. The present war conditions are somewhat against its development, however, as considerable initial outlay is required.

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### MARLBOROUGH.

(H. D. McKELLAR, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Fourteen settlements exist in this district, comprising 216,470 acres, held by 480 lessees. No new settlements were acquired during the year. As a whole the settlers appear satisfied with their holdings, with the exception of those on Lynton Downs and a few on Hillersden Settlement. Crops have been good, while stock have brought high prices, and generally the settlers should have had a prosperous year under present conditions. Farming generally, however, is feeling the drain of men from the country, the high cost of labour and material, and other increases due to war conditions.

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### WESTLAND.

(THOMAS BROOK, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The two settlements in Westland—Poerua and Kokatahi—are old-established ones, and the settlers, most of whom are engaged in dairy-farming, are more than satisfied with their holdings. The creamery at Poerua closed down during the year, and home separators are now in use, the cream being railed to the factories at Greymouth and Cronadun.

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### CANTERBURY.

(W. H. SKINNER, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Only recently acquired settlement lands are requiring constant attention. On the old settlements the tenants' interests are so much in excess of the Crown's that only cursory supervision is wanted.

Writing generally, the cereal crops have been unremunerative. Stock raising and fattening, and cream-supplying, have kept a respectable credit balance to the year's profit and loss account of our tenants. The selectors of sections on the more recently acquired estates have had more difficulties to contend with, such as higher rents, three poor years for cereal crops, difficulty in obtaining help, and, in many cases, absence of the younger men on active service, the increasing cost of implements, building and fencing materials, and the restocking of country at the higher market values. The number of defaulters for insufficient improvements is due to the reasons above stated. The Land Board has endeavoured as far as possible to moderate the difficulties.