

the newly-sown burn during the coming season. An area of 150 acres has been drained by contract workers and good results have been secured. Future development consists of fencing and the felling and grassing of about 1,200 acres of bush and scrub land. The Tapuwae Estate consists of tableland country of good quality and easy contour. Development costs of bush areas (felling, clearing of tracks, cost of grass-seed and sowing) amount to £3 8s. per acre, which must be considered very satisfactory.

Some of the later-purchased settlements do not prosper, and this season the drastic fall in monetary returns for primary products of all descriptions has resulted in a falling-off of revenue.

WELLINGTON.

(H. W. C. MACKINTOSH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

The remarks made concerning the conditions of settlement on ordinary Crown lands apply equally to lands acquired under the Land for Settlements Acts. The tenants on settlement estates are now becoming well established and those who follow dairying will be able to just about meet commitments, but those on sheep-raising propositions have been hard hit, and will require to be nursed along until prices for wool and stock become normal again. The tenants on the later purchases such as Westella, Phillips, Currie, and Gower Settlements, were most unfortunate in experiencing the present depression right at the outset of their ventures, but their lands are of that quality that given two or three years of buoyant prices these farmers will be in a sound position.

NELSON.

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

No properties have been acquired under the Land for Settlements Act for some years past. A careful inspection of areas offered from time to time has shown that they were not suitable for closer settlement.

Owing to the low prices for wool and butterfat settlers generally are experiencing considerable difficulty in meeting their liabilities but they should have little difficulty in doing so when prices improve.

MARLBOROUGH.

(P. R. WILKINSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

During the year six estates, of an aggregate area of 78,561 acres, were offered to the Dominion Land Purchase Board, and one application was received from three persons for an area of 210 acres under the group-settlement scheme. One offer is still under consideration, but for various reasons, the others have been rejected.

In common with the rest of the farming community, the settlers, even on the older established settlements, are feeling the pinch, but, except in a few instances where excessive goodwills have been paid, should be able to carry on until conditions improve.

WESTLAND.

(T. CAGNEY, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No areas were acquired under the Land for Settlement Act during the year. A number of properties were offered to the Government, but, except in the case of three of these still under consideration, had to be refused mainly on the score of the prices being excessive. The settlers on the Raupe Settlement, established about two years ago, are making commendable headway, and proving themselves the right class of farmer. All other settlements in Westland are old-established, being originally selected under lease-in-perpetuity tenure. The administration of these is now purely a matter of routine.

CANTERBURY.

(W. STEWART, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Weather conditions have varied considerably over the various parts of the district, but on the whole have been rather favourable. In most of the district the autumn and winter were alike suitable for stock and for agriculture. Spring was rather later than usual, and in most localities lambing percentages were good, but early lambs did not fatten well, as there was too much wet weather. There have also been again many cases of heavy mortality in lambs.

Cropping prospects looked very bright in early summer, but a long spell of dry weather and scorching nor-westers ruined many of the crops on the lighter areas, so that many late crops did not fill properly and there is much shrivelled wheat not up to milling standard. In some localities early roots and rape failed, but later-sown green crops were generally successful, and later lambs fattened well, agricultural farmers securing a fair margin of profit on fattening bought lambs. The prospects for feed during the coming winter are very promising.