

Prices this season have been disastrous for most farm-products except wheat; and, though production has been above the average, this has gone a very little way towards meeting the slump prices. Graziers have been hardest hit of all; wool and stores and cull sheep being at a very low ebb. The mixed agricultural farmer and dairyman, although also suffering from reduced prices, are not in quite such a bad position as the pastoralist, even though cast ewes were bought in the autumn at 15s. and sold fat this season at 5s.

Many offers of sales of areas to the Crown for subdivision are still being received, but prices have either been too high or the areas have been unsuitable for subdivision.

The Department is continuing to administer Brinklands, which was bought last year but not taken up, and is carrying out extensive improvements which it is hoped will cause the selection of the area when re-offered.

OTAGO.

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

Under this heading large areas have been opened up, comprising purchases made principally towards the end of the 1929-30 year. The Wilden Settlement, comprising 24,020 acres, was subdivided into thirteen sections, the Tapanui Settlement of 1,950 acres into nine sections, and the Rosebery Settlement of 3,933 acres into fifteen sections. All these sections have been taken up. In addition, the Downs Settlement, comprising 4,792 acres, was taken up under Part II of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1928, by eight selectors.

SOUTHLAND.

(J. MACDONALD, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No new estate in Southland has been purchased under the Land for Settlements Act during the year ended on 31st March last. On the older settlements there has been little change of recent years. The settlers on the recently acquired settlements of Tamatea, Fern Hill, Te Wae Wae, and Brydone have settled down to work with a will and are all fully stocked up. There is only one unselected farm on these settlements—viz., Section 1s, Fern Hill Settlement.