

## EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS.

## NORTH AUCKLAND.

(W. D. ARMIT, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No additional properties have been purchased under the Land for Settlements Act in this district during the past year.

Although the price of butterfat has proved the lowest yet experienced, the production still increases, and should an early improvement eventuate in the butter market the settlers in some of the older-established settlements will be in a fairly sound position.

The fact that very few holdings have become vacant or changed hands during the year is an indication that a determined effort is being made by lessees to carry on in the hopes that in the near future better prices will be obtained for farm-produce. The Aponga Settlement, situated about twenty miles from Whangarei, which during the past few years has been mainly occupied for grazing, has been resubdivided, and seven mixed-farming holdings were offered for selection in March, five of which were allotted by ballot. The remaining two holdings have been let meanwhile for temporary grazing.

## AUCKLAND.

(K. M. GRAHAM, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

There have been no new estates purchased during the year, while only seven sections, with an area of 617 acres, have been taken up, these comprising holdings which have come back on the Department's hands and been reoffered for selection.

Most of the settlers on areas acquired under the Land for Settlements Act in this district are engaged in dairying and, as a consequence, are suffering severely from the effects of the continued low prices of dairy products. This is particularly so on some of the newer settlements. Concessions by way of remissions and postponements of rent and interest have been granted in many cases to enable settlers to maintain their pastures and thus keep up production.

## GISBORNE.

(H. L. PRIMROSE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Although there were no new developments under this heading during the year, the Department has had its hands full in looking after the settlements on hand. Te Wera, as yet not offered for selection, is making good progress in the hands of the Department, which is farming it successfully. This year's returns have been very satisfactory indeed, exceeding last year's figures. Expenditure, on the other hand, has been kept well within bounds.

Ardkeen and Ohuka, both pastoral settlements, have had a good year, and both places have improved in appearance and capacity as a result of much cleaning up of scrub under unemployment schemes. A fair amount of arrears have been paid off out of increased revenue, and the outlook for both is much better than it has been for a few years past.

The outlook for our dairying settlements, such as Hukutaia, Apanui, Wharekaka, Glencoe, &c., is far from bright, as butterfat prices are too low at present to permit of the payment of fixed overhead charges in full.

## HAWKE'S BAY.

(J. F. QUINN, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No new properties were purchased under the Land for Settlements Act during the year. The settlers engaged in sheep-farming have considerably improved their position as a result of the increased prices, while those engaged in dairying are having a difficult time owing to the low prices which are being realized for their produce. The Kakariki Settlement is being farmed by the Department. This property has been greatly improved by scrubfelling, grassing, and fencing, and the farming operations during the past season have been very successful.

## TARANAKI.

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

No properties were purchased under this Act during the year. The Department continues to farm the Tapuwae Estate at a good profit. This was purchased in August, 1930, and contains 3,350 acres. It is at present carrying 3,800 sheep and 850 cattle. Like the ordinary settler, the land-for-settlements lessee has had a difficult time, and it may be hoped that the sheep-farmer has now arrived at a period of better prices and that the turn of the dairy-farmer will soon follow.

Ragwort has unfortunately got a good hold on some of these settlements, and is causing much concern, especially to the dairy-farmer.