

1899.
NEW ZEALAND.

“LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1894”

(REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in compliance with Section 39 of “The Land for Settlements Act, 1894.”

The LAND PURCHASE INSPECTOR to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LANDS.

SIR,—

Department of Land for Settlements, Wellington, 20th June, 1899.

I have the honour to report on the transactions under “The Land for Settlements Act, 1894,” for the twelve months ending the 31st March, 1899.

There were twenty-two meetings of the Boards held during the year for business in the following land districts—viz., Auckland, 1; Hawke's Bay, 2; Marlborough, 5; Nelson, 1; Westland, 1; Canterbury, 8; Otago, 4.

Fifty-one estates, of a total area of 534,682 acres, were offered during the year. Of that area, 47,192 acres were declined, not recommended, or withdrawn, leaving 487,490 acres, of which an area of 271,905 acres is under consideration, and an area of 215,580 acres was recommended for purchase. Including with this latter area part of the land offered in the previous year, twenty-four estates were recommended for purchase, with the result that the offers were accepted for thirteen, of an aggregate area of 102,204 acres, for the sum of £582,115. Of the other eleven estates, the owners of three declined the prices offered; the owners of five have the offers made them under consideration; and in the case of three estates no offers have yet been made.

The names of the estates purchased are:—Karapiro, Willows, Mahora, Starborough, Richmond Brook, part of Flaxbourne, Waikakahi, Tamai, R.S. 20184, R.S. 2682, R.S. 36228, R.S. 36469, and part of Elderslie. With the exception of Richmond Brook, Tamai, and Elderslie, now under survey, possession of all was given within the year under review.

The total purchases under the Land for Settlements Act since its commencement are sixty-two estates, containing an area of 256,829 acres, at a cost of £1,250,647 for land, and £53,862 for road formations, surveys, and administration. In all, a total of £1,304,509.

The limit of appropriation fixed by statute, which expires on 31st March, 1900, is £2,000,000. There is therefore a balance of £695,491 available for additional purchases up to that date, after which no new business can be entered on. Recently there have been several large estates offered, which if purchased will, together with the price to be paid for Hatuma Estate, and the offers to purchase now under consideration by several landowners, if accepted, absorb the greater portion of the above sum.

Appended hereto are details in tabular form, viz:—

Table A.—Return of all lands offered to the Government, and how dealt with, from the 1st April, 1898, to the 31st March, 1899.

Table B.—Return of lands recommended for purchase by the Board of Land Purchase Commissioners to the 31st March, 1899.

Table C.—Statement of lands acquired to the 31st March, 1899.

Report of the Surveyor-General on the “Condition and Settlement” of lands acquired.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MCKERROW,
Chairman of Board of Land Purchase Commissioners,
and Land Purchase Inspector.

The Hon. Minister of Lands.