

for stock than the preceding two years. An unusually dry period in the early summer, and again in the following autumn, has caused shortages of grass, and a danger of serious losses during the coming winter and early spring. White crops proved a disappointing harvest as far as Hawke's Bay was concerned, but green and root crops, especially potatoes, compared more than favourably with the yield of other seasons. The sixteen settlements are carrying a population of 1,897 souls, principally engaged in agricultural or pastoral pursuits.

A comparison with last year's return of stock shows a considerable increase in the number of sheep, a decrease in cattle, and an increase in the number of horses and swine.

The dairying industry continues to prosper, cheesemaking in some instances taking the place of butter-factories. Factories and creameries are now established at Norsewood, Ormondville, Makotoku, Matamau, Kiritaki, Maharahara, Woodville, Waione, Umutaoroa, Dannevirke, Piri-piri, Otanga, Ongaonga, Hastings, and Napier, with numerous hand separator machines in use in the settlers' homes. Milking-machines are being extensively used in the larger sheds, and effect a considerable saving of time and cost of labour. Owing to the scarcity of feed, the cattle in some of the dairying districts are in poor condition, and, in consequence, many of the factories have to close down earlier than usual. There is, however, still time for the breaking-up of the drought, and better conditions to prevail, in the way of a plentiful supply of winter feed, before the young grass is damaged by early frosts.

Fruit-farming continues to be a growing and payable industry, although this season many orchards in the vicinity of Hastings suffered severely from an unusually late and heavy frost. Some of the settlers were almost entirely deprived of this source of income, but in some instances turned their orchards into market-gardens with satisfactory results, and they are looking forward to increased profits from their fruit next season.

The Hawke's Bay Fruit-growers' Company and the Heretaunga Fruit-growers' Union have assisted materially in placing their fruit industry on a thoroughly satisfactory and sound basis. The fruit canning and preserving factory at Frimley, near Hastings, employs a large number of hands during the season, and maintains its reputation as one of the leading institutions of Hastings.

It is reasonable to anticipate a fairly good season next year, when it is hoped most, if not all, of our settlers may more than recoup themselves for any losses they have sustained through frost or drought during the past twelve months.

C. R. POLLEN,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

TARANAKI.

The Tokaora Settlement, near Hawera, has given the tenants large returns, and the settlement has a prosperous appearance. All the sections are used for dairying purposes.

In the Clandon Settlement, near Toko, there is evidence that the continued dairying is causing the pastures to run out, and that it will be in the best interests of the land that it be turned over to sheep for a year or two. A marked improvement is visible on two of the sections that have been grazed solely by that class of stock.

The settlers of Huinga, which is also near Toko, have had a good year, and the prospects are very hopeful. In all the three settlements mentioned attention is being given to regrassing after cropping, and a certain amount of top-dressing old pastures is being done.

A satisfactory advance has been made in the Spotswood Settlement, near the Moturoa Breakwater, and all the settlers appear to be doing well. Several residences have been erected during the year, and, with the prospects of improved harbour-accommodation, this locality should attract persons who require a small area of land for residential and grazing purposes.

FRANCIS SIMPSON,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

WELLINGTON.

The settlers on practically the whole of the estates have held their selections for many years, and are consequently now in a more or less highly prosperous condition.

The tenants in the settlements in the east coast district go in for mixed farming, the higher country being utilized for grazing mixed stock, and the lower for dairying and agricultural purposes. The settlements in the neighbourhood of Wellington are used as residential sites principally, but some of the settlers follow poultry-farming, market-gardening, &c.

In the west coast district the settlements are for the most part situated in the vicinities of Feilding, Bull's, and Lower Oroua. These settlements are chiefly used for dairying, cropping, and fruit-growing, the grazing of sheep not being such a marked feature as in the east coast division.

JAMES MACKENZIE,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

NELSON.

Wangapeka Settlement.—This estate was opened for selection in 1907, and contains an area of 6,149 acres, occupied by fifteen selectors. Improvements to the value of £6,870 have been effected, an excess of £5,914 over the requirements of the Act. Cropping is not carried on to any