

1914.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1908

(REPORT ON).

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in compliance with Section 85 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1908.*

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THE LAND PURCHASE INSPECTOR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF LAND PURCHASE COMMISSIONERS  
to the MINISTER OF LANDS.

SIR,—

Wellington, 8th July, 1914.

I have the honour to submit the report of the Department for the year ending the 31st March, 1914.

## LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS.

The number of properties considered was 199, of an area of 652,883 acres. Many of these were found to be quite unsuitable for settlement, or were offered at such a price as to preclude business.

The area purchased and taken possession of was 141,327 acres, costing £560,498. In addition the leases of 108,786 acres of Crown land were surrendered, and a portion has been utilized as additions to settlement lands. The total expenditure to 31st March is £6,936,613, for 1,490,367 acres.

There was an active demand for the whole of the estates purchased, with the exception of those in Southland. These are, however, being gradually taken up, and it is expected that the whole will be occupied within a month or so.

The successful applicants are reported as being of a good type and likely to do justice to their holdings.

The purchase of further areas is being steadily pursued, and already 25,793 acres, valued at £181,582, have been completed. There appears to be a disposition on the part of landowners to quit their holdings, and considerable areas are being offered, but in many instances at prices which are considered to be much beyond the value. With the present returns for all produce there is, however, some justification for owners looking for extreme prices.

## LAND SETTLEMENT FINANCE ACT.

The operations during the period have been somewhat restricted, principally owing to the tightness of the money-market in the earlier part of the year.

There were four associations incorporated, with an area of 4,182 acres, valued at £58,830, and a membership of 27. The total number of associations incorporated to date is 38, with an area of 39,232 acres, valued at £520,924, and 266 members.

There are several others now under consideration. With few exceptions the success of the several associations is assured.

In two instances at least, mainly owing to adverse weather-conditions and bad roads, the financial position of the members has been seriously affected, and some mode of relief may be necessary.

The procedure to be adopted under the present Land Settlement Finance Act is found most cumbersome and almost unworkable, therefore every endeavour should be made to place upon the statute-book the proposed new Bill. It is confidently expected that a considerable impetus would be given to settlement under an improved measure.

Appended are explanatory tables.

I have, &c.,

JOHN D. RITCHIE.

The Right Hon. W. F. Massey, Minister of Lands.