

GENERAL REMARKS.

Notwithstanding the decline in the prices of farm-products—excluding wool—which has been experienced during the year, it is considered that in most cases the values determined upon by the Revaluation Board leave a sufficient margin that will enable settlers, with economy, to overcome the temporary set-back due to deflation in prices. Unfortunately, it is evident that areas which a few years ago were considered large enough to make a living off are now, through altered economic conditions, too small for this purpose, and in such cases the Department must grant some measure of relief until it is possible to enlarge the holdings. In some districts the prolonged drought, followed by a long winter and short spring, affected returns from sheep-farmers, and although good prices were obtained from wool, the clips were light and lambing percentage somewhat on the low side. The slump in prices was fortunately somewhat counteracted by the increased yield of produce for the season.

LANDS PROCLAIMED.

The lands set apart for selection by discharged soldiers during the year totalled 7,724 acres. From the inception of the scheme to the 31st March, 1927, a total area of 1,427,490 acres has been proclaimed for soldier settlement. This area is made up as follows:—

Class of Land.					Area (Acres).
Ordinary Crown lands	..	..	..	..	.. 596,047
Cheviot Estate land	..	..	..	..	.. 3,356
Land for Settlements land	..	..	..	..	.. 397,089
National-endowment land	..	..	..	..	.. 430,998
					1,427,490

Proclamations have been issued revoking the setting-apart of 210,172 acres of Crown lands, and 91,653 acres of land for settlements land.

APPLICATIONS FOR LAND.

Applications for land under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act to the number of seventy-eight were received during the year. The following table gives the number of applications and the area allotted during each year from the inception of the soldier-settlement scheme:—

Year ending					Applications received.	Allotments made.	
						Number.	Area (Acres).
31st March, 1916	..	..	..	..	272	2	629
„ 1917	..	..	..	..	522	319	143,524
„ 1918	..	..	..	..	513	313	103,362
„ 1919	..	..	..	..	1,379	348	117,018
„ 1920	..	..	..	..	5,041	932	403,891
„ 1921	..	..	..	..	5,396	1,087	414,867
„ 1922	..	..	..	..	878	403	97,972
„ 1923	..	..	..	..	284	146	25,113
„ 1924	..	..	..	..	216	79	16,910
„ 1925	..	..	..	..	123	47	9,014
„ 1926	..	..	..	..	109	86	20,500
„ 1927	..	..	..	..	78	66	17,412
Totals for twelve years					14,811	3,828	1,370,212