

1928.

NEW ZEALAND.

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1925

(REPORT ON THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 109 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1925.

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

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 31st July, 1928.

I have the honour to submit a report on land-purchase operations for the year ended 31st March, 1928.

The number of properties considered during the year was eighty-four, of a total area of 171,788 acres; but for various reasons very few purchases were made. Some excellent sheep-country was placed under offer to the State; but the blocks in question were unfortunately not economically suitable for subdivision, although no doubt they had proved payable propositions when capably farmed in large areas. It was found as a general rule that even those properties which were offered at fairly reasonable prices considered as going concerns could not bear the extra charges entailed by subdivision, roading, &c., and be thereafter offered for selection at prices affording prospective settlers a fair chance of success. The extra loading entailed in the provision of new homestead buildings, fencing, roading, &c., is the chief obstacle to the acquisition of lands for subdivision for closer settlement, and it is only on comparatively rare occasions that suitable land can be bought at prices that will allow of a reasonable return on the capital outlay plus the necessary additional charges.

The Land Purchase Board has given the most careful consideration to the offers submitted during the year; but in the great majority of cases has been unable to make a favourable recommendation for acquisition, as the subsequent economic position did not appear to be assured. Several properties are now under investigation.

Possession of the whole of the Tangowahine Settlement has now been obtained. Roading is well in progress, a scheme of subdivision has been drawn up, and it is hoped to offer at least portion of the settlement for selection at an early date. The proposed railway-line to link up Dargaville with Auckland will traverse this property.

The Te Wera Estate is being farmed by the Department, and large areas of bush lands are being felled and grassed. Road-construction will shortly be placed in hand, and the metalling of main access has been completed right up to the property. Considerable improvements are being effected in connection with the pastures.

Tables are attached giving particulars of the properties considered and lands acquired during the year, together with a balance-sheet and statement of moneys received into and paid out of the Land for Settlements Account.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,

Land Purchase Controller.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.