

had an effect on the prices offered. The top-dressing of the lower country, the increase of flocks, and the general improvement of flocks on the pastoral runs is now reflected in the large increase of wool handled at the Invercargill wool-sales. The following information given by a member of the Wool brokers' Association makes interesting reading:—

					Bales sold.	Gross Proceeds.		
						£	s.	d.
For the year 1927	..	..	..	..	26,226	406,429	5	2
„ 1928	..	..	..	..	30,755	648,941	0	0
„ 1929	..	..	..	..	35,187	662,910	9	9

The prices offered by the several companies for fat lambs were very high early in the season, but dropped after the first two months, though the price remained at a good figure for the producer. The wet spring and summer has had an effect on the fattening of lambs, and difficulty has been experienced by some settlers in getting away the same number as in previous seasons; but the broken weather experienced was not general and was mostly confined to the southern end of the district.

The dairying industry has had a successful season, but suffered somewhat on account of the late spring, and pastures generally were not suitable to give good returns till well on in November. Even on the lowest figures paid out per pound of butterfat the returns should be quite satisfactory, and with the general improvement of the pasture and herds which is taking place will show a good return per cow.

There will not be as much rye and fescue seed for export as last year. The late spring experienced had the effect of forcing paddocks to be kept open for stock which generally would have been closed, and fescue-seed has suffered on account of early frosts experienced in the north of the district.

With the small amount of oats threshed the farmer is now turning his attention to the harvesting of meadow hay, and a large amount has been stacked this season. For years past the pastoral-run holder has endeavoured to save up hay for winter feeding, and this is becoming more pronounced, and low country worked in conjunction with pastoral runs is now, where possible, shut up and cut for hay. The turnip crops are looking well, and ample provision appears to have been made for winter feeding.

Conversions to Freehold.—Twenty sections, of a total area of 3,442 acres, were converted to freehold.

Crown Lands opened for Selection.—During the year eighty-two sections, of a total area of 7,762 acres, were opened for selection. There has been no special demand for bush lands, the reasons, no doubt, being difficulty of access and finance. It is difficult to keep settlers on bush lands unless there is a gravelled road to the section, and those seeking land and having a limited capital prefer to purchase a farm as a going concern. On account of the general good conditions prevailing for sheep-farmers there have been many inquiries for pastoral country.

Crown Lands to be opened for Selection.—It is proposed to open for selection some seven sections, comprising 3,000 acres, in the Lillburn district, at an early date.

Land Board.—Twelve ordinary meetings were held during the year and a large amount of business transacted. As Chairman, I desire to thank the members of the Land Board for their cordial co-operation during the past year.

Revenue.—The gross revenue for the year amounted to £145,644, of which £79,542 was on account of principal and interest under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act. The above figures show a substantial increase over past years.