

1931.
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, 1st July, 1931.

I have the honour to submit a report on land-purchase operations for the year ended 31st March, 1931, which were carried out under the direction of my predecessor, Mr. J. B. Thompson, C.B.E.

Some 254 offers of estates were considered, and twenty-nine properties were purchased during the year. The total area acquired was 61,125 acres, and the amount paid out £279,361. Included in the purchases were eleven properties, totalling 8,088 acres, acquired on behalf of approved applicants under the provisions of Part II of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1928.

Two one-man farms were purchased for discharged soldiers under section 3 of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Amendment Act, 1917, while a property of 410 acres at Ruawai was acquired for the purpose of providing run-off areas for four soldier settlers holding sections in the vicinity.

A feature of the year's operations was the purchase of several estates which offer scope for development work by the Crown prior to opening the land for selection. The most important of these purchases was that of the Galatea Estate, of 22,300 acres, in the Bay of Plenty district, which was made after protracted negotiations and the most searching investigation. Possession will not be given until the 31st March, 1932; but arrangements have been made whereby the Crown can proceed with both access and internal roading, and also with certain development work, in order that the property as a whole may be ready for selectors at the earliest possible date. It is expected that the estate will subdivide into 120 farms, practically all of which will be suitable for dairying.

In view of the generally unsatisfactory position with respect to returns from the sale of primary products, the acquisition of estates for closer settlement is at present surrounded by many difficulties, and purchases are therefore being kept under strict control. It seems probable that for some time at least operations will be confined chiefly to the acquisition of suitable areas on behalf of approved applicants under Part II of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1928.

Tables are attached giving particulars of the properties considered and lands acquired during the year, together with Revenue Account and Balance-sheet. The usual statement (duly certified by the Controller and Auditor-General) required under the provisions of section 109A of the Land for Settlements Act, 1925, of the moneys received into and paid out of the Land for Settlements Account during the year will be found in parliamentary paper B.-1 [Part I], being the Abstract of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Public Account for the year ended 31st March, 1931.

I have, &c.,

W. ROBERTSON,

Land Purchase Controller.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.