

1881.
NEW ZEALAND.

CROWN LANDS DEPARTMENT

(REPORT UPON THE, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1881.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

The SECRETARY for CROWN LANDS to the Hon. the MINISTER of LANDS.

SIR,— General Crown Lands Office, Wellington, 18th July, 1881.

I have the honor to forward the general report of the Crown Lands Department for the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1881, together with tables containing an enumeration of lands sold, leased, or otherwise disposed of, in each of the eleven land districts of the colony.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MCKERROW,

The Hon. William Rolleston, Minister of Lands.

Secretary for Crown Lands.

REPORT.

In reviewing the transactions of the Crown Lands Department for the twelve months ended 31st March, 1881, the principal feature which claims attention is the great increase, as compared with former years, in the number of selectors who have acquired land on the deferred-payment and other settlement conditions. No less than 1,310 persons have selected and occupied a total of 165,364 acres, being an average of 126 acres to each. In cash sales the returns are also much greater than for the previous year, and it is satisfactory to observe that the increase is not confined to one or two land districts, but is general throughout the colony. The most marked increase is in that part of the Taranaki District constituted into the new Land District of West Coast, and comprehending the Waimate Plains. The sales of land in that district, together with sales in other districts of the North Island, have had the effect of making the receipts from cash sales in that Island last year nearly equal in amount to those of the Middle Island for the same period.

Before referring further to the settlement of the Waimate Plains, or to the other subjects of report, it will be interesting to give a short summary of the results for the year:—

Land sold on immediate payments—

	A.	R.	P.	Purchasers.	Scrip.	Cash Received.
					£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Town lands ...	274	3	4	711		
Suburban ...	1,170	3	24	202	10,158 11 7	275,896 16 7
Rural ...	195,630	0	35	1,155		

Land sold on deferred payments—

	A.	R.	P.	Purchasers.	
Agricultural	115,329	2 10	880	
Pastoral	29,007	1 34	15	
Village settlement	2,095	0 0	259	53,706 12 1
Deposits on the above, and instalments from selectors current from former years	

Agricultural leases on gold fields—

6,782 acres, leased to 74 selectors.	Rents, from these and from selectors	
current from former years	6,457 1 1

Homestead—

11,984 acres, selected by 77 persons	...	Nil.
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Pastoral rents—

From 12,382,614 acres, held by 946 tenants	...	117,803 2 6
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Miscellaneous—

Coal and mineral leases, royalties, timber licenses, &c.	...	7,000 0 0
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Land and territorial revenue, for 12 months ended 31st March, 1881	...	£460,863 12 3
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LAND SOLD.

The receipts from land sold on immediate payments last year are about double what they were for the previous year. This is not because a greater area was sold, but arises from the land fetching a higher average price than formerly. The open farming land on the Waimate Plains sold for cash at an average of £6 6s. 8d. per acre, suburban land at £11, and town lands at £87 15s. 6d. per acre. The settlement of this country, on account of Native obstruction, and its natural beauty and fertility, excited more than usual interest. It was surveyed into sections of from 50 to 100 acres each, and every third section was offered for application on deferred payments. After the deferred-payment selectors had made their choice, each selector being allowed only one section on these terms, the intermediate sections were offered for sale by auction on immediate payments, open to all bidders. In this way, the deferred payment-selector had an opportunity of adding to his holding, by buying the surrounding sections. The object of these arrangements was to insure residence, and to have as large a population settled on the plains as could reasonably be supposed to thrive on them as farmers, and, at the same time, to prevent any one frustrating that object by buying a large area in one solid block. The results attained have very well realized the aim of these intentions, for there are on the rural lands 180 settlers, holding 22,426 acres, or an average of 125 acres to each farm. Then there are tradesmen and others who have purchased 41 suburban sections, of from 5 to 10 acres each, and 295 town sections of a quarter-acre each; and 57 village selectors on deferred payments, holding on an average 25 acres each. The European population of the Plains on 3rd April last was 361, and of Opunake, 177.

The total area disposed of in settlement, including the bush block behind the continuous Native reserve, is as under:—

	A.	R.	P.		£	s.	d.
Total cash sales	14,825	1	3	realized ...	88,683	11	6
Deferred-payment, rural	7,600	2	26	„ ...	38,232	5	10
Deferred-payment, Village-settlement	1,421	0	32	„ ...	7,682	19	5
Total ...	23,847	0	23	„	134,598	16	9

Or nearly £6 an acre, inclusive of 5,400 acres of bush land, and of town, suburban, and village lands.

Reserves have been made for educational and municipal endowments, school sites, hospital, recreation, public buildings, athenæums, agricultural society grounds, gravel pits, cemeteries, and other purposes of public utility. Several of the religious bodies have secured by purchase sites at Manaia for churches, and the Bank of New Zealand has established an agency there.

The settlement of this fine district is proceeding most satisfactorily; the face of the country is being rapidly transformed from an unbroken wilderness of sombre fern and forest to the green landscape, enlivened by numerous homesteads, herds of cattle, and cultivated fields. And there still remains for disposal 90,000 acres of level and sloping bush land, which is being opened by survey and clearing of road lines preparatory to settlement. The country from Wanganui northwards, along the coast line, is undoubtedly the finest grazing district in New Zealand, and the settlement of the Waimate Plains extends it up to the base of Mount Egmont. The opening of the Parihaka Block is still a further step northwards. The first portion of this block, about 5,000 acres, was offered for sale in February last, in sections ranging from 5 up to 320 acres each. There were no sales at first; but 37 sections, comprising 4,040 acres, have since been taken up on application by twenty-four purchasers at from £2 to £5 an acre for cash, and there are only three sections now remaining for disposal. Other 10,000 acres of the same block are surveyed, and maps are now in preparation prior to sale of land. The Parihaka Block lies along the coast line for 12 miles; it is about 2½ miles wide, and on its inland side it fronts for 10 miles the road recently formed, and along which coach traffic is now regularly maintained between New Plymouth and Hawera. In the further occupation of this block there will be an almost complete cordon of settlements around the base of Mount Egmont, and that mountain will then become the centre of one of the most populous and flourishing districts in the colony.

It would be tedious to enter into details regarding all the lands sold during the year; but, as the sale of land, more especially bush lands, has been greatly promoted by the opening out of roads through the blocks prior to sale, a short statement may be given of the Kairanga blocks, on which the greatest acreage outlay has been made before sale, and the results of that sale. The Kairanga blocks are distant by road from 3 to 8 miles from Palmerston North, and comprise 8,582 acres of level bush land, which every winter was for a considerable portion of its area under water, from 2 to 3 feet deep. On levels being carefully taken, the best lines of outfall were discovered; these were cleared of bush, a chain or a chain and a half wide, drains cut, and the stuff thrown out formed the roads; 14 miles of drains and 18 miles of roads were formed in this manner, at a total cost of £5,000, or 11s. 8d. per acre. Lithograph plans of the block were then published and distributed; and intending settlers, with maps in hand, were able to walk or ride into the heart of the block and view the land. The sale was held in Palmerston North on 21st February last, when 43 sections, comprising 5,090 acres, were sold for cash, realizing £11,075 or £2 3s 6d per acre; and 22 sections, comprising 2,628 acres, were sold on deferred payments, realizing £7,787, or very nearly £3 per acre, payable by half-yearly instalments over ten years. There are only four sections remaining unsold, and three sections of

380 acres of education reserve, which have been improved, but, of course, cannot be sold, but may be leased. Several hundred acres of this block are now being fallen, preparatory to burning off and laying down in grass.

The opening out, and subsequent sale on deferred and immediate payments, of Pahiatua, Kiwitea, Fitzherbert, Ngamoko, and other bush blocks were conducted in a similar manner, and with like satisfactory results as in Kairanga blocks.

SETTLEMENT CONDITIONS.

A reference to Table No. 3 will show that the 1,310 selectors who have taken up 165,364 acres on the various systems of agricultural and pastoral deferred payments, agricultural lease, and homestead, are very fairly distributed throughout the colony. Thus, in Auckland—the only land district where all three systems are in vogue—178 selectors took up 25,886 acres. In Taranaki and West Coast (North Island), 295 selectors took up 24,536 acres. Otago and Southland, as in former years, have taken the lead in the disposal of land on settlement conditions this year, with 416 selectors, who have taken up 88,958 acres. In Southland alone, 201 selectors have been settled on 30,015 acres. A considerable number of these were attracted by several fine blocks in the Aparima Valley, north of Otautau. The railway was extended up from Otautau towards the Nightcaps coal field, and simultaneously the land was surveyed along its course and offered on deferred payment. It has all been taken up, and, virtually, a new district has been called into existence. This extensive settlement on the Crown lands in Otago and Southland has been effected, notwithstanding that many large private estates have been open at the same time to purchasers on easy terms of deferred payment.

The primary object of the deferred-payment system on Crown lands is to prevent the acquisition of large blocks by any one purchaser, and to secure the residential settlement of the lands in moderately-sized areas. The system has been successful in that respect. Revenue is only a secondary consideration in this system; but even in that respect the results have been generally satisfactory, and the instalments of price well paid up. It is true that a number of deferred-payment selectors petitioned Parliament in the session of 1880, praying for relief on account of their having taken on themselves engagements in respect of the price of land which they found themselves unable to meet. Accordingly, a Parliamentary Select Committee was appointed, who, after considering the petition, recommended that those in default should have the option either of paying up arrears or of surrendering their licenses, on the understanding that, on surrender being made, the land and improvements on each holding would be valued by the Government, and then offered for sale by public auction at the upset of valuation. From the proceeds of sale the holder was to be paid for his improvements, and the balance to go to Government in payment for the land. At that time about 200 selectors were in default. Circulars were addressed to them embodying the proposal of the Committee, and in due course 64 selectors, representing 12,584 acres, made surrender. The land and improvements were accordingly valued, and recently offered for sale, and, of 64 properties offered, 59 were purchased, realizing £19,042 for the land; 54 purchases were for the original selectors, who have therefore been able to make arrangements that have enabled them to remain in their holdings; the other defaulters have elected to abide by the original terms.

This expedient of surrender and sale, devised to meet what was deemed an exceptional difficulty, exposes, no doubt, the weak point of the deferred-payment system, which is, that the ease with which land may be obtained under it tempts some to enter on the possession of land before they may have sufficient capital, either to withstand any unforeseen emergency, such as the very low price of oats and other agricultural produce which ruled for the last three years, or bear the heavy drain on resources that is inevitable in the first few years of settling on a farm. But if a few persons overreach themselves, the fault is not so much in the system as in their inexperience; just as in the system of cash payments, it is no slur upon it because some have involved themselves in difficulties by buying more land than they could profitably use.

The fact remains that under the deferred-payment system, since its introduction in 1872, many districts have been settled, that under the cash system would still have remained forest or sheep walks; whereas we now have had up to date 8,925 persons who have selected 894,095 acres, of which 259,550 acres have been made freehold by fulfilment of conditions; and each succeeding year will add by increasing quantities to the total area made freehold, as the ten years of each selector runs out.

It is very easy, however, to over-do the deferred-payment system in a district, because, as already stated, its tendency is to induce people to settle on land before they are ready. In such cases the settler's resource is to find occasional employment in his neighbourhood. It becomes, therefore, necessary, in opening land under this system, to consider the surroundings, and to have in view the evils arising from having too many of this dependent class of settlers brought together in the same district. As a general rule, about one-third of the area on deferred payment, and two-thirds on immediate payment, does very well in a large block. This was the proportion observed in the settlement of the Waimate Plains, also in Kairanga, and other bush blocks.

VILLAGE SETTLEMENTS.

The system of dealing with Crown lands under this designation only became law on 1st January, 1880. As the name implies, a village settlement is a group of small holdings, generally

from five to ten acres each, which will become the abodes of country tradesmen, and the homes of men who take jobs at fencing, harvesting, road making, and other country work. The land is opened generally on the suburban deferred-payment system—that is, the payments extend over five years, and improvements to the value of £10 an acre have to be made, and the occupation of each holding as the home of the selector is compulsory. Each settler can only have one section, and, in the event of two or more persons applying for the same section on the same day, the occupation is determined by lot. Under these conditions speculation in village allotments is effectually prevented, and, although always open for application, they are virtually retained until wanted by settlers who are ready to occupy and improve them. During the year, 259 persons have taken up 2,095 acres on this system, or an average of about eight acres to each. These selections have been made in the Land Districts of Hawke's Bay, West Coast (North Island), Canterbury, and Southland. In Canterbury the village-settlement system has succeeded remarkably well. Regarding it, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr. Marshman, reports: "One hundred and twenty-eight deferred-payment licenses were issued under the village-settlement clauses of 'The Land Act, 1879.' The areas varied from one acre to five acres or thereabouts, and the price per acre from £5 to £10, payable in five years. The area held in this way on the 31st March, 1881, was about 350 acres, and the annual sum payable thereon £630. These village settlements have served a useful purpose. A considerable number of poor men have by this means been able to obtain a bit of land, who would probably not have got it otherwise. The majority are already living on their holdings, and most of the others have enclosed and cultivated them. There are no instalments of purchase-money in arrear on any of the deferred payment lands."

The village settlement of South Rakaia exemplifies very well the advantages pertaining to this mode of settlement. A block of 653 acres, held in reserve there by the Provincial Government, was opened on this system in May, 1880, in five-acre sections. Upwards of 20 have been taken up, fenced in, and cultivated, and there is now a house and family on each. Several shoemakers, carpenters, and fencers have established themselves there, and there is a soap and candle factory which has already made a name for the excellence of its products beyond the locality by its exhibits at Industrial Exhibitions. There are other reserves at Orari, Temuka, Waimakariri Bridge, at Winchester, and other places along the railway lines in Canterbury, which have come in remarkably well for village settlements, and are being occupied and settled on in a very satisfactory manner. There are also strips of valuable land, two and three chains wide, along parts of the railway lines both in Canterbury and Otago, that would be suitable for this class of settlement.

It is of the greatest importance to have reserves made for village settlements at suitable spots in all new districts, and to adhere to the residential terms as a condition of their occupation, so that as the district gets filled up there will still remain sections of a few acres each open for the occupation of thrifty settlers who engage in fencing, harvesting, road making, and other district work, and who have odd times on hand that they can beneficially employ in working on their own places.

There are at the date of this report an aggregate of 1362 sections, from $\frac{1}{4}$ to 50 acres each, open for selection on the village-settlement conditions, in thirty-two districts; on deferred payments, 153,400 acres, in 710 sections; on agricultural lease, about 400,000 acres, of which 42,034 acres are surveyed into 402 sections; on homestead, 70,000 acres, in twenty-seven blocks, open for selection. All the surveyed sections are mapped and published, and lithographed plans are obtainable at the land offices of the various districts in which they are situated.

FORESTS.

547,785 acres of forest, on hill tops and at the sources of streams, have been reserved under the 144th section of "The Land Act, 1877," not so much with the intention of conserving the bush, as of preventing the drying up of springs and streams from exposure to sun and wind. The conservancy of the Crown lands forests, in the interests of the future supply of timbers to the colony, is a question of great importance, and in Part V. of the Land Act there are ample administrative powers conferred on Government for the purpose. But, in the absence of any wanton destruction in the forests, it has not yet been deemed necessary to frame any very stringent conditions regulating the cutting and removing timber, which, for their due observance, would require a considerable staff of forest officials, whose maintenance would necessarily be a charge on the timber industry. Moreover, a system of forest conservancy, such as would be applicable in densely populated countries where timber is scarce and very valuable, would be out of place in a colony such as New Zealand, where our efforts are so largely directed to make clearings for the settler in the forest districts, and where the value of timber is solely what it costs to prepare it for market. The timber or trees as they stand in the forest are really of very little market value. In the Manawatu District alone, this winter, there may be on the Kairanga and Kiwitea Blocks, recently sold by Government, and on the Manchester and other private blocks, an aggregate of 10,000 acres of forest in course of being fallen. In Taranaki, and other bush districts, the same destructive process is in operation, and it is certainly a matter for regret to see the beautiful rimu and other valuable timbers fallen and burned off like so much rubbish.

The most effectual way of utilizing and conserving the forests of the country would be to induce a rise in the price of timber. But the conservancy would not be promoted by any artificial rise occasioned by impost or tax, indeed, this would be likely to have the contrary effect, as

there would be less demand for the timber in the colony and for export, and, consequently, less inducement to bring it to market. The rise in price, to operate beneficially, must proceed from the greater demand for the article. With the view of inducing this, the department has been in correspondence with firms largely engaged in the trade, and proposals have been made towards opening a trade with Europe in the timbers of the colony. Mr. Le Coy, who has given much attention to the subject, is of opinion that if Government would aid the trade by getting the New Zealand timbers officially tested and exhibited at Paris, an important trade could be opened up with France, as timber is scarce there, and several of the New Zealand varieties would be likely to take. The matter is worthy a trial; and, since the trade is willing to venture on the enterprise of timber export, the Government ought to give every facility through official introductions to start it in the manner indicated.

In any regulations bearing on the subject of forest conservancy it would be essential to bear in mind the importance of preserving the young trees, and only allowing those to be cut down which have matured. When the subject is taken up, it will also be important to plant English trees in the forests. Mr. McArthur, the Inspector of Forests in Southland, is strongly of opinion that this should be taken in hand at once. He looks upon the forest areas which have been cut over as most valuable nurseries, where, amid the natural shelter of the indigenous shrubbery and trees, he would plant the larch, and in twenty years, or probably less in New Zealand, the trees would have grown to a serviceable size for railway sleepers, and the numerous other uses to which larch can be applied. Unfortunately the larch in Dunedin has been attacked by a grub, which tops it, and so stunts the growth, but the same evil does not seem to exist in Invercargill, as Mr. McArthur has grown larch very successfully.

PLANTATIONS.

Closely allied to the question of forest conservation is that of rearing forests in those districts of the colony where there is no growing timber. Although there are 10,000,000 acres of Crown lands under forest, besides what is owned privately, yet, as it generally occurs in very large blocks of unbroken forest, there are in the most populous districts of the colony—Canterbury and Otago—many localities without a single indigenous tree. This, as regards the supply of timber for local wants, is not so very serious a matter to some districts as it was before the extension of the railway system; but, for future supply of timber, for shelter, the beauty of the country, and beneficial climatic influence, it is very important that plantations should be fostered. This has been recognized in the Forest Trees Planting Encouragement Acts of 1871 and 1872, which entitle any person to a land order of £4 for every acre successfully planted in terms of regulations. These Acts were only in force in Nelson, Canterbury, and Otago, up to 1877, when the regulations were made applicable to the entire colony. (See *Gazette* for 1877, folio 132.) Within the last year, land orders have been issued to three proprietors in Canterbury, representing 167 acres planted, and two land orders to proprietors in Otago, representing 120 acres planted. Altogether, under these Acts and their regulations, there have been issued since they came into force 18 land orders, representing 1,040 acres planted; of which 13 were to proprietors in Canterbury, for 764 acres planted, and 5 in Otago, for 276 acres planted. Up to 1879, the land orders were only issued in encouragement of private enterprise; but in that year an amending Act extended the encouragement to public bodies as well. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to allow of any public body fulfilling the conditions under which land orders are issued; but the counties of Lake and Ashburton have both entered upon planting within their respective borders.

The Planting Board of Canterbury, which began operations about two years ago, has got 532 acres enclosed and planted in selected blocks of about 50 acres each, along and in the vicinity of the railway lines. The Board has 18,493½ acres of planting reserves in hand, and the rents from one portion give the means of enclosing and planting the other; and, after a time, the revenue from the thinnings of the plantation will supply funds to continue the planting, until the whole area has been brought under tree cultivation.

In the interior of Otago there is a region one hundred miles in diameter where there is not a single native tree growing, the whole country being one enormous grass field. The time has been when there were extensive forests on the ranges, as shown by the remains of trees still lying on the surface, and the trunks found in the mosses and lignite beds. In the disposal of this extensive area, within the next year or two, there will be a considerable accession of settlers, who, each for his own place, will plant a few trees; but something more extensive is required, and, with the object of providing sites for future planting operations, it is proposed to reserve considerable areas for that purpose.

MULBERRY TREES.—SILK CULTURE.

The labours of the Industrial Commission of 1880, and the Local Industrial Exhibitions which have been held since, have awakened and widened the interest felt in developing the special aptitudes of the colony in respect of natural productions. Mr. Federli, who, from practical knowledge of silk culture acquired in his native country, Italy, and from observation of the climate of New Zealand, is convinced that all that is wanted to make it a great success here is to get people to grow the mulberry, and take the trouble of feeding the silkworm for the six weeks or two months of its short period of activity. The Industrial Association in Christchurch, and

several persons in Akaroa, have been in communication with the Government on the subject, and, although the success or otherwise of the experiment of introducing silk culture must ultimately rest with the settlers, it is fitting that the Government should in the initial stage give encouragement and assistance. It has been arranged, accordingly, through reliable and official channels, to obtain a consignment of eggs of the best quality of silkworms from Japan and California, also plants of the *morus alba*, the leaves of which variety of mulberry are preferred by the silkworms, and produce the best silks. Five hundred plants of the *morus alba* have recently been received from Sydney. They will be distributed in Christchurch and Akaroa, and, as there are already a sufficient number of leaf-bearing mulberry trees available in these places to begin with, although not all of the best sorts, Mr. Federli, on arrival of the eggs, will conduct the experiment at Christchurch of hatching them out, and feeding of silkworms, in a public place, so that all may have the opportunity of learning. From the produce of the first hatching out it is intended to send to Europe a portion of the eggs, and retain enough to extend the operations considerably the next season. Silk culture is a light cottage industry. The demand for eggs in France and Italy is very great, on account of a disease in those countries preventing the propagation of the silkworm. These countries import eggs from Japan and China to the value of millions sterling yearly.

CROWN LANDS HELD ON PASTORAL LEASE OR LICENSE.

The total area held is 12,382,614 acres, in 946 runs, all in the Middle Island, with the exception of 33 runs, comprising 260,215 acres, in the North Island. The question of the future disposal of 2,681,000 acres of this area, held in 90 runs in Otago and Southland, the leases of which expire in March, 1883, has been considered by the Government and the Land Board of Otago, as regards the country in that district; and it has been proposed, after making suitable reserves for public purposes, and regard been had to gold mining interests, which represent an industry exporting half a million sterling per annum, to apportion the flat arable lands in hundreds, for agricultural settlement, and the hilly and mountainous country in runs, of a size that will be determined by the features of the country; each run, as near as may be, will be of a depth twice the breadth, and will extend, in its longest dimension, from the valley to the summit of the range. After Parliament has had the proposals under consideration, and the principle of procedure has been finally decided on, it will be advisable, either in a special pamphlet or in the next issue of the Crown Lands Guide, to specially describe the character of this extensive area for the information of persons both in the colony and elsewhere who may be in quest of land to settle on, for the districts are so very sparsely populated that there is room for a considerable inflow of settlers. At present there are only about 7,000 persons, inclusive of miners, shepherds, tradesmen and their families, occupying an area of upwards of 3,000,000 acres, or considerably less than two persons to the square mile. It is therefore manifest that this handful of people can never be supposed to be equal to the settlement of so extensive an area within the next eighteen months, unless their numbers are recruited from without. In connection with this matter it ought to be mentioned that 12 runs, comprising 330,000 acres of education reserves, will also have to be dealt with at the same time; the administration is with the School Commissioners, but, as the dealing with all these lands is one, so far as the public is concerned, it would be well to consult the Commissioners as to their intentions, so that the public might have notice of the whole 3,011,000 acres at one time.

RABBIT PEST.

Closely connected with the settlement of the country is the difficulty of coping with this evil. It can be kept under by poisoning, shooting, and introduction of natural enemies, but where there is a region of broken back-country, the contest has to be maintained from season to season at great expense, which is only partially met by the sale of skins. The carrying capacity of the infested country is of course seriously diminished, and some of the higher-lying runs have been abandoned altogether very much from this cause. This in itself would not be so material, were it not that the abandoned country becomes the breeding-ground for fresh hordes, which overrun the lower occupied country. It is manifest that any partial treatment is unequal to the suppression of an evil which now affects several millions of acres of Crown and freehold lands. Rigorous concerted action is necessary; and this cannot be expected of district associations, unless under the compulsion and direction of one authority. It therefore devolves on Government to possess itself of powers that will require every person to keep his ground clear on pain of severe penalties. This implies that Government must clear the unoccupied Crown lands; and if these measures succeed in reducing the pest to small dimensions, as certainly they would, the expense would be far more than recouped in the increased carrying capacity of the country, and the greater rentals that would be got in re-letting. Increasing the number of runs and holdings will in one way tend to diminish the evil by having more persons to contend against it; but in the increase of settlers, there will be still greater need for Government inspection of rabbit districts, because the neglect of two or three persons in a district to keep their ground clear would render abortive in a great measure the efforts of those who did.

IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS BEFORE SALE.

Under this heading are comprehended the felling and clearing of road lines through bush country, side cuttings, formations, bridges, and outfall drains, or such works as render the

Crown lands accessible. The works which in last year's report were detailed as either in progress or projected have all been gone on with, and are either completed in whole, or for the section of the work for which the vote was taken.

The opening of the Crown lands by these means, more especially in bush districts, is imperative, if the settlement of the country is to proceed. Every mile of road that penetrates the wilderness is followed up by the settlers, and by this operation the productive area of the country is increased. The opening and settlement of such country as Kairanga, Kiwitea, and Seaward Moss is akin to discovering a new country; and there are tens of thousands of acres of Crown lands in the colony awaiting opening out, which at present might as well be in Africa, as regards any benefit they are to New Zealand. The most vigorous efforts should be made to overtake this work; it cannot be entered on too soon. In the topographical maps of the Survey Department, and the accurate information of the country possessed by the several district officers, there is a reliable basis on which to proceed intelligently with the opening of new country. There is a very great demand for land for settlement, and a decided set towards the North Island at present. In the 3,011,000 acres of the Otago and Southland runs there is a potent means of attracting settlers to the colony. This country is naturally easily accessible, but the subdivision into smaller areas will be greatly promoted by formation of road-lines up some of the valleys. A comparatively small expenditure will go a long way. Taking the land districts in geographical order, the following sketch is given of the principal works it is proposed should be undertaken:—

Auckland.—East Coast District.—There are several hundred thousand acres of Crown lands in this district; the soil is good, but the country is generally very rugged, and many of the blocks quite inaccessible to horse traffic until bridle-tracks are made. It is proposed to form a bridle-track from Ormond-Opotiki road to Waiapu, and continue the road *via* Motu to Opotiki; also to open part of the Waimata blocks by a road from Gisborne, and to improve the road from Gisborne to Clyde, Wairoa, with cross roads, opening up Ruakituri and other Crown lands.

Te Puke Block.—A considerable amount of work has been already done on the road between this block and Tauranga; it should be completed and extended on through Pukeroa block, now under sectional survey. This road is important as the future main line to Opotiki and the Hot Lakes from Tauranga.

North of Auckland.—This district has had a great opening up in the main road, which has been carried throughout its entire length as far as connecting all the main settlements on the east side. This has quickened settlement, and it is proposed to run tracks or roads to connect Sandy Bay and Helena Bay with main line between Whangarei and Kawakawa. It is proposed that, instead of continuing to widen and improve the road from Kawakawa to Whangaroa and Mangonui, which passes through a comparatively poor country, to survey an inland road-line from Kawakawa *via* Ohaeawai-Okaihu to Waihou, Mangamuku, and Victoria Valley. This line is made to Okaihu, already one-third the distance, and it passes through a fertile district and opens out a large area of Crown lands and kauri forest, as well as much land suitable for settlement. The road-line between Herds' Point and Victoria Valley has been opened; and, in continuation of this, the main line down the west side of peninsula north of Auckland, the track over the Maunganui Bluff and down the Kaihu Valley to Dargaville, should be prosecuted to completion; also the exploration of a track across the Waioku plateau, from the head of Kaihu Valley towards Hokianga. It is also proposed to connect blocks in the vicinity of Opotiki and also Helensville with these respective places by improved roads.

Taranaki.—It is proposed to penetrate the bush to the east of the railway line by the extension of one or two roads a few miles further.

West Coast, North Island.—Forty miles of road were cleared of bush within the last twelve months, which, up to date, has enabled 8,000 acres of bush land to be sold; and other 8,000 acres is now ready. There are still 75,000 acres to survey and open out, and the main road-lines should be felled before sale, and cleared 16 feet wide. Under the excellent management of the Crown Lands Ranger, Mr. Robinson, this work has been done well and very economically. Felling a chain wide and clearing in the middle 16 feet wide has been done at 15s. a chain, or £60 a mile. For work of this kind the system of piece-work has been found far better than that of contract.

Parihaka Block.—This land is open fern land, with scrub and flax. A little formation on one or two of the cross-roads will make the land appear much more civilized.

Momahaka Block is a few miles east of Waverley Railway-station; 7,000 acres surveyed. It is excellent land and would sell readily, but it is cut off by the deep valley of the Momahaka, which has been examined, and a good practicable road-line can be laid out. It should be formed, or at least be in course of formation, before offering the land for sale.

Hawke's Bay.—Several of the roads already opened in the bush blocks near Woodville will be extended for a mile or two further into the Crown lands.

Puketitiri Bush, and adjacent pastoral sections, to be opened by formation of a road, part of the cost of which to be borne by local bodies.

Tutanae Bush.—About 59,000 acres of a quarantine reserve, which is no longer wanted, excepting about 3,000 acres. It requires an exploratory survey through it to find the best lines of road, preparatory to its subdivision for sale.

Wellington.—About 30,000 acres of surveyed land in Pahiatua and Mangaone Blocks, Forty-mile Bush, require opening out. Also about 7,000 acres of Crown lands near Mauriceville, now under sectional survey. These lands are close to the Masterton-Woodville coach road, and require a few miles of cross-road run in from several points, to connect sections with main road.

Fitzherbert Block, of 7,000 acres, requires further clearing of road lines.

Tokomaru Block, of 18,000 acres, from twelve to twenty miles from Wanganui; 5,000 acres under sectional survey. It should not be offered for sale until a track is cleared connecting with settled districts near Brunswick Road.

Otamakapua and Waitapu Blocks, about 100,000 acres, from fifteen to thirty miles inland from Feilding. This is a great expanse of plateau bush land, lying between the Rangitikei and Oroua rivers; land known to be fertile. The Kimbolton Road from Feilding has been cleared and metalled close up to its borders. It is proposed to continue this road-line, and to survey sections along it, and afterwards open cross-lines as settlement advances.

The Wanganui Harbour Endowment, of 25,000 acres, lies on the east side of Oroua River, opposite to these blocks. It has recently been surveyed by the Government for the Harbour Board, and that body contemplates the clearing of road-lines before asking the Land Board to sell the land.

Pohangina Block, east of Pohangina River.—About 10,000 acres of Crown lands along this river, and at the base of the Ruahine Range, is now under sectional survey; the opening of a road to it is absolutely necessary before it can be settled.

The Otamakapua, Waitapu, Wanganui Harbour Endowment, and Pohangina, form one compact block of about 150,000 acres, on which a great deal of settlement would take place, if only a proper start was made in road clearings and formation.

Kukutauaki Block, of 5,000 acres, is about six miles north from Otaki, on the main road and railway lines projected from Wellington to Manawatu. Road-clearings required.

Nelson.—Cobden, *via* Coal Creek, to Seventeen Mile Beach Diggings.—This will open out Crown lands, and at the same time greatly improve access to a mining population of three hundred persons.

Grey Valley, *via* Bell Hill and Lake Brunner, to Bruce's paddock, Teremakau.—This penetrates an extensive area of level bush land of about 40,000 acres, suitable for settlement, and known to be auriferous.

Aorere Valley.—In continuation of road already formed, so as to open through communication to Goulard Downs.

Wakefield to Stanley Brook.—This will improve communication between Wakefield Railway-station and a district partially settled in the Upper Motueka Valley. There are several thousand acres of Crown lands interspersed along line of road.

Marlborough.—Awatere Shearing Reserve, 12,000 acres, is well adapted for pastoral farms from 500 to 1,000 or 2,000 acres each. Under "The Awatere Shearing Reserve Act, 1879," arrangements have been made for the construction of about six miles of road. The land will be surveyed and offered for sale after the road works are well on.

Rai Valley.—There are a few thousand acres of level and hill-side bush Crown lands in this valley, with some excellent timber. The old bridle-track from Havelock to Nelson went over the range at the head of the Pelorus at a very high altitude, and it was very steep. A much better line and lower saddle is got by leaving the old track at Pelorus Bridge and taking the line up the Rai Valley, and across the saddle to Whangamoia Valley. The line is on grades practicable for coach traffic, and the formation of it wide enough to admit of drays would be an impetus to the settlement of the district.

Canterbury.—In connection with a triangulation last season conducted across the main range from Westland to Canterbury, Mr. Mueller had occasion to visit the Upper Rakaia Valley. He was instructed to examine and report on the country at the head waters of that valley, with the view of ascertaining if a practicable pass existed there leading into Westland. He found a pass over which a track can be made. One great advantage of this route is that it crosses the main range of the Southern Alps at a very narrow place, so that, if the track were made, cattle could be driven across the range from the Upper Rakaia to the valley of the Hokitika River in one day.

Road to Upper Ashley.—This road-line has been graded throughout for twenty-eight miles, and formed as a bridle-track along the sidlings. It is now being widened as a dray road from the quarries near Macfarlane's station, across the Kuku Pass, to Waipara Valley. It is desirable to extend the widening until the road is fairly into the valleys behind the front range. The land in this part of Canterbury is still withheld from sale.

Westland.—It is proposed to continue the main road-line from Lake Mapourika to Gillespie's Beach, and from Moeraki River to the mouth of Waita River, about six miles from the Haast River. If these sections were completed the line of road, or rather bridle-track, from Hokitika to Jackson's Bay, and to Otago *via* Haast Pass and Lake Wanaka, would be opened throughout. This is a line of communication through an almost uninhabited country, in which the explorer is met with formidable rivers and impenetrable forests. It is of great moment, more especially in the interests of mining, that the line be opened out, so that the country may be prospected. A graded survey line has been run through it, and the Survey Department is in possession of full information from which to set out the construction works.

There is about five miles of road now being formed by the County Council, under the oversight of the Chief Surveyor, from Dilman's Town, up the Teremakau Valley, to the Christchurch Road. It runs through some very good timber; and the effect of opening the road will be to start one or two sawmills, and promote the settlement of persons along the line, as well as be advantageous to the homestead and other settlers on both sides of the Teremakau, who will then have direct access to Kumara. As the line is on good grades, it is possible it may become the coach route from Canterbury to Kumara.

Otago.—Beaumont to Miller's Flat.—A line of road up the east bank of the Clutha has long been projected. It has been made from Miller's Flat down to the Horseshoe Bend, but there are still a few miles in the gorge to be made before connection is complete. Until this is done a very considerable area of excellent pastoral country is completely shut in, and, while it remains in this condition, can only be let in one large run, the lease of which expires in March, 1883. If the road were made the country could be advantageously let in several holdings. It is only from thirteen to twenty miles distant from Lawrence.

Road to open Run No. 106.—By direction of the Land Board, this run of about 6,000 acres is to be surveyed, in small-sized sections. The land is good, although considerably diversified by gullies and spurs. One of the drawbacks to its settlement is the hilly nature of the road connecting with the railway system at Lawrence or Waitahuna, about ten miles distant. A new line of road, much better in this respect, can be made; and arrangements for taking it partly through private property without compensation have been agreed on, contingent on approval of vote.

Road through Gorge to Block X., Benger.—This is to give access to back country on Run No. 200 by a level road, instead of a steep ascent and descent over an intervening ridge. The back country on Run No. 200 is excellent. The present lease expires in March, 1883.

Other Roads in Otago and Southland.—Consequent on the disposal of the 3,011,000 acres, there are many points where the expenditure of a few hundred pounds in sidings, cuttings, and formation, would enable the country to be subdivided in much smaller areas than otherwise; but, until it is finally decided what is to be done with the country, these works need not be particularized.

Southland.—Seaward Country.—Four or five miles of road were made from Woodend Railway-station into this hitherto uninhabited country. All the land along the line has been taken up, and there are now eight or nine settlers resident there in their own houses. There is a demand for more land by others, who wish to settle likewise. It is proposed to carry the road through to the beach; when that is done, the road will become the most direct line from Toetoes to Invercargill; also to run a trial line through from Bay Bush to a union with the other line near to the beach. This will be a good opening of the country, and a fair commencement in the settlement of 40,000 acres of Crown lands.

COAL ON CROWN LANDS.

The steam and smithy coal deposits worked at Kawakawa, Brunnerton near Greymouth, and the Waimangaroa, near Westport, are all on Crown lands. The royalty of 6d. a ton on output, and the rents from these mines, amounted to £3,500 last year. This will increase from year to year, as the mines get more developed. In the Waimangaroa basin, the Westport Colliery Company have done a vast deal of work in opening their mine. It is about 2,000 feet above the sea level, and 1,800 feet above the termination of railway line to Westport. The incline tramway connecting the mine level with the railway is a novelty in New Zealand. It is 87 chains long, with grades 1 to 1·2, 1 to 4, and 1 to 8. The descent of the loaded waggons gives motive-power to pull up the empty ones, and powerful hydraulic brakes on the drums regulates the coiling and uncoiling of the steel wire-ropes, and, consequently, the speed of the wagons. The output is about 100 tons a day, but it will be greatly increased after the mine is properly opened out. At present the workings are in an outlying portion of the field, which it is necessary to tunnel through before the main body of the coal can be reached. The coal deposits are of vast extent and thickness, and have been variously estimated at from 70 to 140 million tons, in the Waimangaroa basin and adjacent country.

On the opposite and north side of the Waimangaroa River an incline tramway is being made to the mine of the Koranui Company, which is also situated high up on the mountain side.

In these deposits of steam coal in the North and Middle Islands, the colony has the motive-power of future ocean steam fleets of merchantmen, that will open up trade and rapid communication with foreign markets. Every ton of coal should carry a ton of preserved meat or other produce to Europe.

Including brown coal and lignite workings, there are seventy localities in the colony where coal is mined on Crown lands. Interesting statistics of the coal output, both on Crown and private lands, are given in the Mines Report by Mr. Wakefield, this year, from which it appears that, of a total of 299,923 tons raised in the colony, 166,456 tons were from Crown lands, while the output is steadily increasing from year to year, the import is as steadily decreasing, and the time is near when the colony will be self-supporting in coal.

HOT SPRINGS.

The geysers of Rotomahana, and hot baths of Rotorua and Waiwera, have so absorbed public attention that other hot springs which in a less favoured country would have been famous are scarcely ever heard of in New Zealand. From a little north of Napier, across the interior of the Island to Lake Taupo, and thence to Lake Rotorua, there are numerous hot springs, any one of which, in a populous country, would become the nucleus of a spa or sanitorium. The greater part of this country is still in the hands of the Natives, and there is therefore a great obstacle in the way of making suitable provision for the convenience of travellers, or of beautifying the vicinity of the springs with pleasure grounds. The Native Department, however, a few months ago, made arrangements with the Natives for a block on the shores of Lake Rotorua, at Ohinemutu, and a site for a township has been surveyed and marked off in streets, residence areas, and reserves for public gardens.

On the Crown lands at Te Aroha, near the banks of the Thames River, there are hot springs which have recently come into notice, from the opening up of that country by settlement and roads. A reservation has been made of the surrounding grounds, and it is proposed to let the reserve with the springs for a term of years, subject to condition guaranteeing privacy and moderate charges to those using the springs.

In the Middle Island, at Hanmer Plains, Amuri, at an elevation of about 1,300 feet above the sea level, and about 82 miles north of Christchurch, 32 miles by rail and 50 miles by coach, there are hot springs which have long enjoyed a local celebrity for their healing virtues. Until recently they were difficult of access, but the railway to Amberley and its further extension northwards, now in progress, has brought the Hanmer Plains within easy reach of the populous parts of the colony. The springs are situated on a reserve of 2,560 acres of Crown lands. A survey officer is now inspecting the ground, with instructions to report on the best manner of laying off a township or village in the close vicinity of the springs. An ample space will, of course, be reserved around them, so as to ensure privacy and freedom from any contamination. The control and management of these springs will be a matter for future consideration.

GENERAL.

There were for the twelve months ended 31st March last an area of 448,463 acres of Native Land-purchase blocks proclaimed Crown lands. As the area disposed of during the same period was 239,664 acres, there is a gain in the total area of Crown lands, which, in round numbers, comprise nearly 34,000,000 acres. Of this, 9,000,000 acres are worthless for settlement, consisting of barren mountain tops and lakes. Of the 25,000,000 acres left, one-half is presently let on pastoral leases, and the greater part of the other half is under forest. Leaving the Otago runs out of consideration, and some similar open country in Canterbury and Southland, we have to look to the North Island as the place where settlement on the small farm scale, of from 50 to 320 acres, is likely to be most active during the next year or two. The settler in the North Island has much to contend with, in the fern, and bush, and swamp; but there is a kindliness in the climate that makes amends for much, and, once the grass takes, the hard work is forgotten. It is a country that greatly wants opening; and there are many warm interior valleys where sub-tropical fruits would flourish, and where a large population might find a home and livelihood on a comparatively small area.

In the administration of so vast an estate as the Crown lands, the functions of the department need not be restricted to the mere passive sale of so many acres of land, but should be aggressive, in the sense of opening the lands by roads and surveys; and, having opened them, make known their qualities, whether of soil, timber, or mineral products, by the publication of maps and Crown Land Guides, and, on occasion, assist in the collection and dissemination of information bearing on the introduction of new industries, such as silk, olive, and vine culture, all of which have a direct bearing on the settlement of Crown lands.

DEPARTMENTAL.

The creation of the West Coast Land District (North Island), necessitated a slight addition to the number of assistants, but this was more than counterbalanced by the saving in work effected by the "Land Transfer Act Amendment Act, 1880." It provides for certificate of title taking the place of Crown grant, and the issue of certificates by the Land Transfer Department. In two of the Land Offices this has had the effect of enabling them to do with one officer less, and as the system gets fully into work more saving will be effected. The descriptions in titles have also been shortened; and, as between three and four thousand titles are issued each year, and two copies of each are prepared—under the old system three were required—any simplification tells in the aggregate. The saving, once the system is in full operation, may amount to upwards of £1,000 a year. It will also have the effect of expediting the issue of titles. There is nothing else requiring particular notice.

I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the cordial co-operation of the Commissioners of Crown Lands, and of my associate, Mr. Elliott, and the ready assistance of all the other officers of the department.

General Crown Lands Office,
Wellington, 18th July, 1881.

J. MCKERROW.

No. 1.—SUMMARY OF LANDS DISPOSED OF from the Foundation of the Colony, with Total Cash Received for Twelve Months ended 31st March, 1881.

Land District.	Total Area Sold.			Total Area Granted or Reserved under Acts.			Total Area Sold, or Otherwise Disposed of from the Foundation of the Colony*.			Total Cash Received.			Total Area open for Selection on 31st March, 1881.			Total Area remaining for Future Disposal, exclusive of Area in preceding Column and of Native Lands.		
	A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.
Auckland
Hawke's Bay
Taranaki
West Coast (North Island)
Wellington
Nelson
Marlborough
Canterbury
Westland
Otago
Southland
Totals

* Original land records lost in fire.

† 1,161,439 acres of confiscated lands disposed of, but not included in returns of former years, has been given for this year.

No. 2.—SUMMARY OF EXTENT OF CROWN LANDS ABSOLUTELY DISPOSED OF for Cash, Scrip, or in any other manner, during the Year ended 31st March, 1881.

LAND DISTRICT.	LANDS SOLD.										LANDS DISPOSED OF WITHOUT SALE.	
	Number of Acres.					Rate per Acre.					Consideration.	
	Town.	Suburban.	Number of Purchases.	Country.	Number of Purchases.	Town.	Suburban.	Country.	Cash.	Scrip.	By Grants or in any other manner.	
Auckland	A. R. P.	A. R. P.		A. R. P.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	A. R. P.	
Hawke's Bay	56 3 11	215 0 16	91	66,205 1 0	143	45 2 6	4 1 6	0 7 9½	25,793 11 0	3,456 6 3	4,704 3 23	
Taranaki	7 1 10	97 3 22	15	3,319 0 39	12	48 13 8	3 6 9	0 17 6	2,622 16 1	974 8 10	870 0 17	
West Coast (North Island)	14 3 0	23 3 26	27	1,068 0 39	16	42 10 0	7 0 0	1 18 3½	1,778 2 10	...	778 2 1	
Wellington	81 2 0	227 2 37	295	14,313 3 8	225	80 0 0	11 0 0	5 10 0	88,683 11 6	...	2,186 0 0	
Nelson	3 0 0	36 2 22	4	15,191 1 37	60	62 10 0	5 13 0	1 4 10	13,623 9 0	5,639 14 0	27,059 3 17	
Marlborough	3 0 23	9 0 18	3	2,267 2 11	20	51 0 0	3 3 0	0 12 0	1,542 0 0	...	340 0 9	
Canterbury	0 2 0	27 0 0	1	1,216 1 39	3	30 0 0	3 0 0	0 19 3	1,262 9 11	...	1,163 1 33	
Westland	23 2 35	42 3 18	95	20,710 3 19	289	64 0 10	13 8 4	2 2 3	45,793 16 5	...	717 0 11	
Otago	5 3 31	...	35	595 2 14	13	40 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	832 3 0	...	17 3 23	
Southland	31 0 20	150 0 23	71	53,599 1 17	307	62 0 0	5 9 0	1 5 1	70,126 3 7	88 2 6	3,011 1 28	
Totals	46 3 34	340 2 2	61	17,142 1 12	67	42 2 6	4 8 6	1 3 9	23,838 13 3	...	1,739 0 0	
	274 3 4	1,170 3 24	711	195,630 0 35	1,155	...	...	...	275,896 16 7	10,158 11 7	42,588 1 2	

No. 3.—SUMMARY of LAND SELECTED up to the 31st March, 1881.

Nature of Selections—whether Agricultural lease, Deferred Payment, or as the case may be.	No. of Applications made.	No. Approved.	Area Selected.		Average to each Selection.		Fees Payable Yearly.		Rents Paid.	Total Land Granted for Conditions fulfilled up to Date.		Total Land Forfeited for breach of Conditions up to Date.		
			A.	R. P.	A.	R. P.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	A.	R. P.	A.	R. P.
Selected up to 31st March, 1880.														
Auckland,—														
Agricultural lease ...	190	116	5,079	2 39	43	3 6	254	0 0	959	18 0	5,079	2 39	900	0 0
Homestead selections ...	240	240	42,376	1 0	176	0 0	...	...	...	...	530	0 0	665	2 0
Hawke's Bay,—														
Deferred payments ...	435	432	36,335	2 6	84	0 17	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,244	2 5
Immigrants, under "Immigrants Land Act, 1873"	6	6	213	2 0	35	2 13	...	...	...	...	142	0 0	42	0 0
Taranaki,—														
Deferred payments ...	451	287	24,818	0 24	86	2 0	2,934	6 6	9,042	2 2	...	...	...	...
West Coast (North Island),—														
Deferred payments ...	53	53	6,869	3 20	130	0 0	2,303	17 4	...	...	...	...	407	2 0
Wellington,—														
Deferred payments ...	282	262	59,539	0 34	227	1 0	2,223	4 10	53,000	3 5	50,303	2 35	100	0 0
Nelson,—														
Under Leasing Acts ...	...	274	42,645	2 29	155	0 0	905	12 4	...	...	15,699	0 0	19,736	2 27
Under 10 per cent. clauses ...	2,111	124	13,352	2 24	106	0 0	1,067	12 11	...	...	...	...	845	2 27
Under reserves ...	...	7	6,625	0 2	946	0 0	52	9 8	...	...	...	...	...	...
Under mineral leases ...	...	21	9,133	2 18	434	0 0	2,005	17 6	...	...	...	...	4,585	3 15
Marlborough,—														
Deferred payments ...	5	5	316	3 35	63	1 23	57	12 0	...	...	...	...	29	0 0
Immigrants, under "Immigrants Land Act, 1873"	1	1	17	0 0	17	0 0	...	...	...	...	17	0 0	...	...
Canterbury,—														
Deferred payments ...	2	2	640	0 0	320	0 0	192	0 0	144	0 0	...	...	320	0 0
Under "Public Reserves Sale Act, 1878"	40	40	1,253	2 38	31	1 15	914	16 4	578	4 5	...	...	48	3 28
Westland,—														
Deferred payments ...	30	30	1,695	3 4	56	2 0	222	1 0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Otago,—														
Deferred payments ...	4,848	1,389	172,149	3 31	123	3 30	29,962	0 1	82,774	0 8	35,797	3 1	24,853	1 16
Agricultural lease ...	5,683	3,903	251,105	1 34	64	1 13	9,629	8 6	97,284	1 7	100,071	0 29	11,403	3 12
Southland,—														
Deferred payments ...	739	423	54,563	0 33	129	0 0	8,986	15 0	10,102	10 8	4,005	2 29	5,336	3 0
Total ...	15,116	7,615	728,731	1 11	...	...	61,711	14 0	253,885	0 11	211,646	0 23	71,519	2 10
Selected up to 31st March, 1881.														
Auckland,—														
Agricultural lease ...	15	15	750	0 0	50	0 0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Homestead selections ...	69	69	11,044	0 0	160	0 0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Deferred payments ...	167	94	12,492	1 0	133	0 0	2,195	19 2	1,404	17 7	...	...	...	...
Hawke's Bay,—														
Deferred payments ...	44	41	3,526	0 23	86	0 0	420	1 4	5,081	14 3	6,127	3 28	1,240	0 6
Immigrants, under "Immigrants Land Act, 1873"	2	2	22	0 26	11	0 13	26	13 3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Taranaki,—														
Deferred payments ...	256	147	15,513	2 25	105	2 0	2,968	6 0	5,848	17 5	295	1 12	761	3 17
West Coast (North Island),—														
Deferred payments ...	518	148	9,021	3 18	62	0 0	4,953	11 4	6,648	18 3	...	...	...	...
Wellington,—														
Deferred payments ...	107	73	9,030	0 29	123	2 32	4,341	17 9	3,704	2 9	...	...	103	3 39
Nelson,—														
Under Leasing Acts ...	...	12	1,931	1 16	161	0 0	50	6 9	...	...	1,773	3 0	4,777	0 35
Under 10 per cent. clauses ...	119	104	8,669	0 5	85	0 0	840	1 6	...	...	...	...	812	3 28
Under reserves ...	...	8	104	0 0	13	0 0	23	5 0	...	...	...	...	...	...
Under mineral leases ...	...	5	165	0 32	35	0 0	27	11 0	...	...	...	...	88	0 0
Marlborough,—														
Deferred payments ...	6	6	598	3 38	99	3 13	60	4 0	53	12 0	...	...	29	0 0
Canterbury,—														
Deferred payments ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	96	0 0	...	...	...	...
Under "Public Reserves Sale Act, 1878"	152	152	1,816	3 36	11	3 22	1,253	2 4	1,575	18 3	...	...	32	3 16
Westland,—														
Deferred payments ...	10	10	750	3 13	75	0 0	80	0 8	724	6 2	...	...	...	...
Homestead selections ...	8	8	940	0 0	117	2 0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Otago,—														
Deferred payments, licenses ...	142	86	18,422	2 36	214	1 0	3,407	3 6	*18,465	17 0	12,304	3 27	2,078	1 11
Deferred payments, pastoral do.	22	15	29,007	1 34	1,934	0 0	2,237	19 6	2,362	17 10	...	...	...	...
Deferred payments, exchange do.	39	39	5,400	1 12	139	0 0	811	6 6	1,781	4 9	2,839	1 1	...	...
Deferred payments, suburban do.	23	16	109	1 20	6	3 13	98	8 6	89	11 7	...	...	...	...
Agricultural lease ...	77	59	9,032	2 10	102	0 39	755	10 0	6,457	1 1	17,353	1 19	3,722	0 10
Southland,—														
Deferred payments ...	267	201	30,014	2 33	149	0 4	2,538	1 9	3,040	1 1	7,209	2 9	2,303	2 22
Totals...	2,043	1,310	165,363	3 6	...	...	27,134	9 10	60,163	13 2	47,904	0 16	15,949	3 24
Totals under previous transactions	15,116	7,615	728,731	1 11	...	...	61,711	14 0	253,885	0 11	211,646	0 23	71,519	2 10
Totals	17,159	8,925	894,095	0 17	...	...	88,846	3 10	314,048	14 1	259,550	0 39	87,469	1 34

* Includes £3,895 13s. 7d. collected at District Land Offices.

No. 4.—PARTICULARS of Applications to Exchange AGRICULTURAL LEASES on DEFERRED PAYMENTS, and to Convert LEASEHOLDS into FREEHOLDS, during the Twelve Months ended 31st March, 1881.

To Exchange Agricultural Leases on Deferred Payments.*			To Convert Leaseholds into Freeholds.†			
Land Districts.	No. of Applications.	Extent.	No. of Applications.	Extent.	Value of Improvements.	Extent Cultivated.
		A. R. P.		A. R. P.	£ s. d.	A. R. P.
Nelson ... ..	...	...	6	1,777 3 0	...	...
Otago	39	5,400 1 12	235	27,147 1 10	...	...
Southland ... ..	...	...	58	7,209 2 9	8,334 0 0	767 0 0
Totals	39	5,400 1 12	299	36,134 2 19	8,334 0 0	767 0 0

* No applications were received from the following Land Districts: Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, West Coast (North Island), Wellington, Nelson, Marlborough, Canterbury, Westland, and Southland.

† No applications were received from the following Land Districts: Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, West Coast (North Island), Wellington, Marlborough, Canterbury, and Westland.

No. 5.—NUMBER and AREA of PASTORAL LICENSES issued during the Year ended 31st March, 1881.

Land District.	Number of Holders.	Area.	Number of Stock.	Rent.	License Fees (if any).	Total Rent per Acre per Year.
		A. R. P.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Auckland	4	23,900 0 0	Not known	84 0 0	Nil	$\frac{3}{4}$ d.
Nelson	14	77,261 0 0	"	542 11 8	"	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 32,937 \text{ acres at } \frac{3}{4}\text{d.} \\ 41,936 \text{ acres at } 2\text{d.} \\ 2,928 \text{ acres at } 6\text{d.} \end{array} \right.$
Marlborough	1	1,950 0 0	280	8 2 6	"	1d.
Westland	23	333,000 0 0	Not known	358 0 0	"	$\frac{1}{4}$ d.
Otago	30	588,863 0 0	"	*3,131 18 7	"	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1\frac{1}{4}\text{d.} \\ 6,720 \text{ acres at } 2\text{d.} \\ 4,980 \text{ acres at } 2\frac{1}{2}\text{d.} \\ 7,700 \text{ acres at } 2\frac{3}{4}\text{d.} \end{array} \right.$
Southland	4	19,400 0 0	"	125 0 5	"	...
Totals	76	1,044,374 0 0	...	4,249 13 2	...	...

* Of this £2,940 15s. 10d. was collected within the year.

NOTE.—No pastoral licenses were issued during the year in Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, West Coast (North Island) Wellington, and Canterbury.

No. 6.—LANDS held under PASTORAL LICENSE or LEASE on 31st March, 1881.

Land Districts.	No. of Holders.	Area Approximately.	Average Area to each.	Stock Depastured.	Rent Paid.	License Fees and Fines.	Total Payments.	Average per Acre.
		A.	A. R. P.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Auckland	21	168,215	8,010 0 0	Not known	306 10 0	Nil	306 10 0	$\frac{1}{4}$ d.
Hawke's Bay	11	91,500	8,318 0 0	36,250	321 16 2	"	321 16 2	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 64,800 \text{ acres at } \frac{3}{4}\text{d.} \\ 26,700 \text{ acres at } 1\text{d.} \end{array} \right.$
Wellington	1	500	500 0 0	800 sheep	52 0 0	...	52 0 0	2s. 1d.
Nelson	109	602,587	5,528 0 0	Not known	4,742 7 2	...	...	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 176,285 \text{ acres at } 1\text{d.} \\ 426,302 \text{ acres at } 2\text{d.} \end{array} \right.$
Marlborough	71	1,072,388	15,104 0 0	151,000	4,401 17 11	...	4,401 17 11	1d.
Canterbury	374	2,909,274	7,779 0 0	1,179,900	53,536 10 11	34 19 3	53,571 10 2	$\frac{1}{4}$ d.
Westland	43	514,070	12,000 0 0	Not known	537 6 10	...	537 6 10	$\frac{1}{4}$ d.
Otago—								
Under Land Act, 1866	163	5,055,613	31,016 0 0	1,490,224	44,016 5 6	...	44,016 5 6	2d.
" " 1877	93	1,318,286	14,218 0 0	...	5,195 10 5	...	5,195 10 5	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Wakatipu Runs, under Regulations, 1874	5	115,300	23,060 0 0	...	Nil	...	...	...
Southland	55	534,881	9,725 1 3	599,986	4,657 19 2	...	4,657 19 2	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 527,181 \text{ acres at } 2\text{d.} \\ 7,700 \text{ acres at } 2\frac{1}{4}\text{d.} \end{array} \right.$
Totals	946	12,382,614	...	...	117,768 3 3	34 19 3	117,803 2 6	...

No. 7.—NUMBER and AREA of LEASES and LICENSES, other than AGRICULTURAL and PASTORAL issued during the Year ended 31st March, 1881, and REVENUE therefrom.

Land District.							Area Leased.		Rent.		
							A.	R. P.	£	s.	d.
Auckland	...	...	...	...	...	...	89,387	1 15	1,264	2	0
Hawke's Bay	...	...	...	...	...	...	235	1 13	8	2	6
Taranaki	...	...	...	...	...	...	37	2 3	34	11	6
West Coast (North Island)	...	...	...	...	...	...	69	3 0	17	10	0
Wellington	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	0 0	8	0	0
Nelson	...	...	...	...	...	...	190	0 32	32	11	0
Marlborough	...	...	...	...	...	}	1,671	1 24	35	0	0
							69	0 9	A tithe of 6d. per 100 ft. £5 first 3 years; £10 next 5 years; £15 next 6 yrs.		
							*252	0 0			
Canterbury	...	...	...	...	...	}	†600	0 0	2	10	0
							†950	0 0	3	19	2
							†300	0 0	1	5	0
Westland	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	0 0	72	0	0
Otago	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,501	0 32	347	7	0
Southland	...	...	...	...	...	...	12,122	3 31	1,953	8	2
Total							110,397	2 39	...		

* Oyster fishery. † Mineral leases.

No. 8.—NUMBER of LICENSES REVOKED during the Year ended 31st March, 1881.

Land District.	Description of License Forfeited or Revoked.	At Licensee's Request.	For Non-payment of Fees or Rent.	Non-compliance with and Violation of Conditions.	Total Number.	Extent.		
							A.	R. P.
Hawke's Bay	Deferred payments	...	2	...	2	160	2	20
Taranaki	" "	...	2	2	4	683	1	17
Nelson	License	1	...	...	1	3,300	0	0
Marlborough	{ Pastoral licenses	...	3	}	4	8,529 0 0		
	{ Deferred payment	...	1					
Canterbury	Pastoral	...	44	...	44	122,664	0	0
Westland	Mineral leases	...	11	...	11	4,631	0	0
Otago	Deferred payments	...	...	11	11	2,078	1	11
Southland	" "	5	11	...	16	2,303	2	22
Total		6	74	13	93	144,349	3	30

No. 9.—RETURN of CROWN GRANTS dealt with in the General Crown Lands Department during the Twelve Months ended 31st March, 1881.

Draft Grants Received	...	3,653	Corrected	...	...	9
Executed and Despatched	...	4,822	Antevested	...	...	14
Cancelled, and Others Issued in lieu thereof	46		Duplicates Issued	...	...	5

By Authority : GEORGE DIDSBUY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1881.