

now no doubt about the ultimate success of the settlement. The Ranger reports that a considerable amount of clearing and fencing is going on, and that a large area will probably be cleared during the coming winter. The settlers are all working-men for the most part with previous experience, and none of them are in arrears with their rentals.

W. G. MURRAY,  
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

#### CROWN LANDS RANGER'S REPORT.

During the year the amount of timber cut has considerably increased, in consequence of the large export trade carried on. The returns attached do not represent the whole of the timber cut and exported from this district, as there are five large mills working on freehold property. Of all the timber exported last year, the greater portion was cut in the Nelson District, and during the last six months another mill has been erected, capable of cutting 100,000 ft. a month. The mills at Reefton and Westport cut for local requirements only. The number of mills now working is twenty-one, employing about 170 men, and five others on freehold property engage about sixty men.

Holdings under lease in perpetuity and occupation with right of purchase are in a very satisfactory condition. The improvements are well up to the requirements of the Act. I have made two inspections during the year.

The land taken up as temporary grazing-leases is being improved by bushfelling and grassing.

J. SMITH,  
Crown Lands Ranger.

#### *Timber cut on Crown Lands, Westland.*

Red-pine, 569,252 ft., at 3d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £71 3s. Silver-pine, 594,702 ft., at 6d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £148 13s. 6d. Total royalties, £219 16s. 6d.

#### *Timber cut on Mining Blocks, Westland.*

Red-pine, 1,650,613 ft., at 3d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £206 6s. 6d. Silver-pine, 57,999 ft.; royalty, £14 10s. Total royalties, £220 16s. 6d.

*Number of Sleepers cut in Westland District: 25,216.*

#### *Timber cut on Crown Lands, Nelson.*

Red-pine, 4,648,306 ft., at 3d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £581 0s. 9d. Silver-pine, 461,817 ft., at 6d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £115 9s. 2d.; black-pine, 21,821 ft., at 6d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £5 9s. 2d. Total royalties, £701 19s. 1d.

#### *Timber cut on Mining Blocks, Nelson.*

Red-pine, 1,117,850 ft., at 3d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £139 14s. 8d.; silver-pine, 79,174 ft., at 6d. per 100 ft.; royalties, £19 16s. Total royalties, £159 10s. 8d.

#### *Timber cut on Grey Coal Reserve.*

Red-pine, 536,941 ft., at 3d. and 6d. per 100 ft.; royalty, £87 17s.

*Number of Sleepers cut in Nelson District: 23,740.*

#### CANTERBURY.

*Lands offered during the Year.*—Besides the lands which have been offered for disposal in terms of the Land for Settlements Acts, the Crown lands which have been offered during the year may be summarised as follows:—

*Pastoral Runs.*—Twelve runs, comprising a total area of 232,599 acres. These comprised some of the lands north of the Rakaia River, which had been classified by the Run Classification Commissioners in January, 1896, as pastoral agricultural lands, but which, owing to the still pending claims of the Midland Railway Company, could only be reoffered under the pastoral-license system. There were also runs situated in the Waimate, Mackenzie, and Vincent Counties, South Canterbury, which had been surrendered, and abandoned by the lessees, owing to losses of stock and financial difficulties. These were reoffered at reduced annual rentals.

*Small Grazing-runs.*—Twelve runs, comprising 42,508 acres. With the exception of one run at Ashley Gorge, these runs were situated in South Canterbury, near Burke's Pass, Cave, and Hakataramea, being sections which had been surrendered by former lessees on account of excessive rents, and which were then reoffered at reduced valuations.

*On the Optional System.*—Ten sections, comprising 6,053 acres, situated at different parts of the district.

*On the Lease-in-perpetuity System only.*—These comprised six allotments, of 347 acres, on the Cheviot Estate; one allotment, of 300 acres, at Lake Ellesmere; and fourteen village-homestead allotments, aggregating 240 acres, situated in South Canterbury, and comprising principally forfeited holdings.

*Cash Lands offered at Auction.*—Under this system were offered two allotments of rural land in North Canterbury, comprising 24 acres; also sections in the Townships of Mackenzie, Rakaia, Ashburton, Hinds, South Rangitata, Arundel, Geraldine, Waimate, and the Makarora Village.