

The selections made under a few special clauses of the Act have been as follows :—

	Under Section 114.		Under Section 115.		Under Section 117.		Under Section 13, of Act of 1895.	
	Num-ber.	Area.	Num-ber.	Area.	Num-ber.	Area.	Num-ber.	Area.
		Acres.		Acres.		Acres.		Acres.
Lease in perpetuity	10	794	31	7,005	..	..	..	..
Occupation with right of purchase ..	1	150	..	..	..	..	..	..
Perpetual lease	5	67	..	..	..	..	..	..
Small grazing-runs .. .. .	..	..	3	1,590	..	..	..	..
Cash .. .. .	..	..	3	465	12	186	..	..
Village-homestead : Lease in perpetuity ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	158

NOTE.—The above figures are also included in the general tables.

For purposes of comparison, the figures in the first table may be brought together under a few headings, as below, which, however, exclude miscellaneous and temporary leases, endowments, &c., but include the Cheviot and the Land for Settlements Estates :—

Tenure.	1896.		1897.		1898.	
	Number.	Area.	Number.	Area.	Number.	Area.
		Acres.		Acres.		Acres.
Cash	492	26,584	392	28,489	274	22,526
Deferred payment	6	455	..	..	..	..
Perpetual lease	7	1,427	19	9,106	2	651
Occupation with right of purchase ..	484	84,970	281	59,652	382	81,416
Lease in perpetuity	1,461	199,098	966	139,571	782	128,855
Pastoral runs	188	2,156,378	156	1,256,706	209	2,139,872
Occupation and agricultural leases, Mining Acts	72	2,967	50	2,830	28	1,542
	2,660	2,471,879	1,864	1,496,354	1,677	2,374,862

In comparing the actual number of selectors during the last year with those of the preceding one there is found to be a slight decrease; thus selections under all headings for 1897 were 2,173, for 1898 they were 2,058. The decline last year was principally under the head of cash purchasers and lease in perpetuity selectors; whilst, on the other hand, those who selected with a right of purchase are in excess of those of 1897, as are the purchasers of pastoral leases. If from the total number of selectors and purchasers (2,058) are deducted those who took up town, suburban, pastoral, and miscellaneous leases, but including small grazing-run holders, we shall get 1,396 selectors who took up lands subject to conditions of improvement and residence, and who presumably may be looked on as so many persons intending to permanently settle on the lands. Against this number (which is five more than for the previous year) the forfeitures and surrenders under the above systems, amounting to 658, might be placed; but this would not show what may be termed the balance of new settlers, for nearly the whole of the forfeitures, &c., refer to transactions entered into in previous years. The practical test in this matter is the answer to the question whether more land is being brought under cultivation, and are the people spreading out into the virgin lands year by year. Any one who takes the trouble to visit the out-districts will at once see that large areas are constantly being newly occupied, and that roads are being formed in parts of the country that a few years since were unknown. The extension of settlement towards the central parts of the North Island has been phenomenal within the last few years.

The average-sized farm taken up last year, excluding town, suburban, village lots, pastoral, and miscellaneous, was 190 acres; the average for 1897 being 138 acres, and for 1896 162 acres. In cases under the optional clauses of the Act, where the selector himself determines the area of his selection within the limits allowed by law, the average-sized farm was 222 acres; the average for 1897 being 220 acres.

The following is a summary of the lands of all descriptions taken up for the last ten years :—

Year.	Number of Selectors or Purchasers.	Area taken up during the Year.	Territorial Revenue.	Total Revenue collected.	Number of Crown Tenants on the Books.
		Acres.	£	£	
1888-89	2,529	2,313,611	310,061	Not given.	Not given.
1889-90	2,653	4,155,472	304,842	322,885	12,164
1890-91	2,420	2,154,138	352,417	364,938	11,995
1891-92	2,519	1,453,082	320,483	324,470	12,735
1892-93	3,071	1,663,339	274,399	310,523	14,261
1893-94	2,876	1,393,918	282,067	347,343	15,081
1894-95	2,547	1,015,577	338,166	375,879	15,326
1895-96	2,865	2,662,344	291,673	345,331	15,633
1896-97	2,173	1,600,695	272,954	360,993	15,527
1897-98	2,058	2,451,062	263,296	359,086	16,365