

involved in gazetting, publishing sale-plans, &c., frequently means that by the time applications are receivable the valuations originally fixed have become excessive owing to the depreciation of improvements, and consequently the sections are not readily selected. A statement of Crown lands available for disposal at the 31st March, 1898, is appended.

*Departmental.*—During the year forty-two ordinary and special meetings of the Land Board have been held, at all of which large measures of work have been dealt with, the examination of applicants under the land-for-settlements regulations involving a considerable amount of extra work. The number of statutory applications lodged for lands offered for selection was 1,197, of which 218 were granted. The amount of clerical work transacted in the office may be represented by the following approximate figures: 21,000 letters received and despatched, including ordinary correspondence, rent notices, circulars, returns, &c.; 10,000 lithographs and sale-pamphlets distributed; 900 vouchers, dealing with an expenditure of about £38,000, and 700 cheques, representing an Imprest Account of £7,500, were passed through the Accountant's Office. In the Receiver of Land Revenue's Office, besides the revenue actually received, a sum of £30,936 was passed through the Deposit Account, 4,587 receipts given for payments, 4,988 refund vouchers with notices to depositors and Postmasters issued, 553 cheques drawn on Deposit Accounts, &c.

SUMMARY OF CROWN LANDS RANGERS' REPORTS ON SETTLEMENT HOLDINGS for the Year ended 31st March, 1898.

Tenure.	Number of Leases or Licenses.	Area.			Value of Improvements.						Number of Hold- ings resided on.	Number of Hold- ings not resided on.	Number of Partial Defaulters.	Number of Total Defaulters.
					Required.			Effected.						
Deferred payment...	25	12,335	0	0	2,067	17	0	5,450	1	0	14	11	...	1
Perpetual lease ...	53	1,264	3	30	1,172	10	0	2,893	5	0	39	14	13	...
Occupation with right of purchase	3	334	0	34	66	8	10	71	0	0	1	2	1	...
Lease in perpetuity	102	16,645	3	10	6,742	8	9	7,040	6	9	65	37	34	11
Village homestead...	204	6,048	2	31	1,472	5	2	14,893	18	1	163	41	13	...
Farm homestead ...	12	1,651	0	0	1,453	8	0	1,052	0	0	2	10	...	...
Small grazing-runs	29	71,856	0	0	15,721	7	2	16,865	5	7	22	7	6	...
Cheviot Estate—														
Lease in perpetuity	116	23,928	0	0	6,042	9	4	23,089	0	0	99	17	8	...
Village homestead	91	2,486	0	0	845	8	10	5,443	0	0	79	12	5	...
Grazing-farms ...	31	44,880	0	0	9,143	0	0	10,846	0	0	29	2	3	...
Land for settle- ments	416	56,532	3	7	5,025	11	3	34,593	9	4	259	157*	29	...
Totals ...	1,082	237,962	1	32	49,752	14	4	122,237	5	9	772	310	112	12

\* In the majority of these cases the first year's tenancy has not fully expired, so that they cannot be counted as actual defaulters.

AREA OF CROWN LANDS, CANTERBURY, available for SETTLEMENT, 31st March, 1898.

County.	System.		Area (First Class).			Area (Second Class).			Total Area.		
			A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.
Geraldine ...	Village allotments	...	1	0	0	...	...	...	1	0	0
Ashburton ...	Village-homestead allotments	...	71	2	0	...	...	...	205	3	26
Geraldine ...	"	...	54	1	26	...	...	...			
Waimate ...	"	...	80	0	0	...	...	...			
Selwyn ...	Rural land under Part III. of the Land Act	...	338	0	0	...	...	...	4,598	3	37
Ashburton ...	Ditto	...	306	0	0	1,399	2	11			
Geraldine ...	"	...	178	3	19	1,369	2	7			
Mackenzie ...	"	...	...	...	...	990	0	0			
Waimate ...	"	...	...	...	...	17	0	0	6,071	0	0
"	Small grazing-runs	...	...	...	...	6,071	0	0			
Selwyn ...	Land for settlement	...	11	2	4	...	...	...	125	2	2
Ashburton ...	"	...	40	0	0	...	...	...			
Waimate ...	"	...	73	3	38	...	...	...			
Totals ...	...	...	1,155	1	7	9,847	0	18	11,002	1	25

SIDNEY WEETMAN,  
Commissioner of Crown Lands.