

WESTLAND.

The transactions of all lands dealt with and in occupation during the past financial year are set out, as heretofore, in the subjoined table :—

SUMMARY OF LAND TRANSACTIONS DURING THE YEAR 1901-2.

Class of Selection.	Transactions during the Year.				Leasehold Area held on 31st March, 1902.				Revenue received during the Year.		
	Number.	Area.			Number.	Area.					
		A.	R.	P.		A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
Cash lands	42	4,683	2	0	...	...	...	...	3,547	15	4
Deferred payment ... ..	...	...	...	...	3	332	2	28	52	0	8
Deferred payment made free- hold	2	337	1	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Perpetual lease ... ..	...	...	...	...	7	580	1	8	22	17	0
Occupation with right of pur- chase	67	12,790	1	16	94	16,061	1	22	360	8	5
Lease in perpetuity	46	9,497	1	34	56	10,382	1	34	166	0	2
Lease in perpetuity, lands for settlement	1	190	2	0	18	2,971	2	0	267	10	5
Pastoral runs	13	75,998	0	0	81	577,638	0	0	576	6	11
Miscellaneous leases	67	13,758	0	10	140	14,205	3	24	52	10	6
Timber licenses ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	765	7	5
Crown-grant and license fees, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	112	6	0
Miscellaneous ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	52	16	11
- Total	238	117,255	0	20	399	622,172	0	36	5,975	19	9

It will be noted that there has been a considerable increase in the number of transactions and the revenue received during the year as compared with former periods. This is mainly due to the uplifting of the Midland Railway Company's reservation, which for so many years practically blotted out the greater portion of this district from settlement. The cession of 744,000 acres of the Nelson District and its addition to the Westland area has also tended to swell the business and income. This transfer took place on the 20th December last, and we have, therefore, had possession of the new territory for a little over three months.

The promotion of Mr. Murray to the Nelson office took place on the 1st February last, on which date this district came under my charge.

The whole of the Crown lands in Westland being a goldfield precludes much close settlement in the vicinity of the scattered diggings, and a large number of settlers have to be content with areas held under pastoral or occupation licenses, which are the only tenures permissible in the neighbourhood of gold-workings.

Cash Lands.—The area shown under this heading comprises various holdings all over the northern and middle districts which were purchased for the most part under "The Midland Authorised Area Land-settlement Act, 1900."

Deferred Payment.—Two holdings have been made freehold during the year, and only three selectors under this tenure remain on our books. Of these, two are fighting on under great difficulties, as the Teremakau River has for several years past continuously washed away and flooded large portions of their farms with silt, with the result that they are very much in arrears, and under the Act no real relief can be granted.

Occupation with Right of Purchase.—In comparison with former years there has been a marked preference for lands under this class, for out of 105 selectors under the optional system sixty-seven elected to hold under occupation with right of purchase, the undoubted reason for the preference being the eventual acquisition of the lands as freehold.

Lease in Perpetuity.—There are seventy-four selectors, occupying 13,354 acres, under this heading on the books. Forty-seven of these took up their holdings during the past year. The main total includes eighteen farmers who occupy 2,971 acres on the Poerua Estate under the Land for Settlements Act.

Pastoral Runs.—The area leased amounts to 577,638 acres, held by eighty-one holders, of whom twenty-six are lessees (under the 219th section of the Land Act) of small allotments, which are therefore classified as runs. These leaseholds, being considered more or less auriferous, are consequently only obtainable under this form.

Mining Districts Land Occupation Act.—Under this Act sixty-six holders are located on 13,348 acres, and principally in the Grey Valley, these leases having been granted by the Nelson Board as being the most convenient title for lands over which the Warden has refused his approval under any other tenure. This title was also given to many selectors within the Midland Railway