

MARLBOROUGH.

Table showing land transactions in the Land District of Marlborough for the year ending 31st March, 1903 :—

System.	Transactions during the Year.				Area under Lease at 31st March, 1903.				Revenue received during the Year.		
	Number.	Area.			Number.	Area.					
		A.	R.	P.		A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
Cash	14	484	0	7	...	...	...	...	*451	14	10
Deferred payment ... ..	...	...	...	...	6	342	2	26	33	10	8
Perpetual lease ... ..	...	...	...	...	10	1,747	0	7	54	2	4
Occupation with right of purchase	1	205	0	0	40	11,681	3	9	516	11	3
Lease in perpetuity	2	549	0	0	206	102,861	0	23	2,445	14	3
Occupation lease under Mining Districts Land Occupation Act	...	...	...	...	19	1,161	0	0	31	10	10
Village settlement—											
Deferred payment ... ..	...	...	...	...	2	20	2	20	2	11	6
Perpetual lease ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	10	0	0	1	17	6
Lease in perpetuity ... ..	...	...	...	...	8	152	2	35	21	19	4
Village - homestead special settlement	...	...	...	...	13	184	0	24	23	1	0
Small grazing-runs	11	47,132	2	0	111	195,106	0	16	2,388	11	2
Pastoral runs	4	136,000	0	0	77	825,485	0	0	4,175	5	0
Miscellaneous leases	12	25,420	0	24	89	35,472	1	30	1,424	3	6
Miscellaneous fees, &c. ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	148	6	3
Land for settlements—											
Lease in perpetuity	4	4,715	0	0	142	40,396	0	34	7,062	11	6
Small grazing-runs	2	3,595	2	0	†11	19,742	2	0	1,273	4	8
Miscellaneous	6	3,116	0	0	15	3,041	1	0	539	10	2
Totals	56	221,217	0	31	746	1,237,404	2	24	20,594	5	9

* Includes £50 for one perpetual lease made freehold.

† Four of these are included in the 111 ordinary small-grazing-run holders.

Village Settlements.—There are now twenty-four selectors, holding 367 acres; eighteen of these selectors reside on their holdings; 274 acres are laid down in pasture or cultivated. The value of improvements is £2,510.

Pastoral Runs.—There were four new runs taken up, with an area of 136,000 acres. Five runs expired, twelve were exchanged to lease in perpetuity, and three were surrendered, leaving a total area of 825,485 acres now in the occupation of seventy-seven holders.

Arrears.—Seventy selectors are in arrears with their rent to the extent of £2,532 16s. 1d. Of these, only seventeen, owing £190 2s. 8d., reside on ordinary Crown lands; the remainder are tenants on the various estates acquired under the Land for Settlements Act. The above amounts are much larger than they should be, as the season has been generally favourable throughout the district, with the exception of the neighbourhood of the Omaka Estate, which has suffered from the drought. (Since the 30th March the arrears on the land-for-settlement sections have been reduced from £2,342 to £1,920.)

Land for Future Settlement.—There is not much land now remaining for future settlement in this district. The principal areas to be opened during the ensuing year are two pastoral runs (114,424 acres) on the Birch Hill Block, one small grazing-run of 16,020 acres in Patriarch district, the Kaiuma Block of 2,392 acres, 2,466 acres near Waikakaho, 985 acres near Cullensville, and one small grazing-run of 3,385 acres on the North Bank Estate.

Land under Land for Settlements Acts.

Mr. Buckhurst, Crown Lands Ranger, reports as follows :—

Blind River Settlement.—Area, 5,507 acres; opened for selection in 1895. This estate is distributed amongst nineteen tenants, with holdings varying from 100 to 935 acres, all of whom have complied with the improvement conditions, the estimated value of the work effected being £5,771. The number of dwellinghouses has been reduced by two, through the grouping of some of the sections last year. There are sixty-nine souls residing in the seventeen houses. The stock on the estate consists of 6,500 sheep, 50 head of cattle, 33 horses, and a few pigs. Last lambing season gave only moderate results, the cold snaps of south-east weather were severe on the young lambs; still 75 per cent. cannot be termed a bad average. Cropping was not done to any large extent: 186 acres was in grain, and 150 acres in roots, including onions—for which the land is especially adapted. Lucerne was successfully grown on 40 acres, and will become more general in future. The dams made for the conservation of water proved of considerable value during the dry season, and more are being constructed. This settlement feels the benefit of the Picton-Seddon Railway: fat sheep and lambs can be sent to Picton and arrive in prime condition the same day. The settlers