

1905.
NEW ZEALAND.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON LAND TENURE AND SETTLEMENT

(INDEX AND SYNOPSIS TO REPORT, &c.).

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REPORT OF THE LAND COMMISSION, NOTES, ETC., REGARDING.

CONSTITUTION OF LAND BOARDS.

Present
constitution.

A Land Board is appointed for each land district, consisting of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district, and not less than two nor more than four other members, all of whom are appointed and are removable by the Governor.

Every member of a Board holds office for a term of two years, but no longer. Any member may, however, be reappointed.

Land
Commission re-
commendations.

The Land Commission recommends the present system be adhered to. A number of persons advocated elective Land Boards, but they were unable to suggest a satisfactory franchise upon which to elect them. The Commission emphasized the necessity of Boards being composed of members having practical acquaintance and experience in the agricultural, pastoral, and mining industries.

They further affirm that each land district should be divided into ridings, and a member residing there and having local knowledge of that riding should be appointed a member of the Board, and also that at least one member of each Board should be a Crown tenant.

TENURES.

Tenures at
present
available.

Lands may be obtained and occupied upon the following tenures: Cash, occupation with right of purchase, lease in perpetuity, village settlements, special-settlement associations, improved-farm settlements, occupation leases under "The Mining Districts Land Occupation Act, 1894," small grazing-runs, pastoral runs, and miscellaneous leases

The *majority report* of the Land Commission recommend—

Land
Commission re-
commendations.

(1.) That the lease-in-perpetuity tenure be retained.

(2.) That any lease-in-perpetuity tenant under "The Land Act, 1892," after the sixth year may be allowed to convert to occupation-with-right-of-purchase tenure upon payment of the accumulated amount of 1 per cent. difference of rental between the two tenures, with compound interest added.

(3.) That all lessees under the occupation-with-right-of-purchase tenure be permitted, after ten years' occupancy and fulfilment of conditions, to pay off the capital value of their land in sums of £10 or multiple of £10.

The *minority report* recommend a lease in perpetuity with readjustment of rental by arbitration at periods of, say, fifty years for the first term and subsequent periods of twenty-one years, improvements to be fully conserved to the tenant.

In regard to land for settlements, they suggest that the first term should be thirty years instead of fifty years.

PASTORAL RUNS.

The Commission is very strong in regard to the necessity of restoring mountain pastures which are utilised as pastoral runs. They recommend that there should be absolute security of tenure for a term of at least twenty-one years, with valuation for improvements at the end of the term, and that a portion of the country during a period of the year should be kept free from stock, thus allowing the native grass to recover and shed seed, or that the sheep carried during the first five years of the lease be restricted in number, and that good seed might be furnished at the expense of the State to the tenant for the purpose of sowing.

SMALL GRAZING-RUNS.

The Commission regret that "The Land Act, 1892," provides no power of resumption at the end of the twenty-one-years lease, and recommend that the existing law should be amended so as to have the power of resumption as in "The Land Act, 1885."

RESTRICTIONS.

Present
regulations
regarding land-
for-settlement
holdings.

Cropping regulations on land-for-settlements holdings are as follows:—

"The lessee shall not take more than three crops, one of which must be a root-crop, from the same land in succession; and either with, or immediately after, a third crop of any kind he shall sow the land down with good permanent cultivated grasses and clovers, and allow the land to remain as pasture for at least three years from the harvesting of the last crop before being again cropped."

"The lessee shall at all times during the term of the lease so farm the land, if the area of the whole exceeds 20 acres, as that not less than one-half of the total area shall be maintained in permanent pasture."

"The lessee shall not cut the cultivated grass or clovers for hay or seed during the first year from the time of sowing as aforesaid, nor shall he at any time remove from the land or burn any straw grown upon the land."

Recommendations of the Commission.

1. Cropping restrictions should only apply to white-straw crops and periodical grassing; no limit should be placed on number of green crops.

Land Boards should have statutory power to relax cropping conditions whenever necessary.

2. All restrictions should be removed as to the disposal of straw, the cutting of grass for hay or seed, and the area of the land to be kept in permanent pasture.

3. Recommend any further lands opened for settlement to be carefully classified, and cropping conditions framed accordingly.

4. Forfeiture for overcropping is considered too severe a penalty; power should be given to impose fine in lieu.

RESIDENTIAL CONDITIONS EXISTING: ARE THEY TOO EXACTING.

Personal residence upon Crown lands under the occupation-with-right-of-purchase and lease-in-perpetuity tenures is compulsory, and must commence on bush or swamp lands within four years, and on open or partly open lands within one year from date of selection. Such residence must be continuous on lands leased under the occupation-with-right-of-purchase tenure, for six years on bush or swamp lands, and for seven years on open or partly open lands, and on lands leased in perpetuity for a term of ten years. These residential conditions do not apply to any person who acquires an interest in any lease or license under an intestacy or by virtue of a will.

Lessees under the small-grazing-run system are required to reside within three years upon bush or swamp lands, and within one year upon open or partly open land, and residence must thereafter be continuous to the end of the term.

"Residence" implies the erection of a habitable house, to be approved of by the Land Board. The Land Board has power to dispense with residence in cases where the lessee resides on contiguous land, or where the lessees are youths or unmarried women residing with their parents, and in cases of marriage of the lessee with another lessee or with a freeholder. Residence upon swamp lands may be dispensed with for five years, provided the tenant puts on the land double the amount of permanent improvements required by section 144 of "The Land Act, 1892."

The Land Board has also a general discretionary power to dispense with personal residence on sufficient and satisfactory grounds being shown for non-residence.

Residence on land-for-settlements holdings must begin within the year, and is continuous to the end of the term.

Commissioners' Findings,

Commissioners are of opinion that residential conditions are none too exacting. Land Boards have a discretionary power, which they have exercised wisely in relaxing the residence conditions on Crown lands, and there is no necessity to extend the power.

They draw attention to the variations in the duration of residence required under the Land for Settlements Acts which is continuous to the end of the term, while on ordinary Crown lands on lease in perpetuity it is ten years, and on occupation with right of purchase it is six years.

They recommend that residence be continuous for six years under any tenure, including land sold for cash, thus bringing all tenures under similar conditions, with the exception of pastoral runs.

No residence conditions should be enforced until reasonable road-access is provided.

Residence conditions have proved the surest safeguard against speculation and dummyism.

HOMESTEAD PRIVILEGES, AS TO REINTRODUCING.

Commission is against the reintroduction, as system can only be successful as a means of settling poor men, if applied to good land easy of access to market, and the satisfactory settlement of this class of land is provided under existing forms of tenure.

Poor land requires large outlay to profitably utilise for fruit-growing or other purposes, and it would be difficult for poor men to undertake necessary improvements unless under system of Government assistance.

WORKING OF THE BALLOT SYSTEM.

The Commission dealt mainly with land under the Land for Settlements Act, and is forced to the conclusion that some form of ballot is the fairest mode of determining who shall become the holder when there is more than one applicant for a section.

They disapprove of the present system of grouping and second ballot, and recommend the system described by Mr. Humphries of grouping sections in accordance with the means required for successful occupation.

They recommend that a ballot should be taken for first choice of any section in a group, and that any applicant should be allowed to withdraw at any time before or during ballot.

All applicants for Crown lands should be examined. Persons disposing of their interest in any section to be ineligible for ballot for three years. Certain applicants to have preference, such as married men with families. To residents of long standing on land-for-settlements estates the Land Board should allot such areas as they deem fit without competition. Provision should be made for holders of small areas to ballot for larger areas on giving an undertaking to dispose of their present holding to an approved person within a reasonable time after acquiring a larger area.

The recommendations of the Land Commission are similar to those adopted by the Land Conference.

Present
resident
conditions on
Crown lands.

Present
resident
conditions on
land-for-
settlement
holdings.

LANDS LOADED FOR ROADS: THE AMOUNT OF SUCH LOADING; THE AMOUNT EXPENDED, AND WHETHER
GOOD FAITH HAS BEEN KEPT.

This subject has been dealt with at great length by the Commission. They admit that, generally speaking, good faith has been kept. They advocate a radical change in the whole question of loading for roads, and point out that the matter is inseparable from the general question of land-settlement, and that good roads are of equal importance with the question of tenure.

They regret that back-blocks settlers have been asked to do pioneer work under such hardships as the want of roads.

The formation of roads should be undertaken by the State, and their maintenance handed over to the local body.

The system of control by the County Council and Road Boards has not withstood the test of criticism. The dual control is described as wasteful and unnecessary, and the abolition of Road Boards is strongly recommended.

The Commission recommends that—

- (1.) Subsidies as now existing,
- (2.) Government grants, excepting in extraordinary cases,
- (3.) Loading for roads, and
- (4.) "Thirds" and "fourths"

BE ENTIRELY ABOLISHED, and subsidies on County rates on certain lines are advocated. They give figures for the purpose of illustration. The abolition of Road Boards, if effected, they say, will enable the various counties to increase their borrowing-power, or will enable them to largely increase the amount that may be borrowed under the Loans to Local Bodies Act.

The Commission alleges that great waste of money has occurred in many districts for a long term of years, and also states that conclusive proof has been adduced that the output and development of newer districts has been retarded to an extent not generally known, the aggregate loss in this respect having reached a magnitude which calls for serious and immediate attention.

WHETHER CROWN TENANTS ARE PLACED AT A DISADVANTAGE IN BORROWING PRIVATELY OR FROM
THE ADVANCES TO SETTLERS OFFICE.

The holders of some Crown leases are placed at a disadvantage in borrowing privately, owing to the difficulty in giving the lenders security. They see no reason why the tenant having property in a leasehold should be debarred from pledging it for temporary or fixed loans. When the Land Board has consented to the mortgage, this should insure that forfeiture would not take place without due notice being given to the mortgagee.

Loans for short periods are required by many tenants, and the Commission recommends that any obstacles to raising such loans should be removed.

The Advances to Settlers Office exercised great care in its earlier operations to have a good margin, but in subsequent dealings they have advanced more liberally, and complaints of refusal of loans and of the amounts offered being less than the applicant is entitled to, that were numerous in regard to past transactions, should not occur in the future.

Complaints of the delays between the application and the granting of a loan are made by Crown tenants. The Department deny that any undue delay has occurred, and they have publicly notified that borrowers should make their application, if possible, six weeks before the money is wanted.

No single loss has occurred in connection with lending money to Crown tenants, and as the Crown still retains control of the land, there does not appear to the Commission to be any reason why a greater margin of security should be required than in a case of freehold.

ORDINARY CROWN LANDS.

The evidence shows that 985 persons gave evidence before the Commission. Of these only 557 were Crown tenants holding ordinary Crown lands, other than those holding leases of purchased estates under the Land for Settlements Act, and of these 557 Crown tenants only 321 were in favour of granting the freehold to lease-in-perpetuity holders, while 167 Crown tenants gave evidence in favour of the lease in perpetuity on the terms of "The Land Act, 1892." Now, when it is realised that the ordinary Crown tenants number 17,662 persons, and that the lease-in-perpetuity tenants under "The Land Act, 1892," number some 6,007 persons, it will at once be seen that the proportion of these tenants who advocated that the lease-in-perpetuity tenants should be allowed to purchase, to those who have made no move, is ludicrously small and out of all proportion to those who did not ask for any change. The Commissioners themselves, by a bare majority, recommend that the lease-in-perpetuity tenants be allowed to acquire the freehold after ten years' occupation upon paying up the 1-per-cent. difference plus compound interest from date of selection. The remaining members of the Commission recommend that "The Land Act, 1892," remain intact.

LAND COMMISSION.—NUMBER AND OCCUPATION OF WITNESSES AND OTHER DETAILS.

SUMMARY OF OPINIONS OF WITNESSES ON THE VARIOUS HEADS OF REFERENCE.

Occupation of witnesses—

Farmers, 711.
Road Engineers, County Clerks, &c., 14.
Members of local bodies, M.H.R.s, &c., 38.
Commission agents, merchants, &c., 17.
Storekeepers, tradesmen, &c., 68.
Gum-diggers, miners, &c., 17.
Village settlers, market-gardeners, &c., 22.
Civil servants, 41.
Solicitors, surveyors, &c., 20.

(1.) The constitution of Land Boards:

Favour nominative system as at present, 205.
Greater discretionary powers should be given Boards, 48.
Nominative as at present, but County Councils should act as advisory Boards, 1.
Favour partly elective system, 53.
Land Boards should be abolished, 5.
Auckland District too large, 2.
Administration of lands should be placed in hands of local bodies, 6.
Number of members of Land Boards should be increased, 27.
Court of Appeal against decisions of Land Boards should be set up, 5.
Favour elective system, 75.
Elective system impracticable, 3.
Crown tenants should be represented on Land Boards, 36.
Members of Land Boards should be practical men, 3.
Boards have too much power in regard to forfeiture, &c., 3.
Members of Board should be nominated by local bodies, 1.
Present system unsatisfactory, 3.
Canterbury Land District too large, 4.
Miners should be represented on Land Boards, 1.

(2.) The tenures upon which lands may be obtained and occupied, and whether in the interests of the colony any alteration of the law is desirable:

Favour option of purchase as desirable sentiment and in interests of settlement, 223.
Favour option of purchase for financial reasons and security of tenure, 264.
Advocate deferred-payment system, 79.
Advocate occupation-with-right-of-purchase tenure, 48.
Option of freehold at original valuation, 19.
Cash purchasers should make same improvements as occupation-with-right-of-purchase tenants, 1.
Object to revaluation, 104.
Favour periodic revaluation, 47.
Favour leasehold generally, 37.
Favour lease-in-perpetuity tenure, 147.
Lease-in-perpetuity lease too long, 7.
Option should be given for ordinary Crown lands, but not for lands under Land for Settlements Act, 8.
Small-grazing-run leases unsatisfactory, 3.
Pastoral tenants should be given longer leases, 23.
Tenants should be allowed to pay off portion of capital value, 19.

(3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being, and unnecessary in the interests of the State:

Restrictions should be abolished, 9.
Cropping regulations unnecessary, 24.
Restrictions, &c., satisfactory, 26.
Cropping restrictions should be relaxed, 61.
Cropping restrictions should be relaxed in discretion of Land Boards, 10.
Runholders should be allowed to cultivate for winter feed, 19.
Pastoral tenants should receive compensation for improvements, surface-sowing, &c., 25.
Miners should compensate farmers for loss of land, &c., 5.

(4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting, and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:

Should be modified where no roads, schools, &c., 82.
Advocate improvements in lieu of residence, 13.
Residence should also apply to freehold, 9.
Conditions should be strictly enforced, 32.
Residence on occupation-with-right-of-purchase holdings should be for shorter period, 8.
Residence conditions satisfactory, 11.
Residence by substitute should be sufficient, 3.
Married man and his wife should be considered as one in regard to residential conditions, 1.

- (5.) Also if alterations and variations are necessary in the law regarding tenure and occupation, owing to the varying conditions existing in respect of the climate and land-configuration in the several parts of the colony:

Climate should be consideration for large areas, 1.
 Special legislation needed in Westland, 1.
 Unnecessary, 2.
 Land districts should be considered separately, 1.

- (6.) Also whether it is expedient that the homestead privileges, as indicated in the Appendix to "The Land Act, 1885," should be reintroduced:

Should be reintroduced in regard to poor lands, with modifications as to area, &c., 52.
 Unsatisfactory, 9.
 Should be applied to Stewart Island with modifications, 5.
 Should be applied to homesteads on pastoral runs, 1.

- (7.) As to the working of the present ballot system, and the dealing with applications for land:

Condemn ballot, 18.
 Favour priority of application, 3.
 Favour auction system, 15.
 Prefer tender system, 7.
 Approve present system of ballot, 37.
 Unsuccessful applicants at former ballots should be given preference, 11.
 Grouping unsatisfactory, 35.
 Women should have same privileges as men, 3.
 Young men in colony should have preference to strangers, 1.
 Age-limit too high, 1.
 Advocating single ballot and grouping, 1.
 Advocate single ballot, 17.
 Married men should be given preference, 1.
 Condemn auction system, and advocate that ballot should apply to all Crown lands, 5.

- (8.) The area of lands loaded for roads, the amount of such loading, the amount expended on roads in or giving access to the lands loaded, whether good faith has been kept in regard to them, and as to the amount borrowed, spent, and available:

Bad roads retarding settlement, 101.
 Roads should be made out of general revenue, 36.
 Access should be made before lands opened for selection, 22.
 Local bodies do not expend "thirds" judiciously, 4.
 Royalties on flax, &c., should go towards road-making, 8.
 Local bodies should be given assured finance, 27.
 Crown and Native lands should contribute to roading, 27.
 Faith has not been kept, 66.
 Loading on lease-in-perpetuity holdings should not go on for 999 years, 15.
 System of loading unsatisfactory, 32.
 Loading has not been spent to best advantage, 13.
 Co-operative system of roading a failure, 4.
 Roading should be done by local bodies, 8.
 Loading system satisfactory, 11.
 Loading should be spent before handing over to local bodies, 1.
 Government should take over all road loans and recoup by land-tax, 1.
 Advocates subsidy system as against loading, 1.

- (9.) To ascertain the value of the land now leased from the Crown at the time the land was so leased, and the value of the said land at its last valuation:

No increase, 8.
 Increase owing to progress of settlement, 43.
 Increment belongs to settler, 45.
 Increment belongs to State, 13.
 System of valuing unsatisfactory, 7.
 Value of pastoral runs decreasing, 1.

- (10.) Whether lessees of the Crown are placed at a disadvantage in borrowing privately or from the Advances to Settlers Office:

Satisfactory, 95.
 Disadvantages exist in borrowing from Advances to Settlers Department owing to delays, small valuations, &c., 104.
 Act should be available to Natives, 2.
 Advances to Settlers Department should lend up to greater percentage on leaseholds, 54.
 Advances should be made during first year of tenancy, 2.

- (11.) To ascertain the condition and position of those of our colonists holding and occupying the lands of the State under the several tenures now obtaining:

Bickerstaffe Settlement—rents too high, 6.
 Merrivale Settlement—rents too high, 4.
 Beaumont Settlement—rents too high, 3.
 Otau Settlement—rents too high, 3.
 Pomahaka Settlement—rents too high, 4.
 Epuni Settlement—sections too large, 5.
 Epuni Settlement—rates too high, 7.
 Settlers progressing satisfactorily, 48.
 Village settlers' holdings too small, 12.
 Settler on small holding should be allowed to increase area, 11.
 Land-for-settlements policy a success, 29.
 Improved-farm settlements a failure, 2.

- (13.) To investigate and report as to the aggregation of estates, large and small, the maximum area which should be held under the several classes, and if in certain districts variations are advisable:

Government should not buy estates when lands in North to be settled, 7.
 Area of freehold should be limited, 61.
 No aggregation, 29.
 Aggregation not detrimental to colony if worked by owner, 1.
 Slight tendency to aggregation, 14.

- (14.) To inquire and report whether each area of land leased under the Land for Settlements Act shall have a separate occupier, and the area not to be increased or boundaries altered without the direct sanction of Parliament:

Areas might be subdivided, with approval of Land Board, upon death of lessee if his will so directed, 2.

General—

Danthonia good grass for poor land in North, 21.
 Paspalum grass will be the saving of the North, 8.
 Gorse good sheep-feed when mixed with danthonia, 3.
 Gum-diggers hinder settlement, 4.
 Absentee lands retarding settlement, 10.
 Government should take over Native lands for settlement, 45.
 Native lands retarding settlement, 46.
 Reserves and Crown lands should be thrown open for selection, 15.
 Natives should be allowed to deal with lands on same footing as Europeans, 5.
 Noxious weeds on Crown and Native lands spreading to occupied lands, 17.
 Settler should be allowed to dispose of timber, flax, &c., on holding, 8.
 Parnell Borough Council lessees object to being under administration of Council, 4.
 Government should drain swamp lands, 10.
 Rating on unimproved value a hardship on sawmillers, 2.
 Large estates in Hawke's Bay should be acquired by Government and opened for settlement, 3.
 Rebates of rent to Crown tenants should be uniform, 2.
 Rabbit pest increasing and deteriorating value of land, 6.
 Against land-for-settlements policy, 5.
 Classification of lands unsatisfactory, 5.
 Large runs should be subdivided for settlement, 35.
 Large estates in Otago should be acquired for settlement, 10.
 Water needed for irrigation purposes in Otago, 15.
 Grassing of pastoral runs should be encouraged by Government, 21.
 Runs in Otago not suitable for subdivision, 3.
 Government should acquire water-races in Otago, 1.
 Noxious weeds spreading, and steps should be taken to prevent same, 17.
 Sheep will keep down ragwort, but injurious to cattle, 8.
 Californian thistle can be kept down by salting, burning, &c., 6.

Endowments—

Freehold of endowments should not be given tenants, 13.
 Tenants might be allowed to acquire freehold, 12.
 All endowments should be administered by Land Boards, 12.
 Tenants should be given secure tenure (lease in perpetuity) and compensations for improvements, &c., 31.
 Present administration satisfactory, 3.

AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

Farmers, 241.
 Road Engineers, County Clerks, &c., 13.
 M.H.R.s, members of local bodies, Land Boards, &c., 10.
 Commission agents, merchants, &c., 8.
 Storekeepers, tradesmen, &c., 22.
 Gum-diggers, miners, &c., 2.
 Village settlers, fruit-growers, &c., 12.
 Civil servants, 7.
 Solicitors, surveyors, &c., 3.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

Favour nominative system, as at present, 35.
 Greater discretionary powers should be given Land Boards, 6.
 Nominative system as at present, but County Councils should act as advisory Boards, 1.
 Advocate partially elective system, 33.
 Land Boards should be done away with altogether, 4.
 Auckland Land District too large, 2.
 Administration of lands should be placed in hands of local bodies, 6.
 Number of members on Land Board should be increased, 23.
 Court of Appeal against decisions of Land Board should be set up, 4.
 Favour elective system, 34.

(2.) The tenures upon which lands may be obtained and occupied, and whether in the interests of the colony any alteration of the law is desirable:

Favour option of purchase as a desirable sentiment and in interests of settlement, 97.
 Favour option of purchase for financial reasons, and security of tenure, &c., 128.
 Advocate deferred-payment system, 16.
 Advocate occupation-with-right-of-purchase system, 18.
 Freehold should be given at original valuation, 14.
 Cash purchasers should make same improvements as occupation with right of purchase, 1.
 Object to revaluation, 54.
 Favour periodical revaluations, 12.
 Favour leasehold, because capital available for farming, 9.
 Favour lease in perpetuity, 31.
 Lease-in-perpetuity lease too long, 6.
 Option of freehold for ordinary Crown lands should be given, but not under Land for Settlements Act, 1.

(3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being, and unnecessary in the interests of the State:

Should be no restrictions, 6.
 Cropping regulations unnecessary, 5.

(4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting, and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:

Advocate double improvements in lieu of residence, 6.
 Residence conditions should be modified in discretion of Land Board where no roads, schools, &c., 37.
 Present residence conditions should be applied to freehold, 5.
 Residence conditions should be strictly enforced, 10.
 Residence conditions in connection occupation-with-right-of-purchase holdings should only be enforced for a short period, 8.

(6.) Also whether it is expedient that the homestead privileges as indicated in the Appendix to "The Land Act, 1885," should be reintroduced:

Should be reintroduced in connection with poor lands, with modifications as to area, &c., 42.

(7.) As to the working of the present ballot system, and the dealing with applications for land:

Condemn ballot system, 11.
 Favour priority of application, 3.
 Favour auction system, 7.
 Prefer tender system, 3.
 Approve ballot system, 8.
 Unsuccessful applicants should be given preference in subsequent ballots, 1.
 Condemn grouping system in connection with ballot, 2.

(8.) The area of lands loaded for roads, the amount of such loading, the amount expended on roads in or giving access to lands loaded, whether good faith has been kept in regard to them, and as to the amount borrowed, spent, and available:

Bad roads retarding settlement, 83.
 Roads should be made out of general revenue, 15.
 Roads should be made before lands opened for selection, 11.
 Local bodies do not spend "thirds" judiciously, 4.
 Royalties on timber, flax, &c., should go towards road-making, 8.
 Local bodies should be given assured finance, 19.
 Crown and Native lands should contribute to roading, 25.
 Good faith has not been kept in regard to roads, 36.

- (9.) To ascertain the value of the land now leased from the Crown at the time the land was so leased, and the valuation of the land at its last valuation:
- No increase, 3.
 - Increment belongs to settler, 16.
 - Increment belongs to State, 4.
 - Increase owing to progress of settlement, 10.
- (10.) Whether lessees of the Crown are placed at a disadvantage in borrowing privately or from the Advances to Settlers Office:
- Advances to Settlers Act satisfactory and in interests of colony, 42.
 - Disadvantages exist in obtaining loans on leasehold owing to small valuations, delays, &c., 39.
 - Act should be available to Natives, 1.
 - Advances to Settlers Department should lend up to greater percentage on leaseholds in connection with improvements, &c., 14.
- (11.) Condition and position of settlers, &c.:
- Rent too high on Bickerstaffe, 6.
 - District progressing slowly, 10.
 - Village settlers' holdings too small, 9.
 - Settlers on small holdings should be allowed to increase area, 5.
- (13.) Aggregation of estates, &c.:
- Government should not buy estates while Crown lands in North to be settled, 7.
 - Area of freehold should be limited, 12.
 - No aggregation, 6.

General—

- Danthonia grass good for poor lands, 21.
- Paspalum good grass for North, 8.
- Gorse good sheep-feed on very poor lands when mixed with danthonia, 3.
- Gum-diggers hinder settlement, 4.
- Absentee lands retarding settlement, 10.
- Native lands retarding settlement, 46.
- Government should open Native lands for settlement, 36.
- Kauri-gum and other reserves and Crown lands generally should be thrown open for selection, 13.
- Natives should be allowed to deal with lands on same footing as Europeans, 5.
- Noxious weeds on Crown lands spreading to occupied lands, 11.
- Settler should be allowed to dispose of timber, flax, &c., on holding, 7.
- Parnell Borough Council lessees object to be under administration of Council, 4.
- Government should drain swamp lands, 10.
- Rating on unimproved value a hardship on sawmillers, 2.

HAWKE'S BAY DISTRICT (EXCLUDING POVERTY BAY PORTION).

Occupation of witnesses—

- Farmers (including one member of Parliament), 18.
- Chairman, local body, 1.
- Sheep-farmers, 4.
- District Land Valuer, 1.
- Commissioner of Crown Lands, 1.
- Farmer and butcher, 1.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

- Present constitution satisfactory—no alteration needed, 10.
- Satisfactory, but should be more representative, 1.
- Satisfactory, but should have more discretionary powers, 1.
- Should be partly nominated and partly elective, 3.
- Crown tenants should be represented, 2.

(2.) Tenures on which lands are obtained and occupied, and whether change is desirable:

- Freehold preferred, as best for settlers and country, 5.
- Freehold under deferred-payment system preferred—good for poor man, 1.
- Freehold, as land improved much better than under lease, 1.
- Lease with option of acquiring freehold preferred, as men with small means enabled to select and improve land, 14.
- A partial freehold preferred—tenants to pay off part of capital value of their leaseholds, 7.
- Lease in perpetuity satisfactory tenure for tenants and country, 4.
- Lease with periodic valuations best for country, 1.
- Lease in perpetuity bad for country, as no revaluation, and bad for poor man, as sufficient money cannot be raised on it, 2.
- Small-grazing-run-lease tenure satisfactory, 2.
- Pastoral-lease tenure should be improved, to allow for improvements and enable money to be raised, 1.

- (3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions, &c. :
 Present cropping restrictions satisfactory, 4.
 Present cropping restrictions to be relaxed, 2.
 Present cropping restrictions to be abolished, 2.
 Land Board to have more discretionary powers *re* cropping, 1.
- (4.) Whether the residential conditions are too exacting and require relaxing :
 Residential conditions should be relaxed in certain cases, 4.
 Residential conditions should be strictly enforced, 2.
 Residential conditions are very satisfactory as at present, 2.
- (5.) Homestead :
 No opinions given.
- (7.) As to working of present ballot system, and applications for land :
 Single ballot, without grouping, preferred, 4.
 Preference in ballot should be given in certain cases, 1.
 Ballot system is too speculative, 1.
 Ballot system is bad, 1.
 Auction among approved applicants preferable to ballot, 2.
- (8.) Area and amount of loading for roads, how expended, &c. :
 Loading has not been spent to the best advantage, 4.
 Co-operative system of roading has been a failure, 1.
 Roading should be done by the local bodies, not by Government, 1.
 Loading system satisfactory, but it should be gradually paid off, and not be a burden on land for all time, 3.
 Loading system fairly satisfactory, 3.
- (9.) Value of land now leased from Crown when so leased, and last valuation :
 Value is steadily increasing, and is now greater than when leased from Crown, 4.
- (10.) Whether Crown tenants are placed at disadvantage in borrowing privately or from Advances to Settlers Office :
 Present system of lending money by Advances to Settlers Office is quite satisfactory, 4.
 Present system of above is unsatisfactory through bad working, 3.
 System satisfactory, but too much delay in lending money, 1.
 System satisfactory, but margin of advances should be increased, 1.
- (11.) Condition and position of Crown tenants :
 In a very prosperous condition, 7.
- (13.) As to aggregation of estates, and area to be held by settlers, &c. :
 No aggregation of estates in Hawke's Bay taking place, 2.
 Limit of area a man can hold should be 640 acres of first-class land or equivalent, 2.
 Limit of area as above should be 1,000 acres first-class, 1.

General recommendations :

- Large estates in Hawke's Bay should be acquired by Government and subdivided for settlement, 3.
 Blocks belonging to Maoris should be acquired and cut up, 2.
 Present rating is too high, as valuation of land bad, 2.
 Rating on estates acquired by Government is bad at commencement of settlement, 1.
 Rebates of rent to Crown tenants should be uniform, 2.
 Rabbits are a great nuisance in Mohaka district, 1.
 Rabbit pest is deteriorating value of land in district, 1.

POVERTY BAY LOCAL LAND DISTRICT (GISBORNE).

Occupation of witnesses :

- Farmers (including four representing the Farmers' Union), 19.
 District Surveyor and local Land Officer, 1.
 Manager, Loan and Mercantile Company, 1.
 Surveyor, 1.
 Land agents, 2.

- (1.) Constitution of Land Boards :
 Present constitution satisfactory, 6.
 Satisfactory, but more extended power should be given, 1.
 Satisfactory, but Board should be more representative, 1.
 Elective Boards preferable, 4.
- (2.) Tenures upon which land may be obtained and occupied, and whether any alteration of law is desirable :
 Freehold preferred, as occupier enabled to improve land more, 12.
 Freehold preferred—obtain larger advances and cannot be ejected, 2.

- Freehold preferred, under deferred-payment system, 3.
 Lease in perpetuity, without option of freehold, 2.
 Lease in perpetuity, without revaluation, 1.
 Small-grazing-run lease not satisfactory, 3.
 Pastoral lease should be for longer term, with securer tenure, to enable to improve and grass land, 1.
- (3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being, and unnecessary to interests of State:
 Present conditions satisfactory, 2.
 Present conditions not satisfactory, 1.
- (4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting, and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:
 Conditions should be relaxed in certain cases, 2.
 Board should have discretionary power to relax conditions, 1.
 Residential conditions to be enforced in all cases, 5.
- (5.) If alterations are necessary in law regarding tenure, &c.:
 No opinions given.
- (6.) If it is expedient that the homestead privileges be reintroduced.
 No opinions given.
- (7.) As to the working of the present ballot system and application for land:
 Present system unsatisfactory, 2.
- (8.) Area and amount of loading for roads, how expended, &c.:
 Present system satisfactory, 1.
 Present system unsatisfactory, 10.
- (9.) Value of land now leased from Crown when so leased, and at last valuation:
 Value of leaseholds has increased, 1.
 Unearned increment of leaseholds belongs to State, 2.
- (10.) Whether Crown tenants are placed at disadvantage in borrowing privately or from Advances to Settlers Office:
 Present system of advances from Advances to Settlers Office satisfactory, 1.
 Present system satisfactory, but the margin of advances should be increased, 2.
 System unsatisfactory—too much delay, 8.
- (11.) Condition and position of Crown tenants:
 Present position satisfactory, 7.
 Land-for-settlements policy a great success, 1.
- (13.) As to aggregation of estates, and maximum area that should be held by settlers under various classes, &c.:
 Area a man can hold should be limited, 1.
 Area a man can hold should be unlimited, 1.

TARANAKI DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

- Farmers, 51.
 Civil servants, 3.
 Storekeepers, tradesmen, &c., 3.
 County Engineer, 1.
 Including members local bodies, Land Boards, &c., 5.
- (1.) The constitution of Land Boards:
 In favour of nominative system as at present, 16.
 Nominative system, but Crown tenants should be represented, 4.
 Advocate partly elective Boards, 7.
 Favour elective system, 3.
 Land Boards should have greater discretionary powers, 5.
 Number of members of Land Board should be increased, 3.
- (2.) The tenures upon which lands may be obtained and occupied, and whether in the interests of the colony any alteration of the law is necessary:
 Favour freehold for financial reasons, and security of tenure, 25.
 Favour freehold as a desirable sentiment, and in interests of settlement, 13.
 Advocate deferred-payment system, 13.
 Favour occupation-with-right-of-purchase system, 10.
 Advocate leasehold tenure, 10.
 Object to revaluation, 18.
 Favour periodical revaluation, 3.

- (3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being and unnecessary in the interests of the State:
Cropping regulations should be abolished, 1.
Restrictions are not severe, 1.
- (4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting, and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:
Residence conditions should be strictly enforced, 4.
Residential conditions should apply to freehold lands, 3.
Should be modified where no roads, schools, &c., 6.
Advocate double improvements in lieu of residence, 2.
- (7.) As to the working of the present ballot system, and the dealing with applications for land:
Approve ballot system, 3.
Unsuccessful at former ballots should have preference, 1.
Women should have same privileges as men at ballot, 1.
Grouping system unsatisfactory, 1.
Favour tender system in preference to ballot, 1.
- (8.) The area of lands loaded for roads, the amount of such loading, the amount expended on roads in or giving access to the lands loaded, whether good faith has been kept in regard to them, and as to the amount borrowed, spent, and available:
Local bodies should have assured finance, 6.
Faith has not been kept, 9.
Government should make main roads, 7.
Native lands should contribute to roading, 2.
Bad roads retarding settlement, 18.
Loading on lease in perpetuity should not go on for 999 years, 4.
System of loading for roads unsatisfactory, 12.
Access should be made before land opened for selection, 9.
- (9.) To ascertain the value of the land now leased from the Crown at the time the land was so leased, and the value of the said land at its last valuation:
Value of leaseholds increasing, 7.
Increment belongs to settler, 5.
Increment belongs to State, 2.
- (10.) Whether lessees of the Crown are placed at a disadvantage in borrowing privately or from the Advances to Settlers Office:
Advances-to-settlers system satisfactory, 12.
Disadvantages in borrowing from Advances to Settlers Department owing to small valuations on leasehold, delays, &c., 13.
Advances to Settlers Office should advance to greater percentage on leaseholds, 7.
- (11.) To ascertain the condition and position of those of our colonists holding and occupying the lands of the State under the several tenures now obtaining:
Village settlers' holdings too small, 3.
Lessees of small holdings should be allowed increased area, 3.
- (13.) To investigate and report as to the aggregation of estates, large and small, the minimum area which should be held under the several classes, and if in certain districts variations are advisable:
No aggregation, 2.
Area of freehold should be limited, 10.

General—

- Government should take over Native lands, 5.
Noxious weeds spreading from Crown and Native lands, 3.

WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

- Farmers (including members of Land Board and a member of the House of Representatives), 49.
Gardeners and nurserymen, 4.
Modeller and carver, 1.
Carriers, 2.
Furnaceman, 1.
Painter, 1.
Labourer, 1.
Newspaper-reader, 1.
Barrister and solicitor, 1.
Bookbinder, 1.
Commercial traveller, 1.
Storeman, 1.

Watchmaker and jeweller, 1.
 Journalist, 1.
 Flax-miller, 1.
 Storekeeper, 1.
 Land agent, 1.
 Inspector of properties, Loan and Mercantile Company, 1.
 President, Trades and Labour Council, 1.
 Government Biologist, 1.
 District Road Engineer, 1.
 Superintendent, Government Advances to Settlers Office, 1.
 Valuer-General, 1.
 Crown Lands Rangers, 2.
 Commissioner of Crown Lands, Wellington, 1.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

Satisfied with present system, 9.
 Board should be elected, 2.
 Against elective system, 1.
 Should be partly elective, 1.
 Should be elected on universal suffrage, 5.
 Crown tenants should be represented, 11.
 Board should have practical men, 2.
 Every district should have fair representation, 1.
 Should be partly elected by Government and partly by Crown tenants, 1.
 Board has too much power with regard to forfeiture, 1.
 Should have more discretionary power, 2.
 Should be elected by Farmers' Union, 1.
 Members of Board should be farmers, 1.
 Should be elected by rural occupiers, 2.
 Board should be abolished, and Commissioner of Crown Lands should see conditions carried out, 1.
 Tenants should have power to appeal against Board's decisions, 1.
 Local bodies and County Councils should have right to nominate members, 1.
 Land Board has too much power over tenants, 2.

(2.) The tenures upon which lands may be obtained and occupied, and whether in the interests of the colony any alteration of the law is desirable:

Favour leasehold, 5.
 Favour freehold, 20.
 Favour freehold for workmen's homes, 2.
 Favours freehold, excepting land for settlements, 1.
 Favour deferred payment, 4.
 Favour occupation with right of purchase and option of freehold, 16.
 Favour lease in perpetuity, 8.
 Favour lease in perpetuity with revaluation at fixed periods, 4.
 Favour "optional" system, 5.
 Favours twenty-one years lease, with revaluation at end of term, 1.
 Opposed to lease in perpetuity, owing to demand for a Fair Rent Bill and revaluation, 13.
 Opposed to lease in perpetuity on account of tax-exemption, 1.
 Land-for-settlements tenants should have option of freehold, 4.
 Pastoral-run tenure should be more secure, 1.

(3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being, and unnecessary in the interests of the State:

Tenants should have right to increase holdings, 3.
 Farm-homestead system unsatisfactory owing to preferential treatment, 3.
 Farm-homestead area too restricted, 3.
 Cropping conditions too stringent, 2.
 Cropping conditions require remodelling, 1.
 Cropping conditions—should be no restriction on bush lands, 1.
 Cropping conditions satisfactory, 2.
 Cropping conditions—no restrictions necessary, 1.
 Tenants should be allowed to dispose of timber, 1.

(4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting, and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:

Residence should be enforced generally, 4.
 Residence should be compulsory on workmen's homes, 2.
 Residence should not be enforced if improvements completed and rent paid, 3.
 Residence on adjoining land should be sufficient compliance, 1.
 Residence by substitute should be sufficient, 3.
 Residence should be enforced on cash selections, 1.
 Residence conditions too stringent, 2.
 Residence: Land Board should have power to vary and relax conditions where circumstances require it (no roads, schools, &c.), 14.

- (5.) Also, if alterations and variations are necessary in the law regarding tenure and occupation, owing to the varying conditions existing in respect of the climate and land-configuration in the several parts of the colony:
Climate should be consideration for large areas, 1.
- (6.) Whether it is expedient that the homestead privileges as indicated in the Appendix to "The Land Act, 1885," should be reintroduced:
Should be reinstated to induce settlement on poor lands, 5.
Against such reinstatement, 2.
- (7.) As to the working of the present ballot system, and the dealing with applications for land:
Present ballot system satisfactory, 5.
Public auction or tender better than ballot, 3.
Grouping of sections should be abolished—straight-out ballot best, 4.
Applicants should be examined and classified according to qualifications, 3.
Unsuccessful applicants should have preference at next ballot, 2.
Young men in colony should have preference to strangers, 1.
Age-limit too high, 1.
- (8.) The area of land loaded for roads, the amount of such loading, the amount expended on roads in or giving access to the lands loaded, whether good faith has been kept in regard to them, and as to the amount borrowed, spent, and available:
Present system of loading unsatisfactory, 9.
Local bodies should expend loading, 5.
Loading has been wasted, 5.
Loading should be spent before road handed over to local body, 1.
Government should take over all road loans and recoup by land-tax, 1.
Government should construct main roads, 4.
Roads should be constructed out of consolidated revenue, 1.
Loading for 999 years too long, 3.
Loading has not been expended, 2.
Roads promised have not been made, 6.
Advocates subsidy system as against loading, 1.
Evidence on road-construction, &c., by District Road Engineer.
- (9.) To ascertain the value of the land now leased from the Crown at the time the land was so leased, and the value of the said land at its last valuation:
Unearned increment belongs to tenant, 2.
Unearned increment should accrue to State, 1.
- (10.) Whether lessees of the Crown are placed at a disadvantage in borrowing privately or from the Advances to Settlers Office:
Advances to Settlers Office—present system satisfactory, 2.
Advances to Settlers Office—present system unsatisfactory, 2.
Advances to Settlers Office will not advance sufficient, 11.
Can borrow more privately than from the Advances to Settlers Office, 1.
Difficulty in obtaining advances, 1.
Crown tenant should be placed on same footing as freeholder with regard to borrowing, 1.
Lease in perpetuity bad security for borrowing, 14.
Evidence and full statement of Advances to Settlers Office regarding loans to Crown tenants.
- (13.) To investigate and report as to the aggregation of estates, large and small, the maximum area which should be held under the several classes, and if in certain districts variations are advisable:
Law should be passed to prevent aggregation and limit area, 6.
Aggregation not detrimental if land work by owner, 1.
Graduated land-tax should be imposed to prevent aggregation, 3.
Well guarded against by present restrictions of 640 acres, 2.
No aggregation going on, 3.

General—

- Native lands should be opened for settlement, 2.
Bush and Swamp Lands Act should not be exempt from rates, 1.
Estates should not be taken compulsorily, 1.
Opposed to land-for-settlements policy, 1.
Opposed to workmen's-homes policy, 3.
Government should fell bush, and grass and fence, 2.
Epuni Settlement—sections too large for workmen's homes, 5.
Epuni Settlement—rates too high, 7.
Boundaries should be more carefully laid off for convenient fencing, 1.
Inspection of grass-seed required to prevent spread of noxious weeds, 1.
Classification of area unsatisfactory, 5.
Evidence on grass-seed, &c., by Government Biologist.
Statement and tables of Valuer-General regarding land-values, &c.
Evidence of Commissioner of Crown Lands, Wellington, on general question.

MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

Farmers (including one Land Board member), 4.
 Sheep-farmers, 5.
 Commissioner of Crown Lands, Blenheim, 1.
 Chief Draughtsman and Receiver of Land Revenue, 1.
 Crown Lands Ranger, Marlborough, 1.
 Carpenter, 1.
 Teamster, 1.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

Present system of nomination satisfactory, 4.
 Should be nominated and elective, 2.
 Should be elective altogether, 2.
 Crown tenants should be represented on Board, 2.
 Administration of Board is satisfactory, 4.

(2.) Tenures on which land may be obtained and occupied, and whether change is desirable:

Present lease-in-perpetuity tenure satisfactory, as very good system for poor man—freehold should not be allowed, 6.
 Present lease-in-perpetuity system satisfactory, but would prefer option of acquiring freehold, 3.
 Best tenure of a lease, with-option of purchase, 3.
 Tenure of pastoral lands to be amended, so as to allow of compensation for improvements and fixity of term, 2.

(3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions, &c.:

Restrictions *re* cropping, &c., might be relaxed after ten years, 6.
 Present conditions of leases satisfactory, 2.
 Tenants to be allowed to transfer without restriction, 2.

(4.) Whether residential conditions are too exacting and require relaxing:

Present conditions as to residence satisfactory, 2.

(6.) Homestead system:

No opinions given.

(7.) As to working of present ballot system, and applications for land, &c.:

Present system satisfactory, 1.
 Single ballot and grouping best system, 1.
 No grouping needed in ballot, 2.

(8.) Area and amount of loading for roads, how expended, &c.:

Co-operative system of roading a bad one, 1.

(9.) Value of land now leased from Crown when so leased and at last valuation:

Value of leaseholds is increasing, 1.
 Value of pastoral lands leased is decreasing, 1.

(10.) Whether Crown tenants are placed at disadvantage in borrowing privately or from Advances to Settlers Office:

Present working of Advances to Settlers Office satisfactory, 1.
 Present working of Advances to Settlers Office unsatisfactory, 2.

(11.) Condition and position of Crown tenants:

Satisfactory, 3.
 Land-for-settlements policy a great success, 1.

(13.) As to aggregation of estates, and area to be held by settlers, &c.:

Area that a man can hold should be limited, 1.

General remarks—

Noxious weeds are spreading through Marlborough, 2.
 Workmen's-homes settlement needed at Blenheim, 1.
 State-forest areas in Marlborough should be opened for settlement, 2.

NELSON DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

Farmers, 7.
 Solicitors, 2.
 Acting Commissioner of Crown Lands, Nelson, 1.
 Crown Lands Ranger, Nelson District, 1.
 Diocesan Secretary and Treasurer, 1.
 Tradesman, 1.
 Carpenter, 1.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

Land Boards should be elective, 2.
 Land Boards should be nominated and elective, 1.
 Land Boards should have more discretionary powers, 1.
 Land Boards administration is satisfactory at present, 2.

(2.) Tenures on which land may be obtained, and whether change is desirable:

Freehold system preferred, as it promotes settlement, 4.
 Freehold system under deferred-payment system preferred, 3.
 Lease with option of acquiring freehold preferred, 2.
 Lease-in-perpetuity tenure, with revaluation, best for settlement, 1.
 Lease for shorter term than lease in perpetuity, with revaluation, 1.
 Lease-in-perpetuity tenure is bad for tenant and State, 3.

(3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions, &c.:

Tenants not affected by present regulations, 2.

(4.) Whether residential conditions are too exacting and require relaxing:

Present conditions satisfactory, 1.
 Present conditions require relaxing in certain cases, 1.

(6.) Homestead system:

Might with advantage be reintroduced into Nelson District, 1.

(7.) As to working of present ballot system, and applications for land, &c.:

Only eligible applicants should take part in ballot, 1.
 Present system of ballot a very fair one, 1.
 No grouping should be allowed in ballot, 1.

(8.) Area and amount of loading for roads, how expended:

Loading should be extinguished within a certain time, 1.

(9.) Value of land now leased from Crown when so leased, and at last valuation:

Value gradually increasing, 1.

(10.) Whether Crown tenants are placed at disadvantage in borrowing privately or from Advances to Settlers Office:

Present working of Advances to Settlers Office satisfactory, 1.
 Crown tenants should only be allowed to borrow from Advances to Settlers Office, 1.

(11.) Condition and position of Crown tenants:

Satisfactory, 2.

(13.) As to aggregation of estates and area to be held by settlers, &c.:

No aggregation taking place in Nelson, but rather opposite, 2.
 Freeholds should be limited in area, 1.

General remarks—

Transfers of Crown tenants should not be allowed, as they should surrender holding to be reallocated, 1.
 Chain reserves along river-banks should be protected, 1.
 Workers'-homes settlement needed at Nelson, 2.
 Noxious weeds are spreading in Nelson District, 2.

Endowments—

Freehold of endowments should not be granted to tenants, 1.
 Freehold of endowments should be permitted in Nelson, 2.
 Endowments should be administered by Land Board, 1.
 Endowment lands should be leased with securer tenure, and better conditions *re* improvements and rents, 5.
 Church trust and School Commissioners' leases contain satisfactory provision for right of renewal and valuation for improvements, &c., 3.

WESTLAND DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

Farmers, 2.
 Miner and farmer, 1.
 County Council Chairman and bootmaker, 1.
 County Council Chairman and mining agent, 1.
 Commissioner of Crown Lands, Westland, 1.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

Present system satisfactory, but members should be thoroughly representative, 6.
 Present administration quite satisfactory, 4.

- (2.) Tenures on which land may be obtained and occupied, and whether change is desirable:
 Lease in perpetuity best system for poor man—no option of freehold should be allowed in these leases, 4.
 Lease-in-perpetuity tenure satisfactory, but partial freehold should be granted by paying off part of capital value, 2.
 Lease with option of purchase is preferable, 1.
 Westland pastoral-lease regulations very good tenure, 3.
 Crown should own all the land, 2.
- (3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions, &c. :
 Pastoral leases should allow of compensation for improvements, 1.
 Temporary grazing licenses should allow of compensation for improvements, 1.
- (4.) Whether residential conditions are too exacting, and require relaxing:
 Satisfactory conditions, but Land Boards should have more discretionary power, 1.
- (5.) If alterations in law regarding tenure and occupation are necessary:
 Special legislation is needed in Westland District, 1.
- (6.) Homestead system:
 Favours introduction into Westland District, 1.
- (7.) As to working of present ballot system and applications for land:
 Present system of ballot is good, 1.
 Only eligible applications should be admitted to ballot, 1.
 No grouping should be made in ballot, 1.
- (8.) Area and amount of loading for roads, how expended, &c. :
 System of loading fairly satisfactory, but Government should also subsidise amount, 2.
 Loading for roads should be paid off gradually, 1.
 Loading has not been expended very well, 2.
 Expenditure of loading has been satisfactory, 1.
- (9.) Value of land now leased from Crown when so leased and at last valuation:
 Value is steadily increasing, 1.
- (10.) Whether Crown tenants are placed at disadvantage in borrowing privately or from Advances to Settlers Office:
 Advances to settlers good system, but not much availed of in Westland District, 2.
 Advances to settlers satisfactory system to tenants, 1.
 System requires amending, as too slow and unsatisfactory, 1.
- (11.) Condition and position of Crown tenants:
 Prosperous, 1.
- (13.) As to aggregation of estates and area to be held by settlers, &c. :
 No aggregation of estates in Westland, 1.
 No variation needed in limitation of areas, 1.

General remarks—

Administration of mining areas by Warden satisfactory, 1.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

Farmers, 90.
 Runholders, 13.
 Sheep-buyer, 1.
 Builders, 2.
 Painter, 1.
 Tinsmith, 1.
 Ex-schoolmasters, 2.
 Labourers, 3.
 Director, Agricultural College, 1.
 Wool-sorter, 1.
 Gardener, 1.
 Carpenter, 1.
 Commissioner of Crown Lands, 1.
 Crown Lands Ranger, 1.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

In favour of present nominative system, 43.
 Board should possess greater discretionary powers, 6.
 Crown tenants should be represented on Board, 6.
 Board should be elected, 6.

- Board should be elected by Crown tenants, 2.
 - Board should be elected on Parliamentary franchise, 4.
 - Canterbury District too large for one Board, 4.
 - Present system unsatisfactory, 2.
 - Board should consist of Magistrate, Commissioner of Crown Lands, and one other expert, 1.
- (2.) Tenures upon which lands may be obtained and occupied, and whether in the interests of the colony any alteration in the law is desirable:
- In favour of existing lease in perpetuity, 44.
 - In favour of freehold, 11.
 - Adverse to freehold, 9.
 - Favour leaseholders being given option of purchase, 22.
 - Favour deferred-payment system, 3.
 - Favour perpetual-lease system, 3.
 - Favour thirty-years lease with periodic revaluation, 3.
 - Favour 50-100-years lease with periodic revaluation, 1.
 - Favour all present tenures being upheld, 1.
 - Small-grazing-run lessees should have right of renewal, 5.
 - Lease-in-perpetuity tenants should be allowed to pay off part of capital value, 5.
 - Pastoral runs should carry perpetual right of renewal, 2.
 - Revaluation should not apply to existing leases, 17.
 - Revaluation should apply to existing leases, 2.
- (3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being, and unnecessary in the interests of the State:
- Cropping regulations too stringent, and should be relaxed, 34.
 - Cropping regulations should be abolished, 5.
 - Cropping: Land Board should have more discretionary power, 9.
 - Cropping regulations satisfactory, 8.
- (4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting, and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:
- Residential conditions the greatest safeguard against dummyism, 1.
 - Residential conditions satisfactory, 4.
 - Residential conditions unsatisfactory, 1.
 - Residential conditions should be modified in back blocks, 1.
- (5.) If alterations and variations are necessary in the law regarding tenure and occupation, owing to the varying conditions existing in respect of the climate and land-configuration in the several parts of the colony:
- No evidence given on this point.
- (6.) Whether it is expedient that the homestead privileges as indicated in the Appendix to "The Land Act, 1885," should be reintroduced:
- No evidence given on this point.
- (7.) As to the working of the present ballot system, and the dealing with applications for land:
- Single ballot best, 5.
 - Grouping unsatisfactory, 8.
 - Present system best, 1.
 - Married men should have the preference, 1.
- (8.) The area of lands loaded for roads, the amount of such loading, the amount expended on roads in or giving access to the lands loaded, whether good faith has been kept in regard to them, and as to the amount borrowed, spent, and available:
- No objection to the present system, 1.
 - Loading should be distributed over the whole community, 1.
- (9.) To ascertain the value of the land now leased from the Crown at the time the land was so leased, and the value of the said land at its last valuation:
- Considers values have increased, 3.
 - Unearned increment belongs to Crown, 3.
 - Unearned increment belongs to tenant, 13.
- (10.) Whether lessees of the Crown are placed at a disadvantage in borrowing privately or from the Advances to Settlers Office:
- Present system satisfactory, 14.
 - Greater facilities should be given, 8.
 - Present system unsatisfactory, 6.
 - Lease in perpetuity not good security, 1.
- (11.) To ascertain the condition and position of those of our colonists holding and occupying the lands of the State under the several tenures now obtaining:
- Land-for-settlements system has been very successful, 11.
 - Settlers prosperous, 7.

- (12.) Land Conference:
No evidence given.
- (13.) As to the aggregation of estates, large and small:
No aggregation going on, 4.
Tendency the other way, 1.
Land-tax prevents aggregation, 1.
Slight tendency to aggregation, 7.
- (14.) Whether each area of land leased under Land for Settlements Act shall have a separate occupier:
Married man and his wife should be regarded as one in matter of residence, 1.

OTAGO DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

Farmers (including four Land Board members), 100.
Sheep-farmers, 18.
Miners and farmers, 5.
Storekeepers and farmers, 5.
Members local body, 2.
Solicitors, 4.
Crown Lands Rangers, 3.
Merchants, 4.
Storekeepers, 2.
District Land Valuers, 2.
Miners, 2.
Engineers, 2.
Hotelkeeper and runholder, 1.
General agent, 1.
Grain merchant, 1.
Commissioner of Crown Lands, 1.
Journalist, 1.
Accountant, 1.
Road engineer, 1.
Butcher, 1.
Carpenter, 1.
Compositor, 1.
Contractor, 1.
Builder, 1.
Grocer, 1.
Station-manager, 1.
Nurseryman, 1.
Manager, Loan and Mercantile Company, 1.

- (1.) Constitution of Land Boards:
Present constitution satisfactory—no alteration needed, 36.
Satisfactory, but more extended powers should be given, 19.
Satisfactory, but Boards should be more representative, 18.
Satisfactory, but superfluous, 1.
Crown tenants should be represented on Board, 7.
Crown tenants should not be represented on Board, 1.
Board should comprise nominated and elected members, 4.
Elective Boards preferable, 6.
- (2.) Tenures upon which land may be obtained and occupied, and whether any alteration of law is desirable:
Freehold preferred, as occupier enabled to improve land more, obtain larger advances, and cannot be ejected, 24.
Freehold preferred, as unearned increment belongs to occupier, 2.
Freehold preferred under deferred-payment system—best for poor man, 26.
Lease to commence with option of acquiring freehold, to enable men with small means to take up land 40.
Lease to commence with right to pay off portion of price, 5.
Lease in perpetuity, without option of freehold, 21.
Lease in perpetuity, without revaluation, 3.
Lease in perpetuity as good as freehold, 3.
Lease in perpetuity unfair to State, as no revaluation provided, 6.
Lease in perpetuity satisfactory, but requires amendment, and no restrictions needed in lease, 2.
Lease in perpetuity for land-for-settlements tenants, 3.
Lease in perpetuity preferable, as tenant has more money to improve land, and it is better for State, 7.
Lease for shorter term than lease in perpetuity, without option of freehold, State to be landlord, and no money-lender to acquire interest, 7.

Small-grazing-run lease satisfactory, 1.

Pastoral leases should be for longer term, with securer tenure, to enable tenants to improve and grass land, 14.

- (3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being, and unnecessary to interests of State:

Grazing-run tenants should be allowed to crop, 12.

Land Board should have discretionary powers *re* cropping, 3.

Land Board should not have discretionary powers *re* cropping, 1.

Restrictions should be relaxed in certain cases, 8.

Present conditions satisfactory—no complaints, 7.

No cropping restrictions after a certain period, 5.

- (4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:—

Conditions should be relaxed in certain cases, 5.

Board should have discretionary powers to relax conditions, 5.

Conditions should be relaxed in case of runs, 1.

Satisfactory as at present—no complaints, 1.

Board not to have any discretionary powers, 1.

Residential conditions to be enforced in all cases, 3.

- (5.) If alterations are necessary in law regarding tenure, &c.:

No opinions given.

- (6.) If it is expedient that the homestead privileges be reintroduced:

In favour of reintroduction of system, 2.

Homestead system not required in Otago, 1.

- (7.) As to the working of the present ballot system, and applications for land:

Present system satisfactory, 7.

Single ballot, without grouping, best system, 12.

Present system unsatisfactory—no ballot needed, 3.

Auction system better than ballot, 2.

Preference should be given in ballot to certain classes of applicants, 3.

- (8.) Area and amount of loading for roads, how expended, &c.:

Loading expended satisfactorily—no complaints, 5.

System of loading should be made more use of, 2.

Loading not distributed fairly, and money badly spent, 9.

Settlers should not have to pay for roading—Government should pay for all roading, 6.

System a bad one, 1.

Loans for roading should be paid off, and not allowed to be a burden on sections for all time, 1.

Co-operative system of roading a bad one, 2.

- (9.) Value of land now leased from Crown when so leased, and at last valuation:

Value of leaseholds has increased and much improved, 7.

Value of above has not increased, 2.

Unearned increment of leaseholds belongs to State, 1.

Unearned increment of leaseholds belongs to tenants, 4.

- (10.) Whether Crown tenants are placed at disadvantage in borrowing privately or from Advances to Settlers Office:

Present system of advances from Advances to Settlers Office satisfactory and beneficial to country, 10.

Present system satisfactory, but the margin of advances should be increased, 9.

Present system satisfactory, but should lend more on leasehold property, 5.

System unsatisfactory—too much delay, &c., 6.

Margin of advances should not be increased, 1.

Trustees should be allowed to lend money on leaseholds, 2.

- (11.) Condition and position of Crown tenants:

Present position very satisfactory, 8.

Land-for-settlements policy a great success, as it has assisted settlement and helped tenants, 7.

- (13.) As to aggregation of estates, and maximum area that should be held by settlers under various classes, &c.:

Area a man can hold should be limited, both in area and in value of holding, 17.

Area a man can hold should be limited to 640 acres of first-class land, or 2,000 acres of second-class land, 3.

Area should be limited to 6,000 acres of land, 1.

Area a man can hold should be unlimited, 2.

General recommendations—

Large runs in Otago should be subdivided and opened for settlement, 30.

Large estates in Otago should be acquired by Government, and subdivided for settlement purposes, 10.

Water for irrigation purposes much needed in Otago, 15.
 Government should encourage rabbit-exporting, 2.
 Tree-planting should be encouraged in Otago, 2.
 Pomahaka Estate too highly valued—rents to be reduced, 4.
 Grassing of pastoral runs should be encouraged by Government, 13.
 Mining reserves should be let on occupation leases, 1.
 Runs in Otago not very suitable for subdivision, 3.
 All applicants should be examined by Land Board, 2.
 There should be no examination of applicants by Land Board, 1.
 Married women should be allowed to hold as much land as single women, 1.
 Government should acquire the water-races in Otago, 1.
 Land Board should have power to alter rents, 2.
 Crown tenants should be exempt from taxation, 1.
 There should be no exemption from taxation, 2.

Endowments in Otago—

Power to acquire freehold of endowments should not be given, 7.
 Power to acquire freehold might be allowed, 2.
 School Commissioners' leases should be more liberal, 2.
 Endowments should be administered by Land Board, 2.
 Endowments should not be administered by Land Board, 1.
 Endowments should be leased with revaluation clause, 1.
 High-school endowments are too highly rented, 1.

SOUTHLAND DISTRICT.

Occupation of witnesses—

Members of local bodies, Land Boards, &c., 7.
 Village settlers, fruit-growers, market-gardeners, &c., 4.
 Farmers, 83.
 Civil servants, 5.
 Miners, 7.
 Sawmillers, 4.
 Tradesmen, 5.
 Journalists, solicitors, &c., 2.
 Land agents, merchants, &c., 3.
 School Commissioners and officers, 1.

(1.) Constitution of Land Boards:

Favour nominative system as at present, 17.
 Greater discretionary powers should be given the Land Boards, 7.
 Favour nominative system, but Crown tenants should be represented, 4.
 Miners should be represented on Land Boards, 1.
 Appeal Court should be set up, 3.
 Elective system impracticable, 2.
 Boards should be partially elective in order to represent Crown tenants, 3.
 Advocate elective system, 2.

(2.) The tenures upon which lands may be obtained and occupied, and whether in the interests of the colony any alteration of the law is desirable:

Favour option of purchase as a desirable sentiment and in the interests of settlement, 26.
 Favour option of purchase for financial reasons, and security of tenure, &c., 19.
 Option should be given subject to stringent improvement conditions, 4.
 Option of purchase should be given at original valuation, 5.
 Option should be given in the case of ordinary Crown lands to encourage settlement, but not under the Land for Settlements Act, 1.
 Favour deferred-payment system, 10.
 Favour occupation-with-right-of-purchase system, 4.
 Option of purchase should be given at revaluation, 1.
 Favour leasehold because capital available, 11.
 Favour lease-in-perpetuity tenure, 6.
 Mining districts occupation licenses should be changed to lease in perpetuity, 6.
 Village-homestead system should be abolished because holdings too small, 1.
 Miners should compensate farmers for loss of land, 5.
 Land-tenures should conserve mining rights, 4.
 Favour periodical revaluation, 5.
 Object to revaluation, 11.
 Object to revaluation except in cases where rents too high, 2.
 Pastoral licensees should be given longer tenures, 3.

(3.) Whether Crown tenants labour under restrictions inimical to their well-being, and unnecessary in the interests of the State:

Cropping regulations should be modified and in discretion of Land Board, 4.
 Cropping regulations should be abolished, 2.
 Cropping restrictions necessary, 1.
 Crown tenants in fear of Noxious Weeds Act, as too expensive to clear land, 4.
 Runholders should be allowed to cultivate for winter feed, 7.
 Runholders should be given fair valuation for improvements and surface-sowing, 7.

- (4.) Whether the residential conditions now existing are too exacting, and require relaxing, and, if so, in what direction:
 Compulsory, except in discretion of Land Boards where no roads, schools, &c., 3.
 Residence should be compulsory, 2.
 Residence conditions should be modified where improvements effected, 2.
- (5.) Also if alterations and variations are necessary in the law regarding tenure and occupation, owing to the varying conditions existing in respect of the climate and land-configuration in the several parts of the colony:
 Unnecessary, 2.
 Land districts should be considered separately, 1.
- (6.) Also whether it is expedient that the homestead privileges, as indicated in the Appendix to "The Land Act, 1885," should be reintroduced:
 Might be applied to Stewart Island with modifications, 5.
 Should be applied to homesteads on pastoral runs, 1.
 Should be applied to very poor lands of the colony, 1.
 Should not be reintroduced, 1.
- (7.) As to the working of the present ballot system, and the dealing with applications for land:
 Approve of system, 9.
 Second ballot and grouping should be abolished, 5.
 Women should have same privileges as men, 1.
 Preference should be given to unsuccessful applicants at former ballots, 3.
 Should be limitation to two years between successful applications, 1.
 Condemn auction system as liable to raise rentals too high, and ballot should be applied to all Crown lands, 5.
- (8.) The area of lands loaded for roads, the amount of such loading, the amount expended on roads in or giving access to lands loaded, whether good faith has been kept in regard to them, and as to the amount borrowed, spent, and available:
 Good faith has been kept, 1.
 Local bodies should expend loading, 2.
 Approves of system, 1.
 Condemn system, and roading should be made out of Consolidated Fund, 2.
 Loading not expended to advantage, 4.
 Loading should not go on for 999 years, 3.
 Loading too heavy, 1.
 Roads should be formed before lands opened, 2.
- (9.) To ascertain the value of the land now leased from the Crown at the time the land was so leased, and the valuation of the land at its last valuation:
 No increase in values, 1.
 General increase owing to progress of settlement, &c., on good lands, 8.
 Increment belongs to settler, 5.
 Method of valuing unsatisfactory, 5.
- (10.) Whether lessees of the Crown are placed at a disadvantage in borrowing privately or from the Advances to Settlers Office:
 Approve of system, 3.
 Disadvantages exist in obtaining loans on leasehold owing to small valuations, delays, &c., 9.
 Advances should be limited to £500, 1.
 Advances to Settlers Department should lend up to a larger percentage on improvements on leaseholds, 9.
 No disadvantages, 3.
 Advances should be made during first year, 2.
- (11.) To ascertain the condition and position of those of our colonists holding and occupying the lands of the State under the several tenures now obtaining:
 General prosperity in district, 3.
 Improved-farm settlements a partial failure, 2.
 Land-for-settlements policy a success, 9.
 No market, Stewart Island, 1.
 Rents too high—Merrivale, 4; Beaumont, 3; Otau, 3.
 Improved-farm holdings too small, 4.
 No schools, 2.
- (13.) To investigate and report as to the aggregation of estates, large and small, the maximum area which should be held under the several classes, and if in certain districts variations are advisable:
 Aggregation of small holdings, but no danger of large aggregation, 7.
 No aggregation, 7.
 Area of freehold should be limited, 7.
 Graduation tax should be increased to prevent aggregation, 1.

- (14.) To inquire and report whether each area of land leased under the Land for Settlements Acts shall have a separate occupier, and the area not to be increased or boundaries altered without the direct sanction of Parliament:

Areas might be subdivided with approval of Land Boards upon death of lessee if his will so directed, 2.

General—

- Rabbits increasing, 5.
- Rabbits decreasing, 1.
- Noxious weeds spreading, and steps should be taken to prevent same, 16.
- Government should clear Crown lands of noxious weeds, 3.
- Sheep will keep down ragwort, but injurious to cattle, 8.
- Californian thistle can be kept down by salting, burning, &c., 6.
- Pastoral runs should be cut up into smaller holdings, 5.
- Approve of surface-sowing on runs, 9.
- Grasses suitable for surface-sowing—white clover, timothy, cocksfoot, and Chewing's fescue, 5.
- Government might supply seed, 3.
- Sawmillers should be allowed to cut out scenic reserves in Stewart Island, as no damage done from a scenic point of view, 4.
- Timber should be milled before lands opened for selection, 1.
- Dredging with elevator dredges destructive to land, but with the shoot system practically no damage done, 4.
- Mining should take preference of agriculture in mining districts, 7.
- Good agricultural land should not be dredged, 5.

Endowments—

- Satisfied with administration of School Commissioners, 3.
- State should administer endowments, preferably Land Boards, 9.
- Valuation should be given for improvements, 13.
- Lessees should be given right of renewal, 4.
- Endowments should be let under lease in perpetuity, 11.
- Endowments should be let with right of purchase, 3.
- Should not be sold, 5.
- Might be sold in interests of settlement, 5.
- In interests of education endowments should not be interfered with, 1.

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