

Of this area 225,128 acres were in the North Island, the greater portion being for close settlement, and 416,005 acres were in the South Island, of which 191,729 acres were under the pastoral-run system, leaving 224,276 acres for close settlement, including small grazing-runs. Therefore the area opened for close settlement in each Island has practically been equal. Here it seems a suitable opportunity to review the whole position, which must be faced, viz.—(a) What lands has the Government of New Zealand left for settlement purposes? and (b) what is necessary to keep up the supply to satisfy the ever-increasing demand for Crown lands, a fact which every opening of such lands most strongly exemplifies?

(a.) The position of the Crown lands left for settlement may, I think, be best set forth by the following :—

On hand, 1st April, 1905	2,610,000
Opened during year 1905-6 (of all kinds)	641,133
Total on hand and opened	3,251,133
Deduct lands selected during year (see Table B)	787,927
Leaving available for application, 1st April, 1906	2,463,206
Add to this Crown land available but not yet surveyed or opened for selection, say	1,025,89
Leaves a total of all lands available for settlement of	3,489,100

This total includes lands of every description, including the balances of all estates purchased but not selected and pastoral lands fit only for selection in large areas as runs. It may be mentioned that, by the recent decision of Cabinet, 1,000,000 acres of ordinary Crown lands are to be set aside as an endowment for the purposes of education, and 500,000 acres as an endowment for hospital and charitable-aid purposes, and this area of 1,500,000 acres will have to be dealt with by special legislation and under special conditions, so that the area remaining open under ordinary settlement conditions will be very perceptibly diminished.

The position to be faced is that referred to in (b): What is necessary to be done to keep up the supply to meet the ever-increasing demand for settlement lands? The answer is apparent to every one—viz., only by two, or perhaps three, methods: (1) By a vigorous prosecution of the acquisition of improved lands under the Land for Settlements Acts; (2) by the acquisition by purchase of lands held by the Maori owners, and which are not in profitable use; and (3) by the Maori owners themselves opening these lands for settlement by Europeans. What is being done in the way of purchase of Native lands is more especially set forth in a separate paragraph under the heading of "The Maori Land Settlement Act, 1905."

LAND SELECTED, 1905-6.

This heading suggests at once the pertinent question, What is the total number of new selectors? These number 2,227 (slightly less than last year) who have selected a total area of 787,927 acres (also slightly less than the previous year) with an average of 353 acres to each selection, against an average of 424 acres for each selection last year, whilst the revenue received is some £40,000 more than last year, having reached a total of £550,248. The subjoined Table B will show at a glance the volume of the transactions and the various tenures involved :—

TABLE B.—NUMBER of NEW SELECTORS, and AREA taken up, from 1st April, 1905, to 31st March, 1906, and Total Amount of Revenue received during the Year.

Nature and Tenure of Lands selected.	Number of Selectors.	Area.	Average Holding.	Cash received on Past and Current Transactions.
		A. R. P.	A. R. P.	£ s. d.
Town lands sold for cash	79	42 2 30	0 2 6	9,751 10 6
Suburban lands sold for cash	30	138 3 18	4 2 20	
Rural lands sold for cash	110	10,940 3 39	99 1 34	
Perpetual leases made freehold .. .. .	..	..	..
(village) .. .. .	..	..	..	6,270 18 2
Occupation with right of purchase made freehold .. .. .	..	..	..	366 5 8
Improved-farm settlements made freehold .. .. .	..	..	..	19,539 8 1
Deferred payment instalments .. .. .	..	..	..	1,167 13 3
Perpetual leases	1	126 3 15	126 3 15	5,813 9 4
Occupation with right of purchase	888	157,432 1 24	405 3 0	3,886 10 3
Lease in perpetuity	293	79,428 1 25	271 0 14	40,029 11 4
Agricultural lease .. .. .	..	..	..	37,047 17 7
				23 4 5