

be locked up owing to the objection that possible mining interests are prejudiced. It cannot be denied that very large areas within mining districts might reasonably be exempted from mining, for the country has been prospected over and over again, and has not proved payably auriferous.

I would recommend for the favourable consideration of the Government that a report be obtained as to the area which may reasonably be exempted from mining, and that it be released under section 19 of "The Mining Act, 1905." The probability is that if the lands in the Inangahua and Buller Counties be not made available there will be a large exodus of ex-miners and others from those localities.

MEETINGS OF THE LAND BOARD.

Eleven meetings of the Land Board were held at Nelson, one at Westport, and one at Reefton during the year. The increase of business in the southern part of this district is very noticeable, and probably the Board will make two visits to Westport and Reefton during the current year.

DEPARTMENTAL.

I visited nearly all the localities in Nelson where there are Crown tenants. I have ascertained their requirements, and brought to a satisfactory completion many matters which have been the subject of complaint on the part of the tenants. Having made the acquaintance of the settlers, my correspondence with them has become nearly doubled; but that is, however, a matter of little importance if it tends to a good understanding between the settlers and the Department.

My acknowledgments are due to the office staff for the valuable assistance which they have rendered to me in all departments of the work, and to Ranger Harris, whose intimate knowledge of the district was of great benefit in assisting me to acquire a personal knowledge of the tenants and of the localities where they are settled.

The number of telegrams and letters received and despatched during the year was 14,222. The number of vouchers which passed through the Accountant's office was 649, representing a sum of £15,336 9s. 3d. A total of 3,925 land-sale posters, land guides, and miscellaneous maps were distributed throughout the land district.

F. W. FLANAGAN,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

MARLBOROUGH.

The table below gives a summary of the land transactions within this land district for the year ended 31st March, 1907. The total area dealt with is 33,897 acres, and the amount of receipts was £32,985 15s. 7d., an increase of £2,003 9s. 9d. over last year's returns.

Table showing the Land Transactions and Revenue.

| Nature and Tenure of Lands selected. | Number of Selectors. | Area. | Cash received on Past and Current Transactions. |
|--|----------------------|-------------|---|
| | | A. R. P. | £ s. d. |
| Town lands sold for cash | 1 | 0 1 0 | 275 0 0 |
| Rural lands sold for cash | 4 | 3,083 3 12 | 1,033 15 5 |
| Perpetual lease made freehold | ... | ... | 82 10 0 |
| Occupation with right of purchase made freehold | ... | ... | 63 0 0 |
| Perpetual leases | ... | ... | 30 10 8 |
| Occupation with right of purchase | 3 | 2,646 0 0 | 496 4 5 |
| Lease in perpetuity | 35 | 3,945 2 0 | 2,904 9 1 |
| Village settlement— | | | |
| Perpetual lease | ... | ... | 1 2 6 |
| Lease in perpetuity | ... | ... | 15 17 4 |
| Village-homestead special settlement | ... | ... | 17 12 6 |
| Occupation lease, Mining Districts Land Occupation Act | ... | ... | 27 19 1 |
| Small grazing-runs | ... | ... | 2,749 16 5 |
| Pastoral runs | 2 | 13,880 0 0 | 3,947 1 8 |
| Miscellaneous leases and licenses | 20 | 10,169 3 29 | 2,410 8 7 |
| Miscellaneous | ... | ... | 193 5 3 |
| Land for Settlements Acts— | | | |
| Lease in perpetuity | 7 | 40 1 27 | 12,064 15 8 |
| Small grazing-runs | 1 | 993 0 0 | 5,860 5 10 |
| Miscellaneous | 19 | 136 2 38 | 712 1 2 |
| Cash | 2 | 2 0 0 | 100 0 0 |
| Totals | 94 | 33,897 2 26 | 32,985 15 7 |

During the past year the settlement in this district has been small, because of the limited area of suitable Crown lands available. The demand has been very great, and it is much to be regretted that we have but little land to meet it. There have been, however, ninety-one new tenants added to our