

PAYMENTS TO LOCAL BODIES.

Payments to local bodies have been made during the year as under :—

	Westland County.			[Grey County.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
"Halves" under "The Timber and Flax Royalties Act, 1905"	1,346	7	0	3,089	18	9
"Thirds" under "The Land Act, 1892"	658	8	9	145	17	6
	£2,004	15	9	£3,235	16	3

The total payments for the year amount to £5,240 12s., being an increase of £1,627 0s. 3d. over the amount paid last year. These amounts have been paid over only after careful consideration of the proposals for expenditure submitted by the local bodies.

ERADICATION OF NOXIOUS WEEDS.

An unexpended balance of £152 8s. 9d. was brought forward under this heading from last year, and of this £147 4s. 3d. was expended under the supervision of the Inspector of Stock in clearing ragwort and Californian thistle from river-bed and Crown lands to prevent these weeds from spreading on to adjoining alienated land which had already been cleared. A large amount of necessary work still remains to be done.

DEPARTMENTAL.

Thirteen ordinary and special meetings of the Land Board have been held during the year. 1,028 applications for land were received and dealt with. In addition to these, many applications for approval of transfers and mortgages, Rangers' reports, and other business were dealt with. The number of letters dealt with was 8,000; notices sent out, 4,134.

The Receiver of Land Revenue's dealings totalled £17,540 7s. 3d., for which 1,574 receipts were issued.

Three hundred and seventy-three leases have been made out, 384 returns and reports submitted, 175 audit cards sent, and 1,166 posters forwarded to applicants for land.

In the Accountant's branch 1,488 vouchers, and 2,590 cheques, for £21,461 8s. 3d., were drawn on Imprest Account.

I have much pleasure in acknowledging the faithful help which has been rendered by the staff during the past year, and would especially record my thankful appreciation of the able administration of the Department by the Chief Draughtsman, who was so cordially assisted by the other officers during my recent illness.

G. J. ROBERTS,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

CANTERBURY.

LANDS OPENED FOR SELECTION.

The area of land offered for public disposal during the past year has been very small, owing to the paucity of available Crown lands in the district. The total number of allotments offered for disposal after public advertisement was 122, comprising a total area of 1,265 acres 2 roods 1 perch.

The lands offered for cash sale at auction consisted of sixty-four allotments in the Township of Hinds, and 22 allotments in the newly established Tekapo Village, at the southern end of Lake Tekapo, on the coach-road to Mount Cook: out of these two blocks fifteen allotments were sold, nearly all at the upset prices, and realised £95. The rural lands similarly offered consisted of three allotments in the Weld, Hororata, and Shepherd's Bush Districts; the upset price was £600, and the price realised was £920. The rural allotment of 271 acres in the Fighting Hill District, offered under the optional system, was selected for cash. The ten village-homestead allotments offered for renewable lease are situated in the Stour Village Settlement, near the Mount Somers Coal-pit, and were previously open under the lease-in-perpetuity system; there does not, however, appear to be any demand at present for small lots in this locality. The seventeen blocks offered for lease by auction or tender are situated in various localities, and were all disposed of, the total upset rentals being £84 7s. 6d. and the rentals realised £193 0s. 6d. per annum.

LAND TRANSACTIONS.

The following table shows the number of land transactions during the year, and the area represented thereby; the number of selectors and area held under the various tenures at the 31st March, 1908; and the total revenue received from all sources during the year :—