

OTAGO.

The annual returns of transactions in respect of ordinary Crown lands and endowments for the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1898, forwarded herewith, disclose the whole scope of the year's operations and the position at the date mentioned of the several classes of land-tenure, and they may be considered as requiring but little note or comment. I will, however, briefly refer to some of their salient features, and make such remarks and explanations with reference thereto as may seem to be necessary or desirable.

Summary of Transactions.—The subjoined summary in the usual form shows the selections during the year, the revenue collected, &c., in a concise manner. As compared with the transactions of 1896-97, it will be seen that there is a slight decrease in almost every item, the total difference in the column of selections, &c., being ninety-five in number and 62,200 acres in area. The difference in revenue I have already stated. The total area held shows an increase of 145 holders, but a decrease in area of 58,498 acres, the decrease in area being chiefly in pastoral lands.

SUMMARY of LAND TRANSACTIONS, 1897-98.

Class of Selection.	Transactions during Year.				Area held at 31st March, 1898.				Revenue received during the Year.		
	Number.	Area.			Number.	Area.					
		A.	R.	P.		A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
Cash	28	600	2	14	...	...	...	...	974	4	0
Deferred payment	...	...	...	...	116	26,783	3	27	2,993	11	7
Deferred payment made freehold	29	6,425	3	19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Perpetual lease	...	...	...	...	451	82,541	3	38	3,097	5	7
Perpetual lease made freehold ...	9	834	1	14	...	...	...	...	722	15	0
Occupation with right of purchase	10	1,328	2	4	91	17,374	1	10	562	9	5
Lease in perpetuity	65	12,491	1	34	533	140,010	3	27	3,540	11	9
Lease in perpetuity, exchange from other tenures	9	3,516	1	10							
Land for settlement—											
Lease in perpetuity	84	13,015	2	36	257	33,494	3	10	9,176	18	10
Village lease in perpetuity ...	2	25	0	0	29	402	3	37	321	13	3
Small grazing-runs	2	2,452	3	27	3	3,667	1	30	265	13	8
Miscellaneous licenses	31	364	2	22	39	765	2	1	58	15	11
Miscellaneous receipts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	56	18	10
Agricultural leases	5	257	3	15	19	608	0	35	115	6	6
Village settlement—											
Cash	1	1	0	36	...	...	...	...	10	0	0
Deferred payment	...	...	...	...	5	187	2	36	57	5	10
Deferred payment made freehold	4	107	0	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Perpetual lease	...	...	...	...	42	933	2	33	99	1	11
Occupation with right of purchase	...	...	...	...	5	3	2	28	1	0	6
Lease in perpetuity	27	493	2	31	133	2,123	1	5	139	3	6
Village-homestead special settlement	...	...	...	...	86	1,393	1	25	R.116	10	2
Special-settlement association ...	...	...	...	...	15	2,955	1	12	I. 68	1	2
Improved-farm settlement	1	70	0	0	76	9,748	3	38	96	9	6
Mining districts land occupation	18	941	0	20	81	3,449	1	22	13	16	5
Homestead lands	...	...	...	...	3	206	2	37	193	2	5
Small grazing-runs	24	45,667	0	24	265	517,278	3	22	...	...	...
Pastoral licenses	27	383,667	0	4	247	4,197,796	1	21	11,358	13	10
Coal and mineral leases	2	5	0	0	370	80,756	2	21	30,802	7	0
Timber-cutting	4	45	0	0							
Miscellaneous licenses	75	24,550	0	1	...	...	...	...	190	7	9
Survey-fees	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	4	0
Crown-grant fees	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	774	6	6
Other sources	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	54	17	9
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	79	6	0
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	506	0	9
Total Crown lands	457	496,860	1	32	2,866	5,122,484	0	35	66,458	19	4
Endowments totals	2	13,568	2	10	52	47,113	2	17	1,292	16	9
Gross totals	459	510,429	0	2	2,918	5,169,597	3	12	67,751	16	1

Revenue.—The gross receipts of 1897-98, which include those under the Land for Settlements Acts and the few endowment lands administered by the Land Board, amounted to £67,751 16s. 1d., being less than the previous year by £3,395 6s. 5d., and £2,113 18s. 10d. below the estimate for the year. The items in which there was the greatest deficiency are deferred payments, lease in perpetuity, and miscellaneous. In forwarding the estimates for the present year I stated the reasons for the deficiency to be—(1) Fewer completions of deferred-payment purchases than expected;