

It is not possible to estimate with exactness for any one year the probable receipts under the deferred-payment and perpetual-lease systems; but activity in the acquisition of the freehold may be expected during the next few years, when the right lapses, either by extinction of the system or the time-limit fixed by section 150 of "The Land Act, 1885." Other disturbing elements tending to a falling-off in revenue in future years are probable, such as failure in supply of Crown lands suitable for townships, and an expected reduction in miscellaneous receipts.

Before closing this part of the report I wish to draw attention to the summary of applications received for land, which is as follows:—

					Number of Applications received.	Number of Applications approved.
Cash	...	...	...	...	27	6
Occupation with right of purchase	...	...	...	...	471	120
Lease in perpetuity	...	...	...	...	356	92
Lease in perpetuity, land for settlement	...	...	...	...	14	13
Village homestead, lease in perpetuity	...	...	...	...	128	65
Perpetual lease	...	...	...	...	1	1
Village homestead, perpetual lease	...	...	...	...	1	1
Miscellaneous licenses	...	...	...	...	37	26
Improved farms	...	...	...	...	43	43
Native townships	...	...	...	...	29	29
Totals	...	...	...	...	1,107	396

The 120 occupation-with-right-of-purchase selections show an increase on the previous year, whilst the selections on the lease-in-perpetuity system, including all subdivisions thereof, amounted to 170. The total of 396 excludes auction cash sales, conversions, deferred-payment and perpetual-lease freeholds, and consequently does not harmonize with the general table, where the figures are given as 698.

This current financial year began with 99,086 acres of Crown lands available for selection, a considerable portion of which, however, is not such as to attract settlers.

For the future, the Crown lands suitable in character and quality, facility of access, position, and moderate elevation for ordinary settlement purposes are not extensive.

The Crown still possesses in the Wellington Land District about 831,235 acres, but after making allowance to give effect to the forest-conservation proposals I had the honour to submit for your consideration on the 13th October last, the balance will be found to embrace generally high, hilly, broken, forest, and scrub-clad country, in most instances remote from existing main lines of communication and centres of population. Moreover, these Crown lands are frequently isolated and shut in by Maori and other freehold properties, and the existence of the latter enhances the difficulties and cost of opening such Crown lands for sale, yet they as a rule benefit vastly in the process, at the cost of the country.

Attention is proposed to be given to surveying and opening for selection the following:—

Class.	Area.	Block.	Locality.
	Acres.		
First and second ...	25,000	Tauakira ...	Near Athens, Wanganui River.
First ...	680	Awarua 3d No. 1 ...	Near Taihape.
" ...	1,120	Ngaurekehu ...	Maungakaretu Survey District.
Second ...	10,000	Kaiparoro... ...	West of Eketahuna.
" ...	"	Kaitangata ...	West of Carterton.
" ...	"	Te Mare ...	West of Mauriceville.
" ...	800	Mangapapa ...	Momohaki Survey District.
" ...	25,000	Retaruke and Kirikau	On Wanganui River, in Retaruke Survey District.
First and second ...	25,000	Waimarino ...	Kaitieke Survey District.
First ...	922	Oraukura ...	Near Taihape.
First and second ...	5,000	Rangitatau ...	Nukumaruru Survey District.
" ...	5,000	Undisposed - of sections	Throughout the district.

Last year's published schedules of Native lands under negotiation by the Crown include a number of blocks in the Wellington Land District. These should be handed over at as early a date as possible to the Land Department.

Cash Sales.—The 1,984 acres of rural land taken up under this system comprise five selections, of 1,169 acres, opened under the optional system of the Land Act; six lots, aggregating 415 acres, being lands of special value weighted in some instances with valuable timber or improvements; and a 400-acre lot disposed of to an aboriginal native under special legislative power. The thirty suburban lots disposed of resulted chiefly from auction sales at Raetihi and Taihape. The same remark applies to the 106 town lots sold.

Deferred Payment, Rural.—Deducting the twenty-four holdings made freehold last year, there remain on the books twenty-seven holdings of Crown lands, comprising 10,005 acres and 17 perches, and two holdings on the Wanganui Harbour Board Endowment Block, comprising 251 acres 2 roods. I have to report that there were no forfeitures, but one license was converted to the lease-in-perpetuity system (section 150, "Land Act, 1892").