

The price of stock fell during the slaughtermen's strike, but the drop was only temporary, and good prices are now being realized. In most cases the settlers had good burns, but, owing to the dry autumn, in exposed ridges, &c., the grass did not come away very well. The past winter was very wet, and the roads and bush tracks were often blocked by slips. The local bodies, however, soon removed the obstructions, and it was only in a few cases that settlers suffered any prolonged inconvenience.

The Crown Lands Ranger for the eastern portion of the district reports that settlement still continues to make steady progress throughout the district, and the settlers generally seem prosperous and contented. Some few are now taking advantage of being able to convert their holdings into freeholds.

The season just passed has been a good year for all classes of farm produce, and settlers have benefited thereby.

The major portion of the lands selected in this portion of the district have now been held for a number of years, and the conditions have been fully complied with, the improvements being largely in excess of requirements. Still, selectors continue to add to them each year with new homesteads, stumping and cultivating where there are suitable areas, thereby increasing their carrying-capacity and returns. The dairy industry still continues to flourish, and is one of the principal industries of the district, as every year sees new cheese or butter factories established.

The access to and through the various settlements steadily improves, full-width dray-roads taking the place of 6 ft. tracks; also numerous bridges have been erected over the more dangerous streams—a great boon to settlers.

The Crown Lands Ranger for the south-eastern and southern portions of the district reports that settlement in this part of the land district has prospered along the usual lines. Settlers go in for dairying wherever their holdings are suitable for that purpose; prices ruling for dairy-produce were, however, lower than those obtained last year. The settlers who carry on sheep-farming have had a very successful season.

In the eastern portion of this district the Crown tenants hold chiefly under land-for-settlement conditions. The settlements are now well established, and where they consist of farming land the settlers are doing well. This is very popular, and a good number of prospective settlers would gladly take up agricultural farms if such were available at a reasonable price.

In the western portion the bulk of the tenants hold on village-settlement conditions. These settlements are now well established, and generally all the conditions have been complied with.

Roads for the most part are in good order. Some tracks still require widening into dray-roads, these being principally in the Wainuiorua Survey District.

In travelling through the district and conversing with the settlers the Ranger heard no complaints.

TRANSFERS.

During the year under review 184 transfers were completed on ordinary Crown lands, the area transferred being 43,265 acres. On settlement lands twenty-one transfers were registered, representing 5,151 acres; and twenty-four education leases, aggregating 5,812 acres, were transferred. The figures are made up as follows:—

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Ordinary Crown lands—					No.	A.	R.	P.
Occupation with right of purchase	...	...	...	...	45	19,843	3	11
Lease in perpetuity	...	...	...	...	92	12,665	1	29
Renewable lease	...	...	...	...	26	335	2	16
Small grazing-run	...	...	...	...	10	10,326	1	0
Pastoral licenses	...	...	...	...	2	56	0	38
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	9	37	2	31
					184	43,265	0	5
Land for settlements—								
Lease in perpetuity	...	...	...	...	17	4,493	2	8
Renewable lease	...	...	...	...	3	655	1	18
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	1	2	1	0
					21	5,151	0	26
Education leases					24	5,812	1	39

FORFEITURES AND SURRENDERS.

The number of forfeitures during the year was thirty-nine under all tenures, the area forfeited being 3,858 acres. These figures disclose a material increase in number over last year's statistics, the number last year being eighteen.

Six leases, comprising an area of 4,121 acres, were surrendered during the year, included in which were two primary-education reserve leases, of an area of 593 acres.

The annual rental involved in both the forfeitures and the surrenders was £604 8s. 8d.

CONVERSIONS OF TENURE.

Only one conversion of tenure is recorded during the year. This was the conversion of a lease held under village-homestead special-settlement conditions to a renewable lease. The settler thus secures the advantage of a lower rental, but loses the right to acquire the freehold. The area brought under the new tenure is 6 acres, and this area automatically passes into the national endowment.