

AREA OF CROWN LANDS AVAILABLE FOR SETTLEMENT, 31st March, 1893. (First Class valued at £1, Second Class at 10s., and Third Class at 5s. per Acre.)

Name of Block or Locality.	Quality of Land.			Totals.	Name of County within which Lands are situated.
	First Class.	Second Class.	Third Class.		
Within confiscation boundary ..	5,000	..	..	5,000	Stratford County.
" ..	7,000	127,000	58,800	192,800	Clifton County.
" ..	..	36,000	..	36,000	Patea County.
Outside confiscation boundary ..	2,000	9,580	15,360	26,940	Clifton County.
" ..	2,000	9,200	2,000	13,200	Stratford County.
" ..	..	107,600	..	107,600	Patea County.
" ..	..	15,400	..	15,400	Waitotara County.
Totals .. ..	16,000	304,780	76,160	396,940	Valued at £187,430.
NATIVE LANDS BEING ACQUIRED BY THE CROWN.					
Marekawai Block .. ..	3,000	11,500	42,500	57,000	17,000 acres in Clifton County; 40,000 acres in Stratford County.
Whitianga Block .. ..	2,000	10,000	19,000	31,000	Stratford County.
Taumatamahoe Block ..	12,000	45,000	89,000	146,000	122,000 acres in Stratford County; 24,000 acres in Waitotara County.
Totals .. ..	17,000	66,500	150,500	234,000	Valued at £87,875.

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An area of 49,831 acres has been taken up on purely settlement conditions by ninety selectors, as against 36,007 by sixty-three selectors during last year. The average area of the holdings is 553 acres, which is attributable to the class of land now remaining in the hands of the Crown in this district, being generally of a nature that will only admit of its being profitably worked in moderately-sized holdings.

*Cash Sales.*—These have been fourteen in number, nine of which were of rural lands in different parts of the district.

*Deferred Payment.*—Only one deferred-payment selection has been made, and that of a small section of 117 acres. Thirty-nine licensees have acquired the freehold of their holdings, and one surrendered his license, which leaves 132 now holding 17,944 acres. As selection under this system is abolished, in a few years, through effluxion of time and freeholds otherwise made, holdings under this tenure will be a thing of the past.

*Perpetual Lease.*—Twenty-six selections, comprising 13,541 acres, have been made, and, singularly, the same number have been converted into freehold. The surrenders, forfeitures, and exchanges, numbering nine in all, reduce the number of lessees on the books from 312 in 1892 to 303 at the present time.

*Lease in Perpetuity and Occupation with Right of Purchase.*—The first land thrown open under "The Land Act, 1892," was in December last; and of the twenty-eight selections made since that date nineteen have been on lease in perpetuity, and nine occupation with right of purchase. The former appears to be the favourite tenure, as, of forty-two applications received under the optional system, the proportion is the same. Three perpetual-lease holders have availed themselves of the right to change the tenure to lease in perpetuity, and there is a prospect of a large number following their example.

*Village Settlement.*—There have been four cash selections, and one small farm on deferred payment. Of the fifty-four of the latter class on the books on the 31st March, 1892, eleven have been made freehold during the year, and one forfeited.

*Village Homestead Special Settlements.*—There is little to add to what was reported last year. The two settlements are Woodville and Puketitiri, numbering thirty-one settlers, with an average holding of 6½ acres. As stated in a previous report to you, the Woodville Settlement is a particularly successful one, and is, without question, fulfilling the most sanguine expectations. The regularity of the payments of rent and interest is in itself an indication of prosperity, only three settlers in both settlements being in arrears with their payments of rent and interest, to the inconsiderable amount of £4 7s. 2d. And when it is taken into account that road or other works are not provided for them, but that they are entirely self-supporting, it must be considered eminently satisfactory. Last year the Government was liable for advances to the amount of £214 18s. 6d.; but as the five years has now elapsed during which the privilege lasted, no claims can now be recognised, though there remains a liability of £70 through one application having been made within the specified time, but not yet dealt with. There are circumstances, however, which make it doubtful if it will be granted.

*Special-settlement Association.*—The Waipawa and Danevirke Settlements, which practically form one, being separated only by a road, continue to do well, and, though twenty-four have acquired the freehold, it is gratifying to find no tendency to the aggregation of large areas which has unfortunately occurred in so many instances in the past. The other settlement is that of the Liberal Small-farm Association, near Danevirke, balloted for in January last. It consists of fourteen selectors, with 200 acres each. Being entirely forest country, and the felling season not commenced, no improvements have yet been made.

*Small Grazing-runs and Pastoral Licenses.*—These stand, in regard to number, the same as last year, no new ones having been offered; but improvements have been steadily going on.