

Table J, *Village Settlements, Deferred Payment*, is the next table requiring any mention. There were no selections during the year, the total area held being 645 acres 1 rood 31 perches, by sixty-eight persons, the annual instalments being £485 3s. 10d. One forfeiture of 3 acres took place, and eleven freeholds, of an area of 76 acres and 13 perches, were acquired during the year.

Table K, *Village Settlements, Perpetual Lease*.—There were also no selectors under this system during the year, the total area held being 132 acres and 12 perches, by fourteen people, the amount of rental being £8 4s. 2d. Eight selectors obtained their titles to 112 acres and 21 perches.

Table L, *Village Homestead Special Settlements*.—There were fourteen selectors, of 98 acres 2 roods 7 perches, an average of 7 acres and 23 perches, during the year, the total area held being 2,747 acres and 19 perches, by 218 selectors. Advances to the amount of £347 5s. for houses, bush-felling, &c., were made during the year, the total amount advanced to date being £6,295 19s. 11d., the annual payments of rental and interest on advances being £491 10s. There were three forfeitures of 30 acres during the year.

Table M, *Special-settlement Associations*.—This table comprises two systems—viz., those selected on deferred payments under the special-settlement regulations of the 5th December, 1885, which have since been repealed, and farm homestead associations taken up on lease under the regulations of the 15th December, 1892.

Under the former system there are 582 selectors, holding 58,308 acres 1 rood 31 perches. The number of selectors residing on the land is 212, representing an area of 18,981 acres and 12 perches. One hundred and eighteen selectors took out their titles, for 11,858 acres 2 roods 13 perches, and five holdings, of 508 acres 2 roods 33 perches, were forfeited during the year. Under the latter system twenty-three association blocks have been surveyed, and the sections balloted for and registered on the books, although as yet the prices of the sections have not been finally fixed, but it is anticipated that the average will be about £1 2s. 6d. per acre. These associations comprise 671 selectors, holding 127,656 acres 1 rood 10 perches, an average of 194 acres each.

In addition to these there are fifteen associations, aggregating 660 members for 130,890 acres, the survey of which was not sufficiently advanced to allow of the ballots taking place in time to get them recorded in the books, and consequently they could not be included in the returns of lands disposed of. One of these has since been balloted for, and the preliminary surveys of five of the others are sufficiently advanced to allow of the ballots taking place as soon as I can arrange to hold them.

Table O, *Small Grazing-runs*.—Only one selection, of 1,430 acres, was taken up under this system during the year, the total area now held being 85,559 acres and 30 perches, by eighty-nine lessees, the annual rental being £2,238 15s. One forfeiture took place during the year, of an area of 1,035 acres 2 roods.

Table P, *Pastoral Licenses*.—One selection, of 14,000 acres, being all that was offered for selection, was made during the year. There are twenty-four selectors, holding 41,196 acres, now on the books, the annual rental being £411 16s. 2d.

Table R, *Revenue*.—The total amount of revenue collected during the year was £52,092 18s. 9d. These amounts agreed fairly well with the estimates, but a close agreement cannot, of course, be expected, owing to the alteration in the tenures by the new Land Act, and the great difficulty in estimating how much will be received on account of deferred-payment and perpetual-lease sections made freehold, the only item requiring special mention being cash £14,523 19s. 7d., of which the large sum of £11,969 6s. 5d. represents money received in the purchase of the freehold of land selected on perpetual lease.

Table S, *Arrears*.—These amount to £8,347 2s. 8d. owing by 1,028 selectors, being principally the payments due on the 1st January last, as against £4,005 12s. 11d. owing by 529 selectors on the 1st April last year. This large increase was caused through the notices to selectors of payments due on the 1st January last being delayed, but, judging from the large number of payments which came in during March, it is anticipated that the arrears will be as small as usual by the end of June.

*New Land opened for Sale Last Year*.—The principal blocks opened for sale were the Mangoirā Coal Creek, Otamakapua-Mangawharariki, Otaranoho, and Wharita Blocks. The area of land offered for sale during the year was 63,597 acres. Of this, new land not previously offered amounted to 33,089 acres, the area disposed of aggregating 22,579 acres. The area disposed of on all systems during the year was 170,296 acres, showing an excess over last year of 87,839 acres. This is accounted for by the large area—viz., 127,656 acres—taken up by farm homestead associations. The number of selectors during the year was 818, and the average area selected was 212 acres. The number of freeholds acquired was 224, and the area of the whole amounted to 31,423 acres and 10 perches.

*Town-land Sale*.—I held a most successful sale at Wanganui of the Raetihi and Ohakune Townships, in the Waimarino Block, eighty quarter-acre sections in the former township fetching from £7 to £60 per allotment, the sale realising £1,600.

*Land to be offered for Sale during Next Year*.—The Otamakapua-Rangitikei Block, containing 7,600 acres, has had roads graded and laid out through it, and will be offered for sale at an early date. It is fairly good land, and will be eagerly competed for. Lithographs are also now being prepared of the Kaitangata, Te Mara, and Kaiparoro Blocks, containing 58,700 acres of second-class pastoral land lying west of Carterton, Mauriceville, and Eketahuna, and although a good deal of it will not sell at present, as it is only second-class pastoral country, yet there is some demand for portions adjoining the present settlements, and a portion of it will be taken up.

The balance of the Fruit Growers' Association Block, containing about 4,000 acres, at Waikanae, will also be ready to put in the market shortly, and, though it is only pastoral land, most of it will be readily taken up.

I also propose to get the open country in the Kerikau and Retaruke Blocks, adjoining the