

area of 53,646 acres of rural land; nine small grazing-runs, totalling 20,394 acres; and forty-five miscellaneous licenses for 5,891 acres. (See also special paragraph on page xvi.)

In the report for the year 1901-2 it was explained that the falling-off in the number of selections and revenue under some of the systems of land tenure was due to the fact that suitable land had become scarce. It will be readily understood that this argument has even greater force as regards the operations of the last financial year, and it will be accepted as a gratifying and reassuring evidence that in the face of the drawbacks of remoteness and inaccessibility of the lands thrown open the people are as eager and determined as ever to acquire holdings for settlement and utilisation.

The result of condensing and grouping the above transactions for the year is shown in the following table, which brings out the principal points for convenient and ready reference:—

TABLE C.—COMPARISON of OPERATIONS during Year, under PRINCIPAL HEADINGS, with those for previous Year.

Tenure.	1901-1902.		1902-1903.	
	Number of Selectors.	Area.	Number of Selectors.	Area.
		Acres.		Acres.
Cash sales*	510	27,300	393	17,203
Deferred payment	1	52
Perpetual lease	1	10
Occupation with right of purchase	448	128,894	403	118,557
Lease in perpetuity†	573	118,669	706	173,669
Pastoral and small grazing runs	92	685,952	174	1,164,705
Mining and occupation leases	72	2,535	55	2,469
Miscellaneous leases	462	130,674	516	113,064
New transactions	2,159	1,094,086	2,247	1,589,667
Forfeitures and surrenders	288	145,923	410	293,572
Net increase	1,871	948,163	1,837	1,296,095

* Inclusive of subdivisions of town and suburban lands.

† " " subdivision of land for settlements.

Interest has always been manifested not only as to the areas in which the Crown estate is passing into the hands of selectors, but also as to the particular tenure under which they are taken up, hence the following remarks are submitted.

Following the usual custom, and excluding town and suburban lands, pastoral and grazing runs, and miscellaneous leases, it is found that the average of the areas selected is 230 acres, whilst the figures for the preceding year are 228 acres.

A considerable proportion of the settlement lands are opened under the optional system of the Land Act; the average holding taken up during the year amounts to 315 acres, whilst that for the year 1901-2 was 239 acres.

Another interesting and instructive comparison results from a study of the total transactions during the past twelve years, as set forth in

TABLE D.—SUMMARY of LANDS SELECTED.

Year.	Number of Selectors or Purchasers.	Area taken up during Year.	Territorial Revenue.	Total Revenue collected.	Number of Leasehold Tenants on the Books.
		Acres.	£	£	
1891-92	2,519	1,453,082	320,483	324,470	12,735
1892-93	3,071	1,663,339	274,399	310,523	14,261
1893-94	2,876	1,393,918	282,067	347,343	15,081
1894-95	2,547	1,015,577	338,166	375,879	15,326
1895-96	2,865	2,662,344	291,673	345,331	15,683
1896-97	2,173	1,600,695	272,954	360,993	15,527
1897-98	2,058	2,451,062	263,296	359,086	16,365
1898-99	2,542	1,357,466	273,799	385,145	16,572
1899-1900	2,310	1,573,823	262,228	382,943	17,191
1900-1901	2,312	1,667,744	270,203	431,338	18,050
1901-1902	2,159	1,094,086	249,619	427,138	18,521
1902-1903	2,247	1,589,667	252,278	448,380	19,594