

embrace 285,351 acres more country than under the old lapsed and surrendered leases which were formerly held by the present tenants. The particulars of these latter cases are as follows :—

No.	Name.	Old Leases.	Annual Rent.	New Leases.	Annual Rent.
		Acres.	£ s. d.	Acres.	£ s. d.
16	St. James	93,231	801 18 2	199,000	450 0 0
17	St. Helens	87,437	1,604 17 0	145,000	600 0 0
18	Hopefield	7,286	215 6 6	39,548	150 0 0
19	Tarndale	70,243	655 1 0	160,000	300 0 0
22	Motupiko	5,829	72 10 0	5,829	30 0 0
	Total	264,026	3,349 12 8	549,377	1,530 0 0

In explanation of the greatly increased area in the new consolidated licenses, it may be explained that these runs formerly consisted of a large number of separate leases, in many instances disconnected, with varying conditions, and terminating at different periods. These leases, as may be expected, covered the best of the country, and at the same time hindered the occupation by other persons of the intervening and high back country, which was generally infested with rabbits. Under the new licenses the boundaries of the runs are made coterminous, each taking in all the high country adjacent to it, a large extent of which is barren mountain-tops; and the onus of "rabbiting" this extra country is now thrown on the tenants. An application for relief under the Pastoral Tenants Relief Act was made by the occupier of one other run; but, as he was dissatisfied with the terms offered by the Land Board, the run reverted to the Crown, and it has since been disposed of under the Land Act.

Residence and Improvements.—The inspections have not been so general as they should have been, the more distant selections especially, which are scattered throughout the district, not having been visited. Ninety-seven holdings have been visited by staff surveyors working in the localities, but I am unable to report as exhaustively as I could have wished on the manner in which the improvement conditions have been carried out generally. On the ninety-seven holdings inspected improvements to the value of £2,239 8s. 3d. have been effected on the 5,907 acres comprised in them, just treble the amount that the tenants were legally compelled to make. There were twenty-five defaulters among the number, sixteen for non-residence where it was a condition, and nine on account of no improvements having been effected.

Miscellaneous Leases and Licenses.—Exclusive of endowments, the number of holdings is 385, covering an area of 21,629 acres 2 roods 34 perches, with an annual rental of £1,210 19s. 9d. It includes the leases of subdivisions of reserves at Hanmer Plains.

Arrears.—Of the 1,660 tenants in the district, ninety-seven are in arrear, to the amount of £1,449 12s. 10d., and, as this amount exceeds that returned last year, it is necessary to explain that the administration of the Westport Colliery Reserve leases (Westport Town), 224 in number, with arrears amounting to considerably over £1,000, has been taken over, and the rents are now paid to the Receiver of Land Revenue, and accounted for by the Lands Department, instead of by the Warden's Office, as heretofore. I am pleased to state that these arrears have since been greatly reduced, and now stand at £600, and it is expected during the coming year to have this sum very considerably lessened. Then, £552 is owing on two mineral leases held by the Mokihinui Coal Company, now in course of liquidation, but action is being taken to, if possible, recover the amount. There is also £150 of outstanding arrears owing on three of the Haven Road Reserve leases at the Port, Nelson, and steps are now being taken for its recovery. It will thus be seen that nearly the whole of the arrears is owing by lessees of town lots, of whom there are forty, and a mining company in liquidation. The defaulters among the remaining 1,618 tenants owe the comparatively small sum of £147; and it is a noteworthy fact that only £49 15s. of arrears is owing by the 911 selectors of deferred-payment, perpetual-lease, occupation-with-right-of-purchase, and lease-in-perpetuity lands.

Coal-mines.—The particulars of the output and royalties received from the two mines at Coalbrookdale and Ngakawau are as follows :—

Mines.	Output.	Royalty, 6d. per Ton.	Less Dead-rent.	Royalty received.
	Tons.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Buller Coalfields Reserve— Westport Coal Company ...	243,618	6,090 9 0	1,358 0 0	4,732 9 0

The Cardiff Mine, at Mokihinui, has also had a large output, but the royalties in this case are received by the Warden, as well as those of the Blackball and Brunner, in the Grey district.

Revenue.—The revenue received during the year from Crown lands was £15,884 7s. 3d.; from endowment lands, £7,673 7s. 7d.; and, in addition, £979 9s. 8d. on account of royalties on timber and sleepers cut in the extreme south end of the district, which was received by the Ranger at Hokitika and passed through the books of the Receiver there: making a grand total of £24,536 14s. 6d., which is about £3,000 in excess of what was received last year.

THOS. HUMPHRIES,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.