

marked increase over last year's figures. The chief increases in revenue are in the items "occupation with right of purchase," "lease in perpetuity," and "small grazing-runs."

Arrears.—Twenty-five selectors are in arrears this year, as against sixteen last year, the amount owing being £824 8s. 6d., as against £486 6s. 9d. Seven of the selectors are small-grazing-run lessees, and the others are selectors on the Blind River and Omaka Estates.

Reserves.—1,051 acres was reserved this year for various purposes, and 11,636 acres was granted under Acts. These latter are lands which have been given by the Land Purchase Board in exchange for other freehold lands.

Selectors on the Books.—These now amount to 505, being an increase of seventy-six over last year's figures.

Lands selected under Sections 114, 115, and 117 of the Act.—Only two selections were made this year, both of them being under section 117 of the Act, the area taken up being 10½ acres.

Rangers' Inspections.—253 properties were visited during the year. The total value of improvements required was £28,137, and the total value effected was £67,478. The number of defaulters was twelve. There was only one defaulter in improvements, the others being for non-residence.

Land for Future Settlement.—The areas to be opened for disposal during the coming year are as follows: 6,764 acres in the Puhipuhi Block, to be disposed of in May. The remainder of this block is now being got ready, and will be offered shortly. The area being prepared for settlement in this part of the district is about 45,000 acres. On the north bank of the Wairau a block of 20,449 acres will be offered in June, the low country under lease in perpetuity and the remainder as small grazing-runs. 2,460 acres in Cloudy Bay and Onamalutu districts is to be sold by auction for cash in April, and a small grazing-run of 3,600 acres, near the Clarence River, will be opened for selection shortly. The unsold sections in the Town of Kaikoura will be offered for sale as soon as they have been repegged. The Clarence Run, containing 123,200 acres, till recently in the occupation of the Assets Realisation Board, is at present unoccupied. Surveyors are at work exploring for a suitable road through this country, with a view to subdividing it into two or more runs. As soon as the Land Board is in possession of the reports the question of dealing with the land to the best advantage will be gone into. In addition to these areas, there will be the usual "spotting" applications in various parts of the district.

C. W. ADAMS,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

WESTLAND.

Land open for Selection.—The total area which is open for selection in this district is 77,461 acres.

Cash.—During the year no lands were disposed of for cash, the most of the settlers preferring it under other tenures.

Deferred Payment.—Under this tenure several settlers in special settlement, Teremakau Valley, have acquired their freehold, and arrears have been reduced.

Occupation with Right of Purchase.—One selection was made under this heading.

Lease in Perpetuity.—305 acres were taken up under this tenure.

Pastoral Runs.—It will be seen from tables accompanying this report that the area held as above amounts to 605,651 acres, being an increase of 94,663 acres as compared with last year, with a corresponding increase of revenue. A large proportion is under the 219th clause of the Act, this being the only tenure possible while the Midland Railway holds possession. The removal of this restriction will lead to the conversion of these temporary leaseholds into freeholds or leaseholds under one or other of the more permanent systems.

The Crown Lands Ranger reports that during the year he has inspected in South Westland the holdings under the various tenures, which are all doing well, and within the requirements of the Act. He has also inspected and reported to the Land Board on all applications made under the 219th section of the Land Act. These are very much scattered, and take up a deal of his time in travelling through the country. He also reports that during the year he has visited the various sawmills under his charge in Westland and the southern portion of the Nelson District.

The following is a statement of the timber cut and royalties collected thereon within the Westland District:—

Mining Blocks.—Red-pine, 725,842 ft., £90 14s. 7d.; red-pine blocks for tail-races, 306,338 ft., £25 10s. 5d.; total, £116 5s.

Crown Lands.—Silver-pine, 73,465 ft., £18 7s. 4d.; silver-pine, 260,900 ft., £130 9s.; red-pine, 40,000 ft., £10: total, £158 16s. 4d.

Education Reserves.—Red-pine, 1,260,930 ft., £315 4s. 8d.

Grey Coal Reserve (collected by Mr. Boase).—Red-pine, 191,333 ft., £47 16s. 8d.

About seventy men are employed in working the above mills.

W. G. MURRAY,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.