

It should be stated with respect to the large apparent decrease in Nelson District that this is due in some measure to the fact that in the past year the result of the transference of a large area of that district to Canterbury is for the first time shown. The decrease in Wellington is due to a lesser number of deferred-payment and perpetual leases made freehold. The total decrease, however, calls for little comment, for it is quite within the limit of yearly variation of revenue.

The considerable amount of £21,657 18s. 6d. was held in the Receiver of Land Revenues' deposit accounts on the 31st March. This arose through the selection of several estates being held just before the close of the financial year, and before the deposits could be returned to the unsuccessful applicants.

The amount to the credit of local bodies on account of "thirds" and "fourths" at the same date was £39,737 3s. 6d., a sum which is unnecessarily large, and is due to the failure of the local bodies to make applications to the Land Boards in time, or to the incompleteness of the schemes submitted for approval.

#### ARREARS.

The usual particulars of arrears of rents, &c., will be found with the appended tables. The following summary shows the state of the arrears account for the last ten years:—

	No.	£
31st March, 1891 ... ..	3,548 selectors owing	37,341
" 1892 ... ..	2,612	25,256
" 1893 ... ..	3,382	28,875
" 1894 ... ..	3,104	32,205
" 1895 ... ..	3,594	37,514
" 1896 ... ..	1,673	15,708
" 1897 ... ..	1,464	12,807
" 1898 ... ..	1,546	14,437
" 1899 ... ..	1,451	16,994
" 1900 ... ..	1,709	16,887

Table 26 will show the selectors in arrear classified under each tenure.

#### SURVEYS.

IN accordance with the usual practice the surveys executed under the direction of the department during the past period are summarised in the table below, and further particulars will be found in the attached reports of the Chief Surveyors, and also in the tables in the appendix:—

	Acres.	Average Cost per Acre.	Total cost.
			£ s. d.
Minor triangulation ... ..	1,048,665	0·79d.	3,463 7 6
Topographical surveys prior to selection ... ..	356,214	0·88d.	1,320 9 5
Rural and suburban section surveys (1,541 sections) ... ..	569,909	1·15s.	32,785 11 10
Town section surveys (1,590 sections), cost per section ... ..	2,319	21·78s.	1,731 16 2
Native Land Court surveys (249 divisions) ... ..	163,857	6·04d.	4,129 11 1
Mining surveys (668 sections) ... ..	36,640	4·63s.	8,484 3 2
Roads (804 miles), per mile ... ..	...	£11·41	9,179 13 9
Miscellaneous surveys, inspection, &c. ... ..	...	...	8,299 18 9

Total cost of the above field-work for the year ... .. £69,394 11 8

The total cost for the year is about £9,525 greater than for the previous period, which, however, was some £5,000 less than usual. The amount of work turned out shows an increase under several headings.

#### TRIGONOMETRICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEYS.

The largest continuous area turned out last year under this heading lies in the Nelson District, where Messrs. Sadd and Thomson have been engaged in extending the triangulation over the rough broken country lying between the West Coast and Tasman's Bay, of which district the maps have hitherto been incomplete. A considerable area has also been covered by Mr. Robinson in the interior of the Nelson District, thus affording connecting points for the mining surveys. In the Wellington District, the triangulation of the interior districts around the central mountains has been brought to a close by Mr. Lowe; but the results, so far as they affect closures on to adjacent triangulations, have not yet been worked out. In Taranaki, Mr. Skeet and other surveyors have nearly completed the trigonometrical and topographical survey of Mount Egmont and its neighbourhood, which will furnish data for useful maps. In Marlborough, Mr. Buckeridge has executed about 400,000 acres of trigonometrical and topographical work, lying in very high country, a work which was necessitated by section and run surveys in that district. During this work several high peaks were visited, varying from 7,418 ft. to 9,467 ft. in elevation. In Southland, Mr. Robertson has been engaged under contract in extending the triangulation westwards from the Waiau River in the direction of Preservation Inlet, in order to provide a check on the section surveys now going on in that district, which sections are to be allotted to landless Natives so soon as the surveys are ready. This triangulation is not yet completed.

The past year has also seen some extension of the topographical surveys in the older parts of the colony, which were first settled, where nothing of the kind previously existed. These surveys were undertaken by direction of the Government to meet the want of maps of a special class, and on their completion will serve many other purposes of utility.