

been made on them. Of the others, seven are deficient in value of improvements, which cannot be made up to the required amount without building and residence. Number of souls, 71. Value of improvements required, £690 14s. 9d.; effected, £1,475 18s.

Highbank Settlement (near Methven).—Seventy-four holders, of whom fifty-eight reside on their own sections and six on relatives' holdings in the settlement. Number of souls, 232. Value of improvements required, £3,209 5s. 2d.; effected, £10,165 2s. The settlement is, on the whole, making good progress, although many of the sections still feel the effects of the gale of September, 1898. Less cropping is now being done, and settlers are trusting more to grazing. A proposal is being mooted for the establishment of a creamery.

Waiapi and Rakitairi Settlements (near Tenuka and Geraldine).—Thirty-six holders, thirty-three of whom reside on their sections, and two others (by permission) adjacent thereto. Number of souls, 142. Value of improvements required, £1,493 7s. 10d.; effected, £5,250 7s. 1d. The large holdings are all doing well, and the improvements in most cases are very extensive. In the cases of the smaller holdings the lessee has to be much away at work, and both residence and improvements are less satisfactory.

Otarakaro Suburban Settlement (close to Christchurch).—Seven holders, all complying satisfactorily. Number of souls, 38. Value of improvements required, £108; effected, £993.

Wharenui Hamlet (a workmen's homes settlement, near Christchurch).—Twenty-six holders, all of whom, with the exception of one whose residence is not yet due, are complying. Number of souls, 86. Value of improvements required, £753 6s. 2d.; effected, £1,880.

Albury Settlement.—Seventy-one holders, sixty of whom are actually resident on their own sections, while only four can strictly be called defaulters. Number of souls, 234. Value of improvements required, £3,317 9s. 8d.; effected, £11,161 1s. 6d. The settlement is progressing very well. The improvements in most cases are of very good value, and the holdings well looked after.

Marawiti Settlement (near Rakaia).—Thirteen holders, all complying. Number of souls, 65. Value of improvements required, £748 15s. 10d.; effected, £1,790 9s.

Horsley Down Settlement (near Hurunui).—Twenty-five holders, twenty-three being in residence upon their own sections, and two upon adjacent lands. Number of souls, 64. Value of improvements required, £1,031 15s.; effected, £3,933.

Hekao Settlement (near Mount Somers).—Twelve holders, all of whom are residing and complying satisfactorily. Number of souls, 42. Value of improvements required, £617; effected, £2,503 5s. 6d.

Pawaho Hamlet (workmen's homes settlement, at Heathcote Valley, near Christchurch).—Twenty-two holders, seventeen of whom have built houses and are residing. Number of souls, 40. Value of improvements required, £612 1s. 10d.; effected, £1,617.

Tamai Hamlet (workmen's homes settlement, at Woolston, Christchurch).—In no case has the first year's tenancy yet expired, but out of the twenty-four holders fifteen have already built and resided, and others are preparing to do so. Number of souls, 40. Value of improvements effected, £861.

Waikakahi Settlement, near Waitaki.—One hundred and twenty-six rural lease-in-perpetuity holders; fourteen small-grazing-run holders; and twenty town lease-in-perpetuity holders in the Township of Morven. Exclusive of the last-named holders, who are not compelled to reside or effect improvements, one hundred and eleven holders are in residence upon their selections; and six are exempt by virtue of residence upon previously selected village holdings in the vicinity, leaving twenty-three holders who have up to the present failed to comply with the requirements of their leases. The total value of improvements required on all leases is £9,505 9s. 9d., and value effected £33,012 17s. 5d. The number of souls on the estate is 419. Those who have settled on their holdings have made good improvements, all of the best material. In many cases the results of the crops are very small; this was partly due to the lateness of the season, before the settlers could get to work, but in most of the cases it has been from the effects of the yarrow, which, as soon as the ground is turned over, comes away so strongly as to completely choke the grain or root crops. Many were unable to obtain sheep to stock their holdings, on account of the advance in value, but the coming year should find all with some stock on. Notwithstanding this, the buyers for the freezing-works have been surprised at the number of fat lambs and sheep bought from the tenants during the past season. The tenants, or the large majority of them, are in good spirits, and are certain of success now that the initial expenses are over, and they may look for returns on their outlay. The Morven Township has not succeeded nearly so well as the farm holdings. A fine store and butcher's shop has been built on one of the sections, and is doing a large business.

SIDNEY WEETMAN,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

OTAGO.

The operations of the year compare favourably with those of previous years, and may upon the whole be regarded as very satisfactory. There has also been a bountiful harvest over the greater part of the district, which will result in placing a large number of settlers in a much better position financially than they found themselves in at the beginning of the year. The improved prices of sheep and wool, too, have greatly benefited the sheep-farmers.

Revenue.—The gross receipts for the year, including land for settlement and endowments administered by the Land Board, have exceeded the estimate by £4,283, the estimate being £63,654 and the receipts £67,937, exclusive of moneys collected by Receivers of Gold Revenue in respect of occupation licenses and coal leases, amounting to £828. This result must be regarded