

REVENUE.

The revenue for the year amounts, as shown above, to £17,540 7s. 3d., or £265 10s. 8d. above the estimate, and £2,216 18s. 6d. more than last year. The revenue for the coming year is estimated at £20,882 11s. 10d., and is based upon additional timber and coal royalties, and also upon rentals now becoming due on leaseholds hitherto rent-free under the provisions of the Bush and Swamp Crown Lands Settlement Act, and likewise upon increased receipts from new lands to be offered during the coming year under the various settlement tenures.

REVIEW OF THE CURRENT SYSTEMS OF TENURE.

Cash.—Only three sections in the Kokatahi Village Settlement have been sold for cash during the year. As the whole of this district is within a mining district, no rural lands have been offered for cash.

Occupation with Right of Purchase.—The area held under this tenure remains the same as last year, as there have been no new selections and no cancellations during the year. The improvement conditions have been satisfactorily performed, as is evidenced by the fact that the required improvements amounted to £7,377 8s. 10d., and improvements have actually been effected to the value of £13,713 18s.

Lease in Perpetuity.—Twelve sections, comprising an area of 2,484 acres, were offered during the year. Of these, three sections, of 1,407 acres, were offered under the provisions of "The Bush and Swamp Crown Lands Settlement Act, 1903." 1,575 acres were selected by four tenants. In addition to these, 7,549 acres, offered during former years, were selected by forty-nine tenants. A number of inquiries have been received from holders under this tenure who desire to take advantage of the opportunity of acquiring the freehold as allowed by section 20 of "The Land Laws Amendment Act, 1907."

Mining Districts Land Occupation.—On account of the minimum area allowed under the regulations for the occupation of pastoral lands in Westland being 25 acres, this is the only tenure available for miners and others who desire to obtain leases of small areas in portions of the district which are contiguous to gold-workings. Most of the leases include residence areas, the holders of which have to surrender these before obtaining a new title to the extended acreage. There are at present twenty-five lessees, holding 468 acres, of which 332 acres, included in nineteen leases, have been taken up during the year.

Pastoral Runs.—Eleven runs, comprising an area of 62,152 acres, have been selected during the year, and of these, three, of 50,000 acres, are under section 189 of "The Land Act, 1892," the remainder being temporary grazing licenses. Most of the areas held under this tenure are bush-covered, and as the licensees formerly could not be granted the right to fell and grass, the runs were used almost exclusively for cattle. The power given by section 55 of "The Land Laws Amendment Act, 1907," to allow areas to be cleared and grassed will considerably increase the carrying-capacity of these runs, while the right to full valuation for all improvements effected will popularise this system of tenure, and will encourage settlers in outlying districts to expend their money and labour in making the runs more reproductive.

Pastoral Lands within Mining Districts.—As mining operations are at present being carried on in the northern portion of the district, this is the only tenure under which settlers can select land in fair-sized areas with sufficient security of tenure to warrant their laying out money in improvements. Areas that would in other districts be available for selection under the optional system are therefore leased under these special regulations, and the settlers appreciate the assistance given them by section 19 of "The Land Laws Amendment Act, 1907," by which they are entitled, with the consent of the Warden, to exchange to renewable lease. I anticipate that the whole of these lessees will, as opportunity offers, take advantage of this right. The Land Board has insisted on survey of all areas granted under this tenure. An area of 14,534 acres is at present held by ninety-five tenants, paying an annual rent of £295. The improvements due under the leases total £1,132, while the actual value of improvements effected is almost £6,000. These figures fully evince the *bona fides* of the selectors, who have thus been enabled to take up lands from which they were previously debarred. These regulations have proved a splendid solution of the settlement of areas within the goldfield—alike satisfactory to the miners and farmers.

Twenty-five leases, covering an area of 2,269 acres, have been granted during the year.

Miscellaneous Leases.—During the year thirty-three miscellaneous leases, of which six are flax leases, have been taken up, the total area amounting to 21,913 acres. These selections bring the total up to 254 leases, covering 96,659 acres. A number of these leases are situated in districts where the Warden would not agree to more permanent tenures; but as the gold becomes worked out, the areas will be surrendered and permanent titles applied for.

Renewable Lease.—Only one poster of land under this tenure was issued during the year, and 75 per cent. of the sections offered were selected. There are at present fourteen leases held, covering an area of 2,847 acres.