

## INSPECTIONS AND REPORTS.

The Crown Lands Rangers have inspected each permanent leasehold in the district, and submitted reports to the Land Board, which has considered each case of default on its merits, and where it was proved that *bona fide* settlement was intended extension of time for compliance has been allowed. Lessees in the southern portion of the district have been treated with extra leniency on account of the inaccessibility of their holdings, but in every case the Land Board has given them to understand that non-compliance with the conditions of their leases will not be tolerated.

The Crown Lands Rangers have been fully occupied with inspections and reports for the Land Board, special inspections for Wardens, and general oversight of timber-cutters and sawmillers.

Mr. Ranger Meharry reports that during the past year he made 210 inspections of the different mills, and has made eighty reports for the Warden on sawmill areas, besides inspecting the sleeper-cutters, firewood-cutters, and mining-timber cutters.

Mr. Macfarlane reports that during the past year 422 holdings have been inspected and reported upon, of a total area of 62,250 acres. The required improvements were £23,318 14s. 3d., and improvements effected £63,522 2s. Also, 130 inspections have been made for the Land Board, fourteen residence-sites and eleven timber areas for the Warden, and seven flax-mill areas, making a total of 584 inspections.

## POSITION AND PROGRESS OF SETTLEMENT.

The whole of the district has been favoured with splendid weather, and the oaten and meadow crops are far above the average. The northern end of the district from Ross to the upper Grey still shows steady improvement among the tenantry, new areas being cleared for grazing and dairying purposes. The means of access being good and markets handy, the tenants at this end have a decided advantage over those in the south.

Two milking-machines have been installed, one at Kokatahi and the other at Arahura, and the owners are quite satisfied with results. We are given to understand that six more machines will be in operation next season at Wanganui Flat, where a cheese-factory is now in course of construction, and no doubt as soon as the Wanganui and Wataroa are bridged other factories will be erected at Wataroa and Waiho.

All the flax-mills with the exception of the one at the Cascade have shut down, slump in the price of flax being the cause.

Taking the whole of the district from one end to the other, the harvesting operations have been first-class. Some very good yields of turnips in the far south have been recorded, but as a rule the turnip and cabbage crops have been ruined by the white fly this season.

Fat stock have been plentiful, and large numbers of stores have been purchased and taken south.

The butter-factories in the district are all doing well.

The present outlook for the district is decidedly encouraging, and many of the settlers who formerly utilised their holdings for rearing and fattening cattle are now turning their attention to dairying. There are now three dairy factories in the district, while another is now in course of erection at the Wanganui River. Reports furnished during the year show that settlers are effecting substantial improvements and keeping their holdings in good order.

The following schedule shows the position with reference to improvements on each of the permanent tenures :—

	Improvements required.			Improvements effected.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Lease in perpetuity .. .. .	11,150	14	9	26,842	12	0
Occupation with right of purchase ..	8,078	11	10	15,558	3	0
Leases under regulations within mining districts	1,132	9	0	5,824	0	0
Lease in perpetuity, land for settlement ..	2,211	14	8	12,134	2	0

*Township of Runanga.*—The progress noted last year in this township has been fully maintained, and lessees still continue to improve their sections and erect houses of very fair quality. During the year the Land Board has forfeited thirty-four leases for non-compliance with improvement conditions. Residence will shortly be due on a number of these sections, and steps will be taken to procure a report in order that the Land Board may deal with all cases of default.

## REBATES OF RENTAL.

Rebates of rent were allowed during the year to the amount of £131 3s. 5d., an increase of £60 6s. 10d. over the amount allowed last year.

## ARREARS OF RENTAL.

Payments of rent due during the year have been made very promptly, as evidenced by the increase in rebates. The arrears amount only to £6 18s. 9d. due by ten tenants.