

“ ‘ Value of improvements ’ means the added value which at the date of valuation the improvements give to the land.”

The Act of 1908, section 6, as amended by the Act of 1912, section 4, directs that the valuation roll shall set forth particulars of (*inter alia*),—

- (d.) The nature and value of the improvements;
- (e.) The unimproved value of the land;
- (f.) The capital value of the land.

The word “ land ” is defined in section 2 of the Act of 1908, as amended by section 3 of the Act of 1912, as follows :—

“ ‘ Land ’ means all land, tenements, and hereditaments, whether corporeal or incorporeal, in New Zealand, and all chattels or other interests therein, and all timber or flax growing or standing thereon :

“ Provided that native bush or trees which have been planted for shelter or ornamental or utility purposes shall not be included in the definition of land in this section.”

Apart from the above provisions, the Acts do not contain any direction as to the method to be adopted in valuing land. Probably no such direction can be inferred from the mere statement of the order in which the particulars of the properties are to be set out in the valuation roll.

27. The Valuer-General, in a printed “ Memorandum Explanatory of the Valuation of Land Act, 1908, and its Amendments,” dated the 16th of September, 1913, and published by the Government Printer, advises the district valuers to arrive at a standard unimproved value of land in a district. He proceeds : “ Having arrived at such a standard, it then becomes necessary for the valuer to adjust his values according to the quality of the soil, situation, accessibility, configuration, or other natural peculiarities of each particular piece of land. Uniformity of unimproved value of land is of the utmost importance. Rural land of similar quality and position must be valued uniformly, whether in a large or a small holding, so as to ensure uniformity of unimproved value.” We are of opinion that the Valuer-General here lays down a satisfactory method of arriving at the unimproved value of land in country districts, but in the cases that have come before us, and in which we doubt whether the unimproved value has not been fixed at too high an amount, we consider that the valuers have not, in arriving at their standard values, allowed a sufficient sum in respect of improvements. This may be partly accounted for by valuers taking a number of sales of typical farms, and deducting from the purchase-money their own valuation of the improvements on those farms, making that valuation too low. It can readily be seen that if the standard unimproved value of land in a district is fixed too high the whole district will be overvalued; and, further, that since the unimproved value of any given property and the value of the improvements thereon must not exceed the capital value of the whole property, the value of the improvements gets cut down to a sum that, added to the unimproved value (found by reference to the standard value), will make up the capital value. We think that this explains some of the complaints that owners have not been allowed a sufficient sum for their improvements.

28. The Valuer-General at page 12 of his memorandum says : “ Having estimated the unimproved value and the value of the improvements, the valuer is able to apply a check on his estimates, as these two values combined must represent the fair selling-value (known as the capital value) of the whole. If the valuer’s estimates combined exceed the fair selling-value, then his estimate of the unimproved value, or of the improvements, or of both, is too high, and he must reduce his estimates accordingly. If his estimates combined do not reach the total selling-value, then he is too low either in the unimproved value or in the improvements, or in both, and he must increase his estimates accordingly.” This statement requires that the valuer should not be content with arriving at the standard unimproved value and the capital value, and fixing the value of the improvements on the property he is valuing by deducting its unimproved value from its capital value, and then see