

of these lists shows how the land varies in quality, some of the largest areas being of poor land, while, on the other hand, some owners possess extensive tracts of country all valued at a good figure.

From the table giving a classification of taxpayers by occupation will be learnt the proportion in which various classes in the community contribute to the revenue through the property-tax. Banks, companies, &c., in number 486, pay £107,905 2s. 1d.; graziers, sheep-farmers, farmers, dairymen, &c., 8,611, pay £81,543 14s. 4d.; absentees, 1,150, pay £25,976 16s. 2d.; widows, spinsters, wives, and their trustees, 3,760, pay £22,273 10s. 1d.; and other trust estates, and estates of deceased persons, &c., 1,492, pay £32,286 13s. The sum entered as paid by absentees does not at all represent the tax paid by non-residents, for, of course, a large proportion of the shareholders in banks and in the more important companies do not live in New Zealand.

Table No. 14 records information as to lands in the various counties, and the summary states the total value of all lands, omitting unoccupied Crown and Native lands, as £76,340,577; of this the value of improvements is £19,139,190, and the unimproved value £57,201,387. The improvements are thus classified: On agricultural and pastoral properties, farm buildings, clearing, fencing, draining, &c., are valued at £10,086,556, and the dwellings at £3,533,184. The improvements on properties other than agricultural and pastoral are valued at £5,519,450, which includes the value of buildings. The value of unoccupied Crown and Native lands is set down at £9,105,456.

A casual glance at the figures for the various counties shows what very different kinds of districts are included under the style of county. The total value of land in Whangaroa County is £71,810, while Selwyn County shows a value of £7,021,548; Southland, £3,257,610; Ashley, £3,436,251; and Hawke's Bay, Ashburton, and Geraldine all have a value of more than three millions. Westland has by far the largest value of unoccupied lands, the total being set down as £908,109; Inangahua is next, with £588,815; and Cook has the largest total for the North Island—namely, £408,396; Hokianga being next, with £382,496.

Selwyn has by far the most valuable improvements—namely, £2,081,884; and Eden, with £887,276, has the most valuable improvements in the North Island. Southland has the largest value for farm buildings, clearing, fencing, draining, &c., £680,535, and Selwyn is next, with £660,987; Hawke's Bay has £441,407, and Rangitikei follows with £401,818; then in order are Patangata, Oroua, Wairarapa North, Wairarapa South, Wanganui, and Manukau in the North Island, and, in the South, Ashburton and Ashley, all of which have a value of over £300,000 for improvements. The total value of land and improvements in the North Island is £32,752,002, and in the South Island £43,588,575; but the improvements in the North are rather more than in the South, the figures being £9,844,063 and £9,295,127.

A table for land in boroughs shows a total of £34,797,137, nearly half, £16,501,145, being the value of outbuildings and other improvements. The four large boroughs give total values as follows: Auckland, £5,000,551; Wellington, £5,307,796; Christchurch, £3,211,129; and Dunedin, £4,438,695. Avenal, Alexandra, Roxburgh, and Tapanui show the smallest total values, each being under £20,000; and the unimproved value of land in Alexandra is only £1,669.

The improvements in counties are valued at £19,139,190, and in boroughs at £16,501,145. The unimproved value in the counties is £57,201,387, and in the boroughs £18,295,992.

Although all Assessors received the same instructions as to valuing improvements, it is evident that they did not all act on the same principle, and, as owners did not receive notice of the valuation placed by the Assessor upon their improvements, the valuation would not be sufficiently reliable for taxing purposes without some revision. It may be taken as granted that, if a valuation were made with a view of taxing the unimproved value of lands, owners would claim to have much larger sums deducted, in many instances, than the Assessors have returned as the value of improvements. Therefore the total sum set down for improvements must not be taken as representing the cost or the value of work done to bring lands into their present condition.

It will be a startling piece of information to most persons to be told that