

It will thus be seen that were all the lands that have been offered for selection let, and bringing in rent, the return on the total sum invested would be just a trifle over 5 per cent. ; but the rentals on the lands actually let are still bringing in a return on the total sum of £705,728, equal to 4·86 per cent. interest. As, however, the cost of the Rangiatea (£14,014) and Pawaho (£1,823) Estates are included in the above total, neither of which estates had been offered for selection at the 31st March, the cost thereof should be deducted from the total sum of £705,728, which leaves a balance of £689,891. On this latter sum it will be seen that the rents are bringing in a return of 4·97 per cent. The arrears, amounting to £1,363 3s., would reduce the latter percentage slightly.

It is understood that the annual interest payable, calculated as for the 30th June, 1898, on the money borrowed and invested in these estates, is £23,440 9s. 10d., as against a rental of lands actually let for £34,292 6s. 8d.

The actual sum received during the twelve months ended 31st March last was £27,757 2s. 5d., but, as many of the estates were let late in the year, only six months' rent was received and included in this total.

Under section 7 of the amending Act of 1897 power was given to arrange for the construction of a tramway and the building of limekilns on the Makareao Estate. During the past year arrangements have been made for the construction of the tram-line, which is now in hand under the direction of the Public Works Department.

S. PERCY SMITH,
Surveyor-General, and Secretary for Crown Lands.

The Hon. J. McKenzie, Minister of Lands.
