

## LAND TRANSACTIONS.

During the year 444,863 acres were taken up on various tenures, the number of selectors being 1,018 under all headings. These figures include 406 sections, comprising altogether an area of 83,122 acres, taken up under temporary miscellaneous leases and licenses, so that the selections on permanent tenures numbered 612 sections, covering a total area of 361,741 acres. As indicated above, only a small proportion of this land comprised new selections, and for the most part the land taken up consisted either of areas which had reverted to the Crown on account of forfeiture of leases or of holdings which had been surrendered and reselected by the previous tenants after regrouping and adjustment of charges and areas. The land taken up also included some pastoral runs which had been surrendered and reselected pursuant to section 277 of the Land Act.

The number of leases converted to freehold was considerably less than in the previous year. This is accounted for no doubt by the fact that the period within which holders of leases in perpetuity of settlement land might convert to freehold expired on 31st December, 1940, and was not extended.

## POSTPONEMENTS, REMISSIONS, AND ARREARS OF RENT AND INTEREST.

Rents and interest the payment of which remained postponed at 31st March amounted to £24,787. Arrears of rent and interest at the 31st March (including arrears in respect of the current half-yearly charge) totalled £231,883, while remissions for the year totalled £19,709.

## LAND DEVELOPMENT.

During the year the land-development operations of the Department were placed under unified control. Hitherto, the Small Farms Board controlled operations under the Small Farms Act, 1932-33, and the Lands Development Board controlled the development of land authorized by the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1929. As indicated above, by section 39 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1941, the Land Settlement Board was formed, and that body took over the work of both the Small Farms Board and the Lands Development Board, which were both abolished. The new legislation affected the governing bodies only, and no further alteration was made in either the Small Farms Act or the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1929, and the respective development blocks are still subject to the particular Act under which their development was originally authorized.

The difficulty in obtaining essential supplies forced a decision early in the year to curtail new development work, and on all blocks the programme has been restricted to the farming of existing grasslands and necessary cropping. The rationing of phosphatic fertilizer, which has been applied to the Department on the same basis as to private farmers, has made it necessary to closely watch the stocking of all blocks, particularly on the lighter lands of the North Island, and also the King-country land where the high reversion factor has in the past been overcome by judicious stocking and the use of top-dressing. The shortage of fencing-wire is another factor which has made it unwise to proceed with the grassing of new areas, and the Department has made available to the Army authorities large quantities of its existing stocks of wire which had been specially imported in anticipation of departmental requirements.

The decision to curtail development has seriously affected the programme of preparing land for soldier settlement, and it will be necessary to continue the farming of the blocks which have been acquired for this purpose until the supply position improves and it is also possible to proceed with a building programme.

The season experienced was generally a good year. A good winter was followed by a false spring with wet, cold conditions. Some districts experienced dry mid-summer spells, but on the whole good summer conditions prevailed.

## OPERATIONS UNDER THE SMALL FARMS ACT, 1932-33.

## A. INDIVIDUAL TENANTS.

The tenants who have been established under this Act have continued to make good progress during the year. The greater majority of these tenants are located in the Auckland Province and occupy self-contained dairying units. The shortage of superphosphate supplies has not yet shown its effect on these areas, but if the supply position does not improve it will be difficult for the tenants to maintain the high level of butterfat-production that has been reached on a large proportion of the holdings. The following are the main blocks which have been developed and settled under this Act:—

*North Auckland.*—Church Mission, Maoriroa, Taipuha, Te Maire, Waiaruhe, Rehutai, Parris, Pukekaroro, Arapohue, Onekura, Mangatete, Waiotama, Mata North, Raetea, Whangarei Harbour Board, Oriwau, Tutamoe, and Otaneroa.

*Auckland.*—Broadlands, Whangamarino, Park's, Mangatarata, Blackshaw's, Wainui South, Wharere, Murupara, Tarawera, and Onepu.

*Superintendent of Land Development, Te Kuiti.*—Kairangi and Karakariki Blocks (Waikato Land Settlement Society)—portion settled only.

*Hawke's Bay.*—Richmond and Karamu.

In view of the need to curtail printing to a minimum it has been decided not to publish a statement with regard to each individual block in this year's report. For the same reason it has been decided to dispense with the statistical data which has been published in previous years.

## B. DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS.

## SUPERINTENDENT OF LAND DEVELOPMENT, AUCKLAND.

The Superintendent of Land Development, Auckland, controls fifteen development blocks totalling approximately 73,000 acres.

During the year the Whirinaki and Waikite Blocks were amalgamated, and similar action taken with the Pouarua and Kerepechi Blocks.

New development work has been curtailed in view of the shortage of materials and labour. However, the planning of future development, schemes of subdivision, roading, fencing, shelter, and