

State Coal-mines Account, £24,990; total expenditure. £2,036,176; leaving a balance on the 31st of March last of £312,366.

		£
Loan money to be received after 31st March—		
Under Finance Act, 1909		250,000
Under Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act, 1909		100,000
		<u>£350,000</u>

The amount available to start current year, inclusive of the balance at the end of financial year, is £662,366

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS.

For acquiring estates, and expenses incidental thereto, there was expended during 1909–10 the sum of £279,238. In the previous year the amount was £372,245. Particulars of expenditure and areas acquired in each provincial district since the system of purchasing land for settlements was commenced are shown hereunder:—

Land District.	Number.	Area.	Purchase-money.	Improvements, Incidental Expenses, Roads, Preliminaries, &c.
		Acres.	£	£
Auckland	27	277,110	449,053	82,103
Hawke's Bay .. .	26	193,414	1,205,631	76,450
Taranaki .. .	4	4,609	79,363	6,073
Wellington .. .	26	60,824	473,629	60,797
Marlborough .. .	9	114,979	354,463	44,905
Nelson .. .	2	24,347	29,975	1,895
Westland .. .	2	5,124	8,343	2,900
Canterbury .. .	64	297,081	1,624,908	78,350
Otago .. .	30	203,686	967,458	83,549
Southland .. .	7	56,917	213,387	19,315
	197	1,238,091	5,406,210	456,337

There are still considerable areas under offer, but the prices asked make it difficult to purchase any great area. During the year fourteen estates were purchased, ten of which have been settled.

The number of applicants for farms containing an area sufficient to keep a man fully employed all the year round was far in excess of the number of sections offered. It would therefore appear that there is an unsatisfied demand for suitable lands in fair-sized holdings, which every effort must be made to meet.

LAND AND INCOME TAX.

LAND-TAX.

The collection for the year was £642,270, being £17,270 in excess of the estimate of £625,000.

It showed an increase of £37,370 over the collection of the previous year. In this connection I would point out to honourable members that we cannot look forward to recurring increases in the immediate future from this branch of the revenue. The legislation of 1907 is beginning to have effect, inasmuch as many of the large land-owners are now engaged in subdividing and disposing of their surplus land.