

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.—SETTLEMENT OF CROWN LANDS.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS ON SETTLEMENT OPERATIONS DURING THE TWELVE MONTHS WHICH ENDED ON THE 31ST MARCH, 1913.

AUCKLAND.

LANDS OPENED FOR SELECTION.

THROUGHOUT the year there has been a keen and well-sustained demand for land, not only from residents and land-seekers within the district, but also from other parts of the Dominion. The total area opened for selection during the year was 74,304 acres (exclusive of an area of 2,809 acres of education endowment lands), while the area selected, including lands remaining open from previous years, was 103,025 acres. The total number of applicants who lodged applications for lands opened was 1,951, most of these covering several sections apiece. Most of the applicants represented an excellent type of settler, and many of them came from other districts, bringing fresh capital, energy, and experience to bear upon the development of Auckland lands.

The new preference system, whereby preference at ballots is granted to those who have been unsuccessful at two ballots during the preceding two years, or who have children dependent on them, has worked smoothly since its inauguration by the Act of last session, although naturally its operation has caused some disappointment amongst those who fell under its ban. The hardship involved is not, however, great, since exclusion from a ballot on two separate occasions upon the preference ground alone qualifies for admission to subsequent ballots; while the system affords some encouragement to those most needing and anxious to select land.

THE VARIOUS TENURES.

The occupation-with-right-of-purchase tenure still maintains its position as the premier tenure of the district, the area selected under it having been 55,332 acres, or more than half of the total area taken up. The holders under this tenure now number 2,776, over one-third of all the Crown tenants in the district, and they occupy slightly over three-quarters of a million acres.

Of the settlement tenures, the lease in perpetuity comes next in order of importance, having 1,935 tenants occupying 418,401 acres.

The renewable-lease tenure, consisting principally of land-for-settlement (acquired) lands and national endowments, is the third principal tenure, its holders numbering 751 and occupying 191,328 acres.

The other tenures do not call for special remark, but it may be noted, in connection with the question of settlement of the mining lands on the Coromandel Peninsula, that an area of 15,017 acres has been selected during the year by fifty-three holders, under the two available tenures, Hauraki pastoral lease and mining-district land-occupation lease, principally the former; while the total area now held under these tenures is 78,940 acres, occupied by 441 tenants.

The total number of Crown tenants within the district is now 7,553, occupying an area of 1,983,369 acres, and paying an annual rental of £94,750.

REVENUE.

The total gross revenue received during the year was £156,947 6s. 11d., a decrease of nearly £14,000 from that of the previous year. The most noticeable falling-off is in the receipts from freehold of O.R.P. lands, which are nearly £6,000 less; and the receipts from sales of timber, which have yielded about £25,000 less. These have in some degree been counter-balanced by increases in other directions. The collection of the gross revenue for the year involved the issue of 13,798 receipts. In addition to these amounts, the Receiver of Land Revenue's office also passed through the Deposit Account a sum of £39,527, involving the issue of 2,548 receipts; and a further sum of £16,315 was passed into the Local Bodies' Deposit Account, out of which payments amounting to £20,851 were made to local bodies for expenditure on roads benefiting lands held from the Crown.

The arrears of rent unpaid at the close of the year amounted to £4,443 8s. 3d., owing by 393 tenants, occupying an area of 138,290 acres. These represent about 5 per cent. both of the number of tenants and rentals payable.

The amount of rebates granted for punctual payment of rent was £5,650.