

LAND REVENUE.

The gross revenue received for the year was £121,153 11s. 6d., which is an increase of £4,538 18s. 3d. over the previous year.

The amount granted in rebates was £8,375 6s. 4d.

Ordinary revenue receipts numbering 3,823 and thirteen provisional-title receipts were passed through the Receiver of Land Revenue's cash-book. The amount received on account of survey liens was £1,889 3s. 10d., which is £1,049 5s. 8d. more than that received under this heading during the previous year. This entails a large amount of extra work in both the receiving and draughting branches. In the ordinary deposit accounts, the receipts were £18,764 6s. 10d., and disbursements £19,404 18s. 7d. These figures show a large increase on those of the previous years. The Local Bodies' Deposit Account receipts amounted to £9,001 2s. 7d.; and twenty payments, amounting to £8,195 14s. 3d., were made to the various local bodies. Out of the above revenue the sum of £35,260 was handled by the Gisborne office and transmitted to the Receiver at this office; this is an increase of £1,568 on last year.

EXPENDITURE OF "THIRDS," "FOURTHS," AND "HALVES."

After careful consideration of the twenty proposals for expenditure submitted by the local bodies, the sum of £8,195 14s. 3d. was approved by the Land Board, a satisfactory increase on last year's operations.

It is a matter of satisfaction to the Department that no complaints were received from the Crown tenants during the year, which goes to show that the amounts derived from their holdings and paid to the local bodies were spent to the best advantage—i.e., in improving the road-access to their holdings. The amount at credit of the Deposit Account of the Receiver of Land Revenue at the end of the financial year was £6,751 6s. 6d.

LAND BOARD.

Meetings were held regularly every month at the district office and once a quarter at the local Land Office at Gisborne, and special meetings were held at Ormondville and Waipukurau in connection with land-ballots. The applicants greatly appreciated the saving of time and expense in holding the meetings of the Board so near the land offered for selection.

During the latter part of the year Mr. R. M. Birrell, the Gisborne member, resigned his seat, owing to his departure from the Dominion. Mr. George Wright, whose term as nominated member expired in March, was reappointed.

GENERAL REVIEW.

The year's transactions show that the work has doubled in this district since last year. In spite of the unfavourable season, owing to unsettled weather in the early part, followed by a dry spell for five or six months, and the burning of thousands of acres of grass, the district shows steady progress. The demand for land suitable for small farmers, chiefly dairying, is still unsatisfied, but with the experience of the Sherenden and Waihou Settlements, sheep-country is not so much in demand as the smaller areas of land suitable for dairying or mixed farming. The stringency of the money-market has made the payments of rents more difficult than usual.

DEPARTMENTAL.

The Accountant's branch also shows a large increase on last year's transactions; 888 vouchers were dealt with, representing an amount of £25,192. The number of letters, &c., received during the year was 13,171, and despatched 22,563. Out of the above, the following were dealt with by the Gisborne Branch Office: 159 vouchers were paid, totalling £1,251; and ninety-two vouchers, amounting to £5,968, were passed for payment by the Treasury; forty-one credit vouchers were passed, being cost of work done for other Departments, &c.

I wish to place on record my hearty appreciation of the work performed both by the office and field staffs during a very busy year, by which my labours have been much lightened.

ROBT. T. SADD,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

TARANAKI.

SETTLEMENT OF CROWN LANDS.

An area of 23,866 acres of rural land was offered for selection during the year, in addition to 152 acres of Crown lands offered at auction and fourteen leases of education reserves. There were 112 new selectors, and they took up 25,858 acres. There are prospects of an exceedingly busy period during the new year, as an area of 105,280 acres is expected to be available for offering within the next few months.

CONDITION AND PROGRESS OF SETTLEMENT.

The district as a whole has recovered from the effects of the abnormal rain of the previous year, and, as a result, the progress and development has been encouraging, and from a farming standpoint the season was a successful one for both dairy farmers and graziers. Good burns were the rule all over the district, and this has encouraged the settlers to further efforts. The