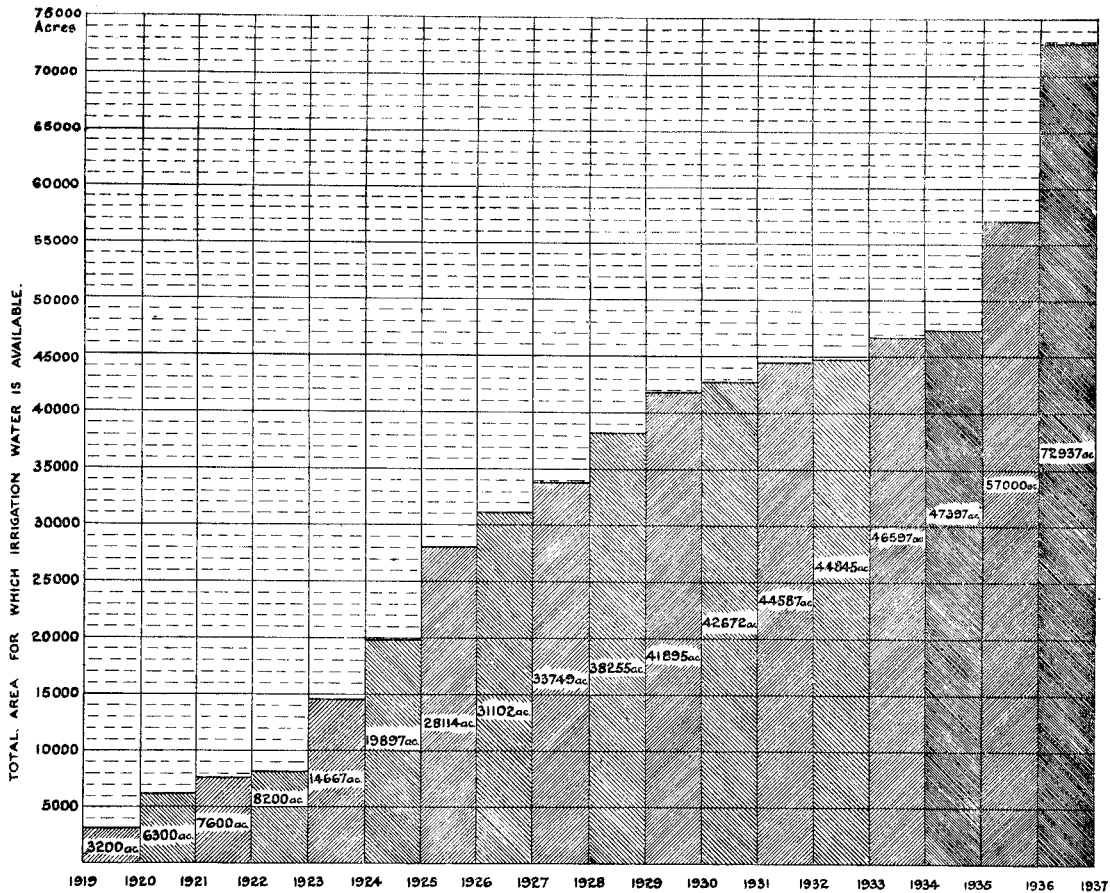


the cost of the earthwork will be reduced by some 60 per cent., and the whole work carried out with greater expedition than would have been possible by hand methods.

The revenue last year was £23,963, and the working-expenses £27,234, which includes £6,390 for the renewal of pipes on the Teviot Scheme.

The revenue, which shows a slight increase on last season was not up to expectations due to the exceptionally wet season experienced in Central Otago last summer.

The following graph shows the growth of irrigation areas under Government schemes in the last eighteen years :—



During the year surveys have been made of the proposed Downs water-supply. This scheme, which can be economically justified, is designed to supply domestic and stock water to an area of 150,000 acres of closely settled downland country surrounding Timaru.

LANDS IMPROVEMENT.

The net capital expenditure from the Public Works Fund for the year was £62,672, as against a net capital expenditure last year of £37,909. The gross expenditure this year, however, was £232,070, as against £97,568 last year. The difference between the net capital expenditure and the gross expenditure—viz., £169,398—is represented by contributions obtained from local bodies interested in the works and by revenue expenditure. The work under this section of the Department's activities comprises the improvement and control of rivers, reclamation of tidal-flat areas, reclamation of sand-dune country, and drainage and clearing of farm lands. Some of the main works in hand are the Taupiri drainage scheme in the Waikato, the Te Kawa drainage scheme, Waitoa River clearing, Mokau River clearing, Ahuriri Lagoon reclamation, Hutt River reclamation, Karamea flood-control works, and sand-dune reclamation along the western coast of the Manawatu and Auckland Districts. A considerable