

VILLAGE SETTLEMENTS.

These are gradually being converted into other tenures, as the special conditions have in most cases been long since fulfilled, and in most instances the lessees have surrendered their leases in exchange for other tenures. A special report by the Superintendent is printed in Appendix III.

PASTORAL RUNS.

In last year's report a useful return was embodied showing the years in which the leases of the several pastoral runs in Canterbury and Otago will be falling in. Reports in advance are being obtained as to the suitability or otherwise of the areas for close settlement. The subdivision of the Blackstone Hill and Lauder Runs, in Otago, into areas for close settlement and small grazing-runs was attended with great success, there being 1908 applicants, and the whole area opened has been selected.

REVENUE RECEIPTS.

The receipts from all sources give the very satisfactory total of £578,223, or £27,981 in excess of last year's receipts. Divided under the two headings of "Territorial" and "Non-territorial," the results are, from sources scheduled as territorial, £250,900. This embraces cash, deferred payment (almost non-recurring), perpetual lease (under "Land Act, 1885"), occupation with right of purchase, lease in perpetuity, small grazing and pastoral runs (under "Land Act, 1892"); also timber licenses from Crown lands other than State forests. Non-territorial revenue realised £327,323. This is derived from numerous sources not enumerated above, such as rents received from land-for-settlements estates, which reached £206,443; coal and mineral leases, State forests, endowments administered by Land Boards, Cheviot Estate, &c. The principal contributors (given in the order of the gross amount of their receipts) are—Canterbury, £131,514; then Auckland, £95,115; Otago, £89,633; Wellington, £71,969; Hawke's Bay, £61,461; Marlborough, £32,985; Southland, £27,244; Taranaki, £27,046; Nelson, £25,937; and Westland, £15,323.

For the coming year, 1907-8, it is estimated that £256,000 will be received from territorial sources, and £310,200 from non-territorial, or a total estimated revenue of £566,200.

REBATES OF RENT.

The rebates of rent granted under "The Crown Tenants' Rent Rebate Act, 1900," for the past year has been availed of by 8,345 Crown tenants, who have received remissions to the amount of £7,225 17s. 10d.; under "The Land for Settlements Consolidation Act, 1900," 3,055 tenants have been granted rebates to the amount of £16,753; whilst the tenants on the Cheviot Estate, to the number of 201, received rebates to the amount of £683 10s. 3d.: the total number of Crown tenants benefited being 11,601, who received a total remission of £24,663 3s.

CROWN PURCHASES UNDER "THE MAORI LAND SETTLEMENT ACT, 1905."

In last year's report was foreshadowed the intention of the Crown to commence purchasing under the powers given by this Act, and it was decided by Government that the several land-purchase officers should engage in the purchase of suitable blocks of Native lands under the supervision of the Under-Secretary for Lands, who would take instructions for this work from the Hon. the Minister for Native Affairs. As a special report upon these operations will be laid before Parliament by the Native Minister, it will suffice to say that in the Auckland District some 205,016 acres are under negotiation; in the Hawke's Bay District, 7,954 acres; and in the Taranaki and Wellington Districts, 107,975 acres. Here it may be useful to state that since 1891 the Crown has purchased 2,800,330 acres of Maori-owned land, distributed as follows:—

	Acres.
Auckland Land District	1,436,607
Hawke's Bay Land District	448,697
Taranaki Land District	344,434
Wellington Land District	570,690

MAORI LAND COMMISSION.

In readiness for the work of the Commission appointed to deal with the question as to the best method of dealing by the Maoris with the lands still held by them, an exhaustive return was compiled dealing with 956 separate blocks, containing a gross area of 4,975,444 acres, giving the description of each block (whether agricultural or pastoral, forest or open) and the present value per acre of the land. No doubt a copy of this return will be attached to the Commissioners' report. In connection not only with the survey necessities disclosed by the published proceedings of the Maori Land Commission, but also in connection with the surplus areas placed in the hands of the Maori Land Boards to deal with by way of lease, is the pressing necessity of pushing on with