

about 656,000 acres, in the Urewera district, and provides the machinery necessary for giving effect to these arrangements.

*Expiring Laws Continuance Act, 1921-22.*—Under section 2 of this Act the operation is continued until the 31st December, 1922, of section 42 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1914, which empowers the Minister of Lands to exempt Crown lessees from any conditions in their leases with respect to rotation of crops.

*Finance Act, 1921-22.*—Section 15 of this Act provides that the proceeds of all rates levied under the Hauraki Plains Amendment Act, 1911, shall be paid into the Hauraki Plains Settlement Account, and that payments in respect of maintenance of works carried on under the authority of the Hauraki Plains Act, 1908, may be made without any further appropriation out of moneys standing to the credit of that account.

*Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1921-22.*—This Act, which authorizes special dealings with public reserves and other lands, and gives special powers to certain public bodies, &c., contains 138 sections and five schedules, relating in most cases to matters of purely local interest.

#### NATIONAL ENDOWMENT.

The area in the national endowment was reduced during the year by 5,798 acres (as shown in parliamentary paper C.-14). Of the area set aside, 6,979,274 acres were held on lease or license at the 31st March by 4,445 tenants, paying an annual rental of £137,550, and 1,636,562 acres (partly, however, covered by existing leases) have been set aside as provisional State forests.

#### REVALUATIONS.

Notwithstanding the difficult times experienced by the majority of farmers during the past year, only seven Crown leaseholds were revalued under section 15 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1915, resulting in a reduction in capital value from £10,579 to £8,360, and in annual rental from £492 to £388. Up to the 31st March the total revaluations made numbered 467; the aggregate capital value being reduced from £1,118,230 to £893,990, and the annual rental from £50,700 to £40,529.

#### FORFEITURES AND SURRENDERS.

Crown tenants to the number of 468 had their holdings forfeited for non-compliance with the conditions of their leases. The area involved was 101,025 acres, and the annual rental £8,280. In addition 200 tenants voluntarily surrendered their leases over an area of 162,485 acres, with an annual rental of £8,885. A considerable proportion of the lands forfeited were held under miscellaneous and temporary leases and licenses. In the case of lands held on permanent tenures forfeiture is resorted to only after every reasonable means have failed to produce improvement and where it is evident that the lessee is unable or unwilling to fulfil the obligations of his tenancy.

#### RECEIPTS.

The gross receipts for the year amounted to £1,215,040. Of this sum £473,642 was derived from ordinary Crown lands; £456,427 from lands held under the Land for Settlements Act (including Cheviot Estate); £132,201 from the national endowment; and £105,370 from education endowments.

This shows a decrease of £520,443 from last year's record amount, mainly accounted for by the great falling-off in the acquisition of freeholds, and recording more or less faithfully the reduced income derived from primary products. It is instructive to note that the returns from the South Island, where land-values were not inflated to any great extent, compare a good deal more favourably with last year's figures than those received from the North Island.

#### REBATES.

For prompt payment of rent 14,894 Crown tenants were granted the usual rebate in terms of section 116 of the Land Act, 1908, and section 55 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1908. Total rebates granted amounted to £45,100.

#### ARREARS.

Rents in arrear at the 31st March amounted to £167,838, an increase of £104,379 from last year. It was hoped when last year's figures were published that the position would materially improve during the following period; but the unsatisfactory prices current, together with various other contributory factors, militate against early improvement, and the Department is now confronted with the onerous task of reducing as much as possible its heavy rental arrears while at the same time conserving the interests of the tenants. The Department recognized that the abnormal conditions encountered demanded special treatment, and the various Land Boards have given every consideration to those tenants who were endeavouring to work their farms to the best advantage. It is confidently anticipated that as normal conditions return tenants will in their own interests discharge their arrears as promptly as increased incomes will permit; until that time comes they can rely upon receiving fair and considerate treatment to help surmount their present difficulties.