

parties have applied for prospecting-areas at Okarito and Gillespie's. The American company has recently completed an exhaustive test at Awatuna; but, though the ground is definitely auriferous, results did not justify the erection of a dredging plant, the margin of profit being too narrow. I understand the company propose shortly to make application for further prospecting-areas. The amount of gold recovered at Rimu Flat during the year was 9,830 oz., valued at £42,000, and an area of 18 acres has been dredged. The total amount of gold recovered to date by this company is valued at £165,000.

Honey-production.—During the past year many inquiries have been made and areas applied for for apiary-sites in Westland, consequent, no doubt, on the successful operations of those already engaged in the honey industry. One apiary at Barrytown turned out 9 tons of honey, valued at £500, whilst others have had quite a successful year. The native bush, especially rata and kamahi, of which there is practically an unlimited quantity in Westland, is the main source of the honey-supply. From present indications this industry, which may be considered to be permanently established, promises to be an extensive and profitable one.

Revenue and Arrears.—The total gross revenue for the year from all sources (including Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account) amounted to £31,973. The rent roll amounted to £8,760, and arrears of rent £1,696, an increase on last year's figures, due mostly by soldier settlers. Every effort is being made to collect amounts outstanding.

Land open for Selection.—Areas totalling 3,637 acres were opened for selection by ballot during the year, and 3,138 acres were taken up under various tenures on permanent title.

Land Board.—Twelve monthly meetings were held during the year, as scheduled, occupying one full day each. The Board dealt with 104 applications for land, 182 transfers and exchanges, 97 applications by discharged soldiers for advances, transfers, postponements, &c., together with an exceptionally large volume of miscellaneous work.

Land remaining for Selection.—An area of 1,705 acres resumed from Run 27B is now being prepared for selection, and will be available some time during the current year. The land is situated close to the Main South Road, between the Fox and Cook Rivers; it is all level land of good quality, and will be offered on renewable lease tenure. A further area of 833 acres, comprising good swamp land at Harihari, over which drainage operations by the Land Drainage Engineer were completed during the past year, is now available for offering. In addition to above, an area of 2,206 acres, comprising isolated areas and township sections, will also be available almost immediately.

CANTERBURY.

(G. H. BULLARD, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

During the past year conditions have in the main been favourable for the various classes of farming. The season has again been a very good one for sheep men, particularly on the back country, and wool-yields and lambing percentages have been satisfactory. The very high prices for wool obtained at some of the earlier sales must have been very welcome to the farmers and the institutions financing them. Some few, whose cupidity was aroused by the large increase in prices, were tempted to withhold their wool, with the result that they had later on to accept lower prices, as the earlier ones were not maintained; but even the lower returns have been very good, and if these can be maintained sheep-farmers should be well satisfied.

The winter and early spring were very mild, and at first too dry, and the demand for store stock eased for a time, but good rainfalls in September and December saved the situation and crops and grass made good growth. The death-rate among lambs after marking was higher than usual owing to too much condition with the abundance of feed. The value of store sheep rose with the increase in the value of wool, and good breeding-ewes realized prices that seemed very high for those having to buy. In some localities farmers state that owing to the sappy condition of the feed it was a little difficult to finish lambs well, but if the results of this year are again experienced pastoralists and graziers should be accounted fortunate. The good results from sheep will mean that more land will be used for sheep-farming, and the relief from excessive cropping will be beneficial. Shearing was delayed a little by wet, and this caused some of the clips to miss the top prices.

The frozen-meat industry has again had a good year, and record prices for lambs were obtained. The good season should result in an increase of flocks. A large number of sheep from the North Island, and some from the West Coast, found ready sale owing to feed being plentiful. The market prices for prime beef were good, and in the opinion of some there are indications that the local needs are equal to the supply.

Grain-growers should have had a fairly profitable year. The promise of the season a little before harvesting was somewhat marred by heavy rain and wind just when harvest was pending. Yields have been variable. The moister conditions suited the lighter lands, but were not so good for the heavier. The oat-yields were very variable, the grain in some cases weighing very light; but still, on the whole, the results were fair, and on the lighter land better than usual. Rust was very prevalent, and early-sown Gartons on the heavy land were most affected. Much the same can be said of wheat crops. Growers are complaining that prices, owing to heavier costs all round, are not remunerative.

Yields of peas have been good, but many of the potato crops have been affected by blight. Linseed crops were good; grass and clover seed also, and owing to the good supply prices are easy. Generally good yields have been obtained by men who worked their land sufficiently.

Those engaged in the dairying industry were not so fortunate as sheep and grain growers. The price of butterfat was not very good; in the first part of the season the payable price of 1s. 6d. per