

Section 41 permits the acquisition of areas beyond the stipulated maximum of 5,000 acres of third-class land where it is expedient in the public interest to waive the restriction. The widows of servicemen are now given the same preferences at ballots for the allotment of Crown and settlement land as are available to discharged servicemen (section 42). All holders of leases of Crown land in the Hanmer Town area are given the right to surrender their present leases, which contain no right of renewal, and obtain leases under the Public Bodies' Leases Act, 1908, term twenty-one years, perpetually renewable. Experience in the operation of the Servicemen's Settlement and Land Sales Act, 1943, demonstrated that it was desirable to remove certain difficulties and to improve parts of the Act. Of the eleven sections of the Servicemen's Settlement and Land Sales Amendment Act, 1945, which was passed to bring this about, nine sections are of a machinery nature. Section 10 provides that urban land, the sale of which has been consented to by the Land Sales Committee, which is afterwards withdrawn from sale shall not be sold, except with the prior consent of the Minister, within a period of twelve months to other than an ex-serviceman. The taking of land outside cities, boroughs, or town districts for homes for discharged servicemen who are farming, or to facilitate settlement of discharged servicemen, is authorized by section 11 of the Act mentioned.

RECEIPTS

The receipts for the year from all sources totalled £2,445,659. The receipts for the previous year totalled £1,920,955. Details are as follows :—

Heading.	Year ended 31st March, 1946.	Year ended 31st March, 1945.
	£	£
Rents, royalties, and interest	890,577	890,780
Rates and miscellaneous receipts from drainage areas	34,276	34,625
Administration charges, fees, and other departmental receipts	97,094	96,889
Sales of land, improvements, repayment of advances, &c.	666,169	408,241
Farming receipts from development schemes	748,367	482,578
Miscellaneous	9,176	7,842
	2,445,659	1,920,955

POSTPONEMENTS, REMISSIONS, AND ARREARS OF RENT AND INTEREST

Rents and interest the payment of which remained postponed at 31st March amounted to £6,812. Arrears of rent and interest (including arrears in respect of the current half-yearly charge) totalled £137,244, while remissions for the year totalled £17,526.

THE SERVICEMEN'S SETTLEMENT AND LAND SALES ACT, 1943

This report gives an account of the operations under this Act for the second complete year.

APPLICATIONS

Have increased from 37,038 in the previous year to the remarkable total of 43,899. This figure comprises 38,262 urban properties and 5,637 rural transactions. As the average number of registered transactions for the three years preceding the enactment of this legislation was 28,201, it appears that little or no restraint has been laid upon the property market by this Act. Moreover, it seems that, notwithstanding the housing shortage, there is little to discourage the free sale of town properties.