

1914.
NEW ZEALAND.

WORKERS' DWELLINGS ACT:

YEARLY STATEMENT BY THE RIGHT HON. THE MINISTER OF LABOUR.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 18 of the Workers' Dwellings Act, 1910.

IN pursuance of section 18 of the Workers' Dwellings Act, 1910, I have the honour to present the following statement of the Superintendent of Workers' Dwellings relating to the operations of the Act during the year ending the 31st March, 1914.

W. F. MASSEY,

Minister of Labour.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report on the operations of the Workers' Dwellings Act during the year ending the 31st March, 1914.

Workers' Dwellings in Rural Districts.—The inquiries referred to in last year's report relating to a number of offers of land for the purpose of the erection of workers' dwellings in country districts resulted in the purchase of a suitable area of 65 acres at Willowbridge (near Waimate); negotiations were also, on the 31st March, under way for the purchase of 44 acres near Masterton and 32 acres near Fairlie, besides which there is a suitable area of Crown land near Blenheim which it is proposed to utilize for the purpose. That at Willowbridge was subdivided into thirteen allotments of an average of $4\frac{3}{4}$ acres each, and dwellings were, on the 31st March, being erected thereon for applicants under the purchase-by instalment system; the block at Masterton will be similarly divided into eleven allotments, and arrangements will shortly be in progress for the erection of that number of dwellings for applicant purchasers; the block at Fairlie is intended to provide six or seven dwellings for purchasers upon areas of from 4 to 5 acres, while the area of Crown land near Blenheim will accommodate five or six workers. There has been a keen demand for the various allotments.

The decision of the Government to afford additional facilities for the erection of workers' dwellings in country districts, by giving the requisite authority to local bodies, resulted in the Counties Amendment Act, 1913, sections 31–33, and since the passing of the measure a number of County Councils have instituted inquiries into the matter. The amendment authorizes County Councils to purchase land and erect dwellings thereon for workers in their respective districts on similar lines to the provisions contained in the Workers' Dwellings Act and to raise money for the purpose. The Act has in particular view the evils of intermittent employment, and provides for the erection of dwellings for farm workers upon allotments of up to 20 acres of land.

Workers' Dwellings in Towns.—The table published on page 3 shows, in column 3, the number of workers' dwellings erected in the various towns of the Dominion during the year under review—namely, 81; columns 1 and 2 show that 228 dwellings had previously been erected since the inception of the Acts (in 1905); and column 4 that there were, on the 31st March, 1914, 31 dwellings in course of erection; total, 340. Arrangements had at that date been completed for the commencement of 87 additional dwellings, and negotiations were also in progress in regard to 165 applications that were pending.*

* In respect to the applications pending, it has since been decided to proceed with the erection of new dwellings in every town in the Dominion where six or more applications had been received. (Total, 100.)