

1917.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY: DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1917.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 14 of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915.

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SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st June, 1917.

In accordance with the provisions of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, I have the honour to submit herewith the report on the operations under the Act for the year ended 31st March, 1917.

I have, &c.,

T. N. BRODRICK,

Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Right Hon. W. F. Massey, P.C., Minister of Lands.

REPORT.

PART I.—SETTLEMENT DURING YEAR.

REVIEW OF POSITION.

1. The successful settlement of our returned soldiers on the land is recognized as of paramount importance, and has continuously occupied the attention of the Government since the despatch of the first Expeditionary Force. The passing of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act in 1915 laid down in concrete form the methods and principles on which land was to be provided and allotted to discharged members of the Expeditionary Forces on their return to New Zealand; and the amending Act of last year extended its scope in many respects. In addition, other provisions in the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1915, and Part II of the War Legislation Amendment Act, 1916, provide for further concessions to members of the Expeditionary Forces both during their period of service and afterwards. Regulations were prepared and issued defining the methods and giving effect to the provisions of the Act, and every possible care has been taken by all officers of the Department entrusted with the administration of the Act to carry out in as sympathetic a manner as possible the provisions of the statutes, having due regard to the individual requirements of the selectors and the intentions of the Government.

2. On the whole the results have been very satisfactory, but it must be borne in mind that up to the present only comparatively few of the members of the Expeditionary Forces have returned to New Zealand and been discharged. The bulk of the work of settlement therefore still remains to be done, and a large proportion of the lands of the Dominion suitable for their occupation should be retained until the main body of the Expeditionary Force returns to our shores, so as to ensure that all our soldiers have an equal chance of securing land, and in particular, that those who have served continuously or for long periods at the front shall not be overlooked in favour of others who may have returned to New Zealand after a short period of service.

3. In this connection it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the success of the soldiers as settlers depends very largely on their own individual efforts. The Government is finding the land and financing them in order that those who wish to do so may earn their living by that means, and the concession granted must not be regarded as being in the nature of a bounty that can be exploited in any way. The law wisely makes this quite clear by prohibiting the transfer or sale of the allotments for a period of ten years after selection except with the approval of the Minister and Land Board. The majority of the soldiers already settled realize this, and are working in a manner that gives great promise of success; some have been most successful already, but a few have shown that they have neither the will nor the capacity to succeed. The position may, however, be considered very encouraging as the percentage of failures is not higher than it would be in ordinary settlement.

During the year full information was given to all inquirers, and from time to time various particulars were published by the Government in the Press so as to bring the methods and procedure in the application for and allotment of land, to the notice of all interested persons.

4. The problems that confront the Government are many, and it is evident that only a strict and sympathetic co-operation between the individual applicants, the various societies that work on their behalf, the Land Boards, Government Departments, and officers administering the Act can ensure the fullest success being given to the scheme of settlement which has been launched under such favourable auspices.

It is pleasing to record the manner in which the Land Boards, departmental officers, representatives of various soldiers' societies, and administrators of patriotic funds, together with individual members of the general public, have up to the present responded to the call upon their services, and every effort will be made in the future, as in the past, to keep in close touch with all sections of the community who are in any way affected by the operations of the Act.

AMENDMENT OF ACT.

5. As was to be expected with legislation dealing with a new problem, a few months' experience of the working of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, made it desirable that some of its provisions should be extended, and the amending Act of last year provided that residents of New Zealand who have served with other Forces during the present war should be permitted to acquire land under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, and the financial assistance provided for in that Act may now be given to any discharged soldier who is the lessee or licensee of any of the land that is administered by a Land Board though not acquired under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act. Land required for the purposes of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act may be taken compulsorily under the Public Works Act, 1908, as well as purchased under the Land for Settlements Act, and authority was given to raise £500,000 for the acquisition of land for the settlement of discharged soldiers, whilst the amount authorized to be raised for the purpose of advances under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act was increased from £50,000 to £100,000.

6. The Appropriation Act, 1916, authorized the expenditure of £20,000 for roading lands set apart under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act.

7. In addition the War Legislation Amendment Act, 1916, though not dealing directly with discharged soldiers, granted further privileges to members of the Expeditionary Force, particulars of which are given in paragraph 41, under Part III, Concessions to Members of the Expeditionary Forces.

REGULATIONS.

8. The original regulations under the Act were published in the *Gazette* of the 11th November, 1915, while supplementary regulations regarding advances were published in the *Gazette* of the 16th March, 1916. Amending regulations gazetted on the 16th November, 1916, 12th April, 1917, and 10th May, 1917, extended the conditions of occupation and leasing of the land by making further provisions of the Land Act applicable thereto, and giving greater elasticity to the conditions of occupation. Hitherto financial assistance was given to the extent of £500 to enable discharged soldiers to erect dwellinghouses, effect improvements, and purchase stock, and the amending regulations further provided that the Minister of Lands might purchase such materials or articles as may be required, and dispose of them to settlers under the Act at cost price plus freight. The effect of this alteration has been most beneficial, as purchases of stock and material have from time to time been made by the Department on behalf of settlers on better terms than they themselves could have made, and in no case has a settler been obliged to purchase such material from the Department except at his special request.

9. Further amendments of the regulations will have to be made from time to time, as unforeseen difficulties will occasionally crop up and will require to be met and overcome.

INQUIRIES BY APPLICANTS.

10. It is most essential that every returned soldier should be afforded the fullest information as to the method of securing land and the terms on which it is allotted. A special pamphlet giving such particulars has been published, and is distributed to all soldiers' clubs, associations, or bodies dealing with returned soldiers, and it is also supplied to every applicant or person inquiring for particulars of the scheme.

11. In each office of the Department officers have been detached to deal with inquiries by returned soldiers or other persons on their behalf, and representatives of various societies have from time to time received special letters containing full information on various phases of the scheme.

12. To enable discharged soldiers to inspect land that they may consider suitable for their requirements, arrangements have been made by which every applicant under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act is refunded the cost of a second-class railway ticket used in travelling to view the land he has applied for. As is only to be expected the number of inquiries is steadily on the increase, and there is no doubt that the operations under the Act will gradually form a very large proportion of the work of settlement undertaken by the Department.

13. A reference to the report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Wellington, which appears in the appendix, indicates the methods adopted in that office of dealing with soldier settlers, and is typical of the procedure adopted generally by the various District Offices of the Department.

LANDS OPENED FOR APPLICATION.

14. To deal with the numerous applications that would inevitably be made, a large area of land was proclaimed during the year. It comprised 159,825 acres of ordinary Crown land throughout the Dominion, which under ordinary circumstances would have been opened for application by the general public, but being suitable for occupation by discharged soldiers has been withdrawn from application under the Land Act and set aside under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act. This has been supplemented by 32,859 acres of national endowments, which cannot, of course, be acquired in freehold by the selectors, but can be disposed of on renewable lease for sixty-six years with right of renewal for further terms of sixty-six years.

15. An area of 3,453 acres in the Cheviot Estate was also available for leasing by discharged soldiers under various tenures, and in addition to the foregoing areas no less than 80,153 acres of land set apart under the Land for Settlements Act was proclaimed for discharged soldiers. The greater part of this area includes purchased estates, but in addition adjoining areas of Crown lands have in some cases been added to ensure the better subdivision and settlement of the land, so that the area proclaimed is always larger than the area purchased. As a matter of fact, nearly all the land that has lately been acquired under the Land for Settlements Act is utilized for the settlement of discharged soldiers, and at the present time it is only in rare cases that it is available for settlement by the general public.

16. Exception has from time to time been taken in various quarters to the classes of land set apart under the Act, and it has been suggested by some that only improved land should be allotted, so that the soldiers could obtain returns therefrom immediately after selection, whilst others contend that unimproved land should be allotted to them so that they might reap the fullest benefit from their labour in improving and roading the lands. Seeing what diversity of opinion there is on the subject both by farmers, theorists, business people, societies, and the soldiers themselves, the Government deemed it best at the very commencement of the scheme to provide land suitable for the requirements of all soldiers—that is to say, individual preference was in each case taken into account, and the wishes of the settler have been met as far as possible. For instance, the Government has provided suburban land suitable for market-gardening and poultry-farms; small areas of rural land adapted for bee-keeping; small farms suitable for dairying and fruitgrowing, &c.; larger holdings suitable for mixed farming; and pastoral country for grazing only. Large areas of land have been opened for settlement so that they may

be available to meet the demands as they arise, but in order to prevent the lands from deteriorating through being unoccupied until selection, they are in many cases let for grazing purposes to the general public on tenancies terminable at short notice.

17. In view of the necessity for producing as much wheat as possible, arrangements are being made to devote to this purpose some land set apart for discharged soldiers that has not been selected and is not required for disposal at present. Sections in the Seaforth, Cricklewood, and Leeston Settlements, Canterbury District, are being thus dealt with under the supervision of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and in the latter case some of the local farmers have given teams and labour free of cost. The cost of seed and such additional labour as may be required will be borne by the Department.

18. In the Canterbury and Otago Districts the licenses of large areas of pastoral runs terminate in 1918, and with the concurrence of the Land Boards arrangements have been made that the runs which have been classified for subdivision, and which in ordinary course would have been submitted for competition early in next year, shall be retained on temporary occupation by the present holders and not re-leased until 1919, and not even then unless the war is over and the main body of the soldiers have returned.

19. In order to render lands available for utilization from the date of selection, authority has in some cases been given to the Commissioner of Crown Lands to sow in grass burnt bush areas of Crown land, so that when they are placed on the market and taken up the soldier selector can at once obtain some return from his holding. The amount of advance that may be made to the settler for buildings, stock, &c., is not affected by this expenditure, as the cost of grassing is added to the capital value of the land, and rent is based upon the improved value.

20. It depends chiefly on the applicant's wishes, capabilities, and farming experience as to what class of land should be allotted to him, and the Land Boards who attend to this matter in every case study the applicant's qualifications and endeavour to provide him with land that he can utilize to the best advantage. Many soldiers, young and physically fit, who have had past experience in farming, prefer to take up bush land, as they wish to do as much of their own improvements as possible, and to be employed on the roadmaking necessary to open up the block. Others who have come from dairying districts desire to be placed on a dairying farm so that they can make good milk cheques from the beginning, whilst a large number who have been accustomed to the management of sheep will accept only sheep-country; and so it will be seen that no hard-and-fast rule can be laid down as to the class of country that should be set aside for the settlement of the soldiers, but that individual capabilities and preferences must be recognized as the chief factors in the situation coupled with the supply of land at the disposal of the Government.

CLASSES OF APPLICANTS.

21. There is one phase of the question to which I desire to draw attention. Returned soldiers comprise all classes of the community: some have wide experience as farmers, others have little or none; some have a fair amount of capital, others have a small amount, whilst others again are without any capital. It sometimes happens that a soldier with a fair amount of capital and with experience of farming is desirous of taking up a large pastoral run, and is in a position to make good use of it. At the same time another soldier without capital and with little experience of farming desires to apply for similar land, and unless the Government is prepared to largely increase the present limit of £500 for advances, which for many reasons would not be advisable, or the soldier obtains outside capital, it is impossible for him to work the land profitably. Among the soldiers absent from New Zealand, however, there are many men with sufficient capital who will be prepared and desirous of taking up land in large areas. There are plenty of allotments available for those soldiers without capital for the working of which the advance of £500 is sufficient. Every care must therefore be taken to ensure that a man is only allotted land that he is able to work to advantage with the farming experience he possesses, the capital at his command, and the advances made by the Government. To deal with such cases in a fitting manner is one of the principal duties devolving on the Land Boards, and it is here that the local knowledge, wide experience, and sympathetic views of the members of the Boards are most valuable.

OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE TO SETTLERS.

22. As an instance of help being afforded soldier settlers by patriotic societies and the public, it may be mentioned that the War Relief Association at Napier at its meeting on the 4th June, 1917, decided to advance sums up to £250 at 4 per cent. for five years to successful applicants on the Porangahau Block, offered for selection on the 8th June. Such sums as are thus advanced will not be made available until the £500 advanced by the Government is exhausted, and each case will be dealt with on its merits.

23. Assistance by private individuals has also been given in several cases, one of the most prominent being that of Mr. G. P. Donnelly, of Otatara, near Napier, who provided a large portion of the posts and wire for fencing required by the soldiers on the Kaiwaka Settlement (Purahotangihia Block), north of Napier, together with horses, pack-saddles, and 9,460 sheep, at a total stated cost of £12,600. Of this amount £7,000 will be lent to fifteen settlers for five years free of interest, and Mr. Donnelly has by deed of trust arranged that the money, when repaid, will be available for placing future returned soldiers on the land. Other Hawke's Bay settlers have agreed to contribute towards the fund, and at the end of ten years it is anticipated that £10,000 will be available, and will be handed over for administration by the Y.M.C.A. and Salvation Army for the benefit of parents, widows, and families of Hawke's Bay soldiers.

24. When land in the Lees Valley was opened for selection the Canterbury Patriotic Fund granted £200 in several cases as an addition to the Government advance of £500 so as to assist the soldiers in making a financial success of their holdings, whilst the North Canterbury Farmers' Co-operative Association and several Oxford residents and Canterbury runholders gave generous assistance. In both this and the preceding case the land taken up was hilly pastoral country in large areas, and although it is very suitable for settlement a fair amount of capital is required to work the land to advantage. It is understood that several other patriotic societies and individuals have likewise assisted in a similar manner, though particulars are not available.

25. In the Mangapaoro and Matakaoa districts (Poverty Bay) an area of 3,850 acres, valued at £40,000, has been constituted "The Waiapu Returned Soldiers Trust Estate," the trustees being Messrs. Thomas Sydney Williams (Tuparoa), Heathcote Beetham Williams (Gisborne), Arnold Beetham Williams (Waipiro Bay), and Kenneth Stuart Williams (Tuparoa), who have sole discretion in the matters of subdivision and choice of settlers. The returned soldiers must have been *bona-fide* residents of the Waiapu County before enlistment. On the security of the land, money for stock and implements for the settlers has been borrowed from the Bank of New Zealand, the interest and principal having to be repaid. The net profits of the estate are for the relief and benefit of needy returned soldiers of the Waiapu County, for the relief of dependants of killed soldiers and sailors, and also for assistance to war relief societies and associations generally. The action of the Messrs. Williams in donating this land and establishing a practical scheme of settlement is another example of generosity displayed by this well-known family. The land will not be allotted to the soldiers until the return of the Main Body, but is being worked for their benefit by the trustees in the meantime.

LANDS SELECTED.

26. During the year ended 31st March, 1916, when the Act had been only a short time in operation, only two allotments had been selected, aggregating 629 acres. During the past year, however, applications were fairly numerous, over four hundred soldiers having applied for specific sections, and of these 319 were provided with 143,524 acres of land; 180 settlers being placed upon Crown land and 131 settlers upon land acquired under the Land for Settlements Act. The greater part of the settlers took up the land under the special lease conditions provided by section 4 of the 1915 Act and the regulations framed thereunder, which appear to meet the requirements of the soldier settlers in a very satisfactory manner. The Wellington District was the most favoured, as 124 soldiers selected land here, and the next in favour was the Auckland District, with seventy-two selections, whilst Hawke's Bay, with fifty-seven, was a good third; and it would appear that in the majority of cases soldiers prefer to settle in the North Island, as several settlements of good land in the South have failed to find applicants.

27. The Land Boards, both when examining the applicants as to their capabilities and requirements and when allotting land, have endeavoured to place them on holdings suited to their needs, and where necessary have recommended exemptions from rent for any necessary period or recommended postponement if such would meet the case, and in every way have assisted the settlers in entering into possession under most favourable conditions. The co-operation of the Agricultural Department has been availed of, and advice has been rendered by its experts regarding the best cultivation of the land to any soldier settler who may desire it. The Crown Lands Rangers have periodically visited the settlers and also rendered assistance, with the result in the majority of cases that the settlers have already done very well.

28. An instance of the patriotism displayed by one of the discharged soldiers coming under notice during the year was furnished by Mr. Leonard Ashworth, who was a member of the Second Reinforcements, being attached to the Wellington Mounted Rifles, and served for nearly two years. After having been severely wounded in the head, in August, 1915, he was invalided to England, and finally conveyed back to New Zealand and discharged from service with the Expeditionary Force. Having sufficiently recovered from his wounds, he applied for land under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act of 1915, and was allotted a section of 116 acres at Takapau, Hawke's Bay, in June, 1916. He was granted advances under the Act to enable him to improve and stock the land, whilst a mercantile firm also gave him further advances. Since going on to the land Mr. Ashworth worked well, fenced and subdivided the land, and having had a good lambing, his profits enabled him to discharge outside liabilities and the Crown's interest and rent, and further stock the section, whilst he also built a four-roomed cottage. As, however, Mr. Ashworth's short stay on the land restored his health, he re-enlisted in the Expeditionary Force, and was accepted for a further term of service.

STOCKING OF FARMS.

29. The various Commissioners of Crown Lands render all possible assistance to the soldier settlers in the matter of procuring stock, and if so desired make the necessary purchases on their behalf. The soldiers are not debarred from arranging their own purchases, subject, of course, to the supervision necessary to ensure that the stock represent reasonable value by way of security for the money advanced for the purchase. As many of the men who are acquiring sections have had a very limited experience in farming, their judgment of the value of the different classes of stock is not such as to qualify them to bid directly at auction, and they are therefore encouraged to arrange their purchases privately. The advice of a Crown Lands Ranger or Inspector of Stock is always available to assist in the negotiations for purchase of suitable stock at reasonable prices.

30. The Crown Lands Rangers are instructed to ascertain the requirements of the different settlers as soon as they select their lands, and to get into touch with the local branches of the patriotic societies, from whom valuable information, gained by the practical experience and local

knowledge of members, is obtainable. The ready co-operation of the various patriotic societies in this respect has been very fully appreciated both by the Department and the discharged soldiers in whose interests they have acted. On account of the present abnormal condition of the markets, settlers are encouraged to deal cautiously in the matter of stock, and to restrict their purchases as far as possible. The purchase of expensive implements for individual use has been discouraged, and settlers have been advised to combine and obtain implements for their common use. This arrangement has so far been found to give satisfaction.

LAND FOR MAORI SOLDIERS.

31. It may not be generally known that Maori members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force have the same privileges in selecting land under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act as European members, and in one or two instances have taken advantage thereof. Moreover, the Native owners of 40,000 acres of land in the Owhaoko Block, south of Taupo, have signified their desire to set it apart for settlement by Maori soldiers, and their wishes are now under consideration by the Aotea Maori Land Board and the Government with a view to giving effect thereto. Special legislation may, however, be necessary to accomplish this.

PART II.—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

ADVANCES.

32. During the year the sum of £36,000 was raised under the provisions of section 8 of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, for the purpose of making advances, &c., to discharged soldiers. Out of this sum £2,155 4s. 1d. was spent in the purchase of fencing-wire, staples, &c., of which £465 10s. represents direct sales; £1,438 16s. 2d. has been debited to the settlers at cost against advances authorized, leaving £250 17s. 11d. worth of wire, &c., on hand in the Wellington District as at the 31st March last. The statement of accounts appended to the report shows that out of £30,956 4s. 1d. advanced on mortgage (including £640 10s. 1d. not charged up in Treasury at the 31st March), £1,199 4s. 9d. has been repaid, of which a considerable portion has been received through the dairy factories, the discharged-soldier settlers having given orders on the factories to pay the Department 12½ per cent. of their milk proceeds.

33. Advances amounting to £62,420 13s. 2d. were authorized to 199 soldiers, against which advances amounting to £30,956 4s. 1d., as stated above, have been made to 143 soldiers. Advances are made when actually earned, either in the purchase of stock, the erection of dwellinghouses, or general improvements to the land. As soon as a request for payment of an advance comes to hand the Commissioner of Crown Lands instructs the Ranger to inspect the stock purchased, or proposed to be purchased, and the improvements effected, and should the report of this officer be satisfactory steps are then taken to settle accounts direct with the vendors or contractors where necessary, or to the soldiers where the improvements have been effected by them. The balance of the authorities not earned at the 31st March is held available, and the advances authorized will be paid upon the conditions relating to payment of advances being complied with.

34. When the first advance is made a mortgage is given which covers all subsequent advances, and bills of sale as collateral security are executed in the case of advances for stock, chattels, &c. Advances in respect of these transactions are very varied, and cover almost all articles required in connection with farming operations, ranging from tools, milk-cans, &c., to horses, cattle, and sheep, seed-oats, potatoes, &c. Some delay has been experienced in settling accounts through the Treasury, but this has now been remedied by arrangements made with the Treasury to have accounts paid by the Commissioner of Crown Lands immediately upon receipt of invoices, &c.

35. The restrictions placed upon lands for disposal to the general public enabled the staff of the District Offices to devote attention to the settlement of lands by discharged soldiers, and to make arrangements for financial assistance without extra staff being required. As the Department did not incur any additional expense by way of administration, it was considered inadvisable to debit the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account with the value of the time of those officers who were employed in giving effect to applications for financial assistance.

36. The Revenue Account shows a book loss of £135 7s. 5d., which has arisen through moneys being raised in anticipation of calls earlier than actually required, the result being that more interest is payable than would otherwise have been the case. In the meantime this small loss has been transferred to Suspense Account in anticipation of its being cleared off next year.

EXPERIENCE IN IMPROVED-FARM SETTLEMENTS.

37. In view of the financial assistance now rendered to discharged soldiers for the purpose of stocking and improving their lands, it is interesting to note that in 1912 the Government authorized the Department to arrange for the purchase of cattle for those improved-farm settlers in the Auckland, Taranaki, and Wellington Districts who were not in a position to stock their lands, and from then until the 31st March last the sum of £10,082 6s. was advanced for this purpose, the only security being bills of sale over the stock. Of this sum £8,384 1s. 9d. has been repaid, leaving a balance of £1,698 4s. 3d. outstanding at the end of last financial year. The settlers have considerably benefited by the assistance, and have generally fulfilled their obligations, and it is anticipated that the whole of the amount now outstanding will be repaid by the 31st March next.

The following is a statement of the financial transactions referred to:—

<i>Advances Account.</i>			
	Advances.		
	£	s.	d.
Auckland, 1913-17	1,576	15	2
Taranaki, 1912-17	6,511	0	0
Wellington, 1913-17	1,994	10	10
Totals	£10,082	6	0

	Repayments.		
	£	s.	d.
	1,323	13	11
	5,345	9	4
	1,714	18	6
Totals	£8,384	1	9

	£	s.	d.
	253	1	3
	1,165	10	8
	279	12	4
Totals	£1,698	4	3

<i>Revenue Account.</i>			
	£	s.	d.
Interest allowed at 4 per cent. on money advanced out of Consolidated Fund	1,156	12	6
Approximate cost of administration	150	0	0
Balance	52	1	10
	£1,358	14	4

	£	s.	d.
Interest charged to settlers at 5 per cent.	1,358	14	4
	£1,358	14	4

Interest in arrear at the 31st March, 1917, £101 15s. 5d.

OTHER FINANCIAL CONCESSIONS.

Postponements and Remissions of Rent.

38. Besides advancing money to settlers to improve and stock their holdings, the Act permits of concessions being granted with regard to the half-yearly payment of rent. Where the settler is in a fairly good financial position at the outset and only needs temporary relief a postponement of rent will probably meet the case, but where circumstances warrant it and the settler is unable to work his holding profitably for some little time he may be exempted from payment of rent for a limited period. Each case is treated on its merits and receives such concession as is reasonable and justified.

39. Postponements of rent were granted during the year to forty-nine discharged soldiers, the amount being £1,679. These were to enable the settlers to establish themselves satisfactorily on the holdings allotted to them, and relieve the financial strain in the early stages of settlement.

40. Remissions of rent that fell due up to the 31st March, 1917, were granted to eleven discharged soldiers, the amount remitted being £353. It is, however, anticipated that an amount of approximately £1,600 will be required to meet cases during the current year, and provision is accordingly being made on the estimates to cover such remissions.

PART III.—CONCESSIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES.

41. In addition to the provisions of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Acts of 1915 and 1916, which deal with soldiers discharged from service, legislation has been passed conferring privileges on members of the Expeditionary Forces who are either Crown tenants or desirous of acquiring lands administered by the Crown. By sections 23 and 24 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1915, and Part II of the War Legislation Amendment Act, 1916,—

(a.) The Minister is empowered to grant exemption from rent to Crown tenants during their term of service and until six months after discharge.

(b.) The Minister is empowered to grant remission or postpone date of payment of interest falling due on account of balance of purchase-money due under licenses to acquire land on deferred payment from the Crown, and to postpone the due dates of instalments of principal, and extend the terms of such licenses for a period not exceeding three years.

Applications under both of these provisions are considered by the Land Board, which recommends what concession should be granted in each case, and the Minister then decides. The amount actually remitted up to the 31st March, 1917, was £8,092, whilst sixty were granted postponements of rental aggregating £3,183 during the year.

(c.) Members of an Expeditionary Force to receive preference at ballots.

Section 11 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1912, amended by section 34 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1913, provides that preference at all ballots shall be given to married applicants who have children dependent upon them, and now soldier applicants, though unmarried, are entitled to an equal preference with these married applicants.

(d.) Applications for land may be lodged by an agent.

When application is made for Crown land, a declaration by the applicant as to his eligibility has to accompany the application. The applicant has also to appear personally before the Land Board for examination. The special provisions enact that on production of evidence in writing of appointment, or, failing this, by his own declaration that he has been so appointed, an agent may represent any soldier in these matters.

(e.) Age-limit of applicants for settlement land reduced.

Section 51 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1908, provides that no person under the age of twenty-one years may be an applicant for land, but section 12 of the War Legislation Amendment Act, 1916, states that this provision shall not apply in cases where the applicant has been engaged on military service beyond New Zealand in connection with the present war.

Besides these concessions the Land Boards have relaxed the improvement and residential conditions of the leases of tenants on active service, and in every way give special consideration to their needs whilst absent from their holdings.

APPENDIX.

REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS.

AUCKLAND.

(H. M. SKEET, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

DURING the year an area of 14,832 acres was opened for selection by discharged soldiers only, in addition to the preference given at ordinary ballots to such selectors. The number of provisional applications for land received up to the close of the year was 450, but the actual number of applications received for lands opened was only 134, and the number of holdings selected was seventy-two, comprising an area of 10,882 acres. From the time of selection the office has kept in close touch with the selectors, attending to their requirements in regard to advances, purchasing and inspecting stock, obtaining necessary mortgages and bills of sale, and making payments for stock and materials purchased, all of which we have endeavoured to arrange with the least possible delay in the interests of tenants. The total amount of advances authorized up to the end of the year was £24,488, and the amount actually paid was £6,902. It is, of course, scarcely necessary to remark that in order to enable the work to proceed smoothly and with a minimum of delay and inconvenience to the tenants it is essential that there should be the utmost possible elasticity, and no more formality than is absolutely necessary to protect the interests of the State.

It is satisfactory to record that nearly all the tenants have already made excellent progress on their holdings, and they are displaying an energy and enthusiasm that augurs well for their future success.

On the 31st March, 1917, there were twenty-eight sections, containing 7,780 acres, still available for selection.

HAWKE'S BAY.

(W. F. MARSH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

It is now almost a twelvemonth since the first ballot under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, took place, and the experience so far gained has been varied and profitable.

Of the two large blocks—viz., Otawhao and Purahotangihia—already settled, the former is adapted wholly for dairying, and the latter almost exclusively for sheep-farming; in each case good progress has been made, and the most inspiring sign is the general satisfaction expressed by the settlers.

The blocks known as Watea and Marakeke to be opened very shortly present a different problem, as they will require the close attention of men willing and able to devote all their energies to successful mixed farming under closer cultivation.

Surveys are partly complete, or near completion, of lands aggregating about 45,500 acres suitable only for sheep-farming, and which will be ready for offering at the opportune season; and it is such class of land which appeals most to the settler in Hawke's Bay.

It is a matter of regret that the Tiratu Block of 5,730 acres, near Dannevirke, although subdivided, could not be put on the market this season—due to the absolute necessity of providing proper road access for the small-holders for whom the block was intended. In the meantime, however, it is well let.

The examination and selection of applicants under the Act have caused the Land Board much thought, and very careful consideration has been given in all cases. Generally speaking, applicants are of three classes—those who know the game and are prepared to see it through; those who have not the experience but are determined to seize the opportunity offered them, quite realizing that they may have to suffer hardships; and finally those who have no experience, not much determination, and the belief that the land is a loving stepmother to all her children. The first will go straight ahead, the second will require nursing for some time, and the third will gradually drop out and make room for others.

It may be mentioned that the first year of a soldier settler's term entails a lot of departmental office-work. With the ordinary settler this is almost negligible, but the soldier settler's primary needs make almost a personal equation, and those members of my staff who have been most in contact with the duties have not spared themselves in the endeavour to extend every assistance to the selector.

TARANAKI.

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

There has not been very much inquiry on the part of returned soldiers for holdings in this district, and little competition resulted for the sections that were made available for settlement. This may be due largely to the fact that the sections offered have been mostly bush country, more or less remote, and suited only for men physically fit and possessing experience at bushwork. A total area of 8,340 acres, comprising thirteen sections, has been made available to date. Other discharged soldiers have acquired Crown leases by transfer, or were possessed of such before going on active service, and both classes are now by the amending Act of 1916 entitled to the benefits of the advance up to £500 for improvements provided for in the original Act of 1915. The total number of discharged soldiers holding land in the district is thirteen, aggregating 4,381 acres.

WELLINGTON.

(G. H. M. McCURE, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

At the 31st March, 1916, seven sections had been allotted, containing an area of 2,839 acres; and at the close of the corresponding period this year 131 soldiers had been allotted a total area of 36,223 acres. A proportion of this area was bush land, comprising 23,684 acres, on which sixty applicants had been accommodated with a section. In two instances two soldiers have taken up a large area as tenants in common. On almost every selection bush has been felled, and the subsequent improvements in the way of fencing and buildings are proceeding. In the more remote district abutting on the upper reaches of the Wanganui River below Taumarunui the settlers will be able to obtain any quantity of employment, as forty-one miles of road-formation are necessary, involving an expenditure of £30,000.

On open lands seventy-one soldiers have taken up 12,539 acres and 36 perches, and about one-third of them have had good results either from the milk or wool returns. More than half of these settlers will be dairying next season, and of them it may be said that few have any capital to speak of, and what they did have was necessary to keep them going until they could obtain a return from their holdings.

Taken as a whole the average class of settler that has taken up these sections is good, and suited to the class of country selected, and if they will only realize that they must work and apply their energies with diligence to the improvement of their holdings and their herds there is no reason to doubt the success of the settlements that have been brought into existence under the generous provisions of the statute.

Under these provisions an area of about 2,300 acres of bush has been felled and grass-seed provided by advances under the Act, twenty-five dwellings erected, and 550 head of stock, mostly dairy cows, have been purchased.

A brief *résumé* of the methods of settling the returned soldiers on the land may be interesting.

After finding out what land is available and selecting a section, the soldier is examined by the Land Board as to his experience in farming pursuits, his means, and his character, his discharge usually supplying the latter. Under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act all the qualifications for obtaining land are—

- (a.) Has been a member of the New Zealand Naval Forces or of any Expeditionary Force;
- (b.) Has served beyond New Zealand in connection with the present war;
- (c.) Has returned to New Zealand; and
- (d.) Has received his discharge from service, either before or after his return to New Zealand.

These make it practically impossible for the Land Board to debar soldiers without previous farming experience from selecting lands. This is, in one sense, as it should be, and no doubt many of the soldiers without experience will make successful settlers, but it increases the work and the responsibilities of the Lands Department enormously. The whole scheme is yet on its trial, but from the experience already gained I consider that, as most of the soldiers are without capital, there are only two classes of land that they can be settled on with a fair chance of success—those are forest-covered Crown land of good quality where experience and a stout heart is the main adjunct, and first-class fully improved dairy land, where, with the £500 advanced by the Government, and a farm of, say, 50 acres, any soldier who puts his best into his operations ought to succeed.

The best and in my opinion the only time for putting soldiers on dairy farms is during the months of May, June, and July, for by so doing they are enabled to get a return out of their farm by, say, September; on the other hand, if they are put on during the other months of the year, owing to the difficulty and cost of procuring good cows, they are unable to get a return from the land, and consequently are unable to meet their payments of rent, &c.

If this principle was adopted, soldiers with no experience in farming pursuits, and who proposed taking up land, could obtain employment on farms, and by the time sections were available would be in a position to judge whether they would prove a success or not.

Owing mostly to the lack of experience, and in some cases, unfortunately, the desire to do no work, the starting of the soldier on his farm is a strenuous operation. To commence with, the farm has to be fenced, buildings erected, and stock bought, and the whole of these operations have to be, in most cases, supervised by the officers of the Lands Department.

Soldier settlers should always bear in mind that farms are not made in a day, and they should do their best to make the farm earn interest in the shortest possible time. This requires the soldier to devote the whole of his time and brains to the development of his farm. He should never forget that labour is capital, and that a day wasted is gone for ever.

Fencing, cultivation, and grassing are much more important in the initial stages than elaborate houses. Good stock is essential, and men without much capital must exercise caution in their methods. It is not advisable, nor should it be allowed, for soldiers without experience to buy their stock; they should be guided by the advice of practical farmers, and in nearly every district the members of the patriotic societies are only too pleased to assist the returned soldiers not alone with advice, but with both labour and capital.

MARLBOROUGH.

(H. D. McKELLAR, Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

An area of 7,974 acres was opened, comprising twenty-seven sections, ranging from 7 acres to 759 acres; twelve of these are small areas, part of the Wither Settlement, close to Blenheim, suitable for fruitgrowing and poultry-farming; but so far only two have been taken up. Two

of the others, situated in the Ronga Valley, suitable for dairy-farming, have also been taken up, and five sections in the Erina Settlement have also been selected.

Apparently there does not seem to be much demand for land in this district by discharged soldiers, as, although there have been a number of inquiries, they have gone no further in the matter.

NELSON.

(F. A. THOMPSON, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

During the year eleven applications were received from returned soldiers, two of whom were allotted land under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, and the greatest care was taken to see that they satisfied themselves by personal inspection as to the suitability of the land selected. In addition, three soldiers acquired 10,500 acres under the Land Act, and another took over a Crown tenant's holding.

It must be borne in mind that many of the invalided men are as yet hardly fit to undertake the strenuous work of taking up new land, and at the same time the land available for all but the strongest is indeed limited in extent. It may be possible in the near future to acquire further land suitable for subdivision into pastoral as well as fruit farms, and the Land Purchase Board has this under consideration.

In addition to current applications now disposed of in individual areas, an area of some 24,000 acres comprised in the Rainy River and Slips Blocks is being prepared for offering.

WESTLAND.

(THOMAS BROOK, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

No land has yet been disposed of to discharged soldiers, but areas aggregating 6,505 acres have been set apart for the purpose, and will be available for selection during the coming year. The Bell Hill Block, adjacent to the Greymouth—Otira Railway, forms the greatest part of this area, and grass-seed is now being sown on portions of it which were burnt during the summer.

CANTERBURY.

(W. H. SKINNER, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

Four estates, partly acquired and partly Crown lands, have been submitted for selection by discharged soldiers: eight sections in Cricklewood, near Fairlie, areas ranging from 145 acres to 391 acres of agricultural land, two of which have so far been selected; nine sections in the Seaforth Settlement, near Temuka, the areas ranging from 14 acres to 105 acres, not yet disposed of; two were taken up but subsequently relinquished. 82 acres of wheat and 50 acres of oats which were on the land when purchased were harvested. The wheat averaged 48 bushels and the oats about 56 bushels to the acre. Clayton, near Fairlie, subdivided into five sections of sheep-country with areas from 800 acres to 3,580 acres, and having an altitude 1,400 ft. to 1,700 ft., was all selected. Lees Valley, Upper Ashley district: eight sections were offered and seven taken up, all small sheep-runs, with an altitude from 1,400 ft. to 3,000 ft., and areas from 2,500 acres to 3,900 acres. Two small sections, one at Hornby of 3 acres and another at Drayton of 10 acres, have not yet found a selector.

So far the selections already made indicate a choice for sheep-farming, and that small agricultural and dairy farms are not in favour. Still, it is too early to arrive at a decision as to the advisability of recommending any particular class of land.

OTAGO.

(ROBERT T. SADD, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

So far there has been a very limited demand for land by discharged soldiers, and in most cases their capital is also very limited. Out of the fifteen sections set apart on the Benmore Runs there are still four unselected. Two runs at Tarras were also selected by discharged soldiers. On Clifton Settlement only three sections were allotted out of twenty-two. There have been a few inquiries for small areas on Earnsclough and Galloway Flats, but owing to water for irrigation not being available these lands cannot at present be worked to advantage.

The lands allotted to discharged soldiers have not been held long enough to judge of the prospects of the settlers. The high prices ruling for stock, and the enormous increase in the price of fencing-material, is a great drawback to the settlement of the land.

SOUTHLAND.

(H. D. M. HASZARD, Commissioner of Crown Lands.)

During the year thirteen discharged soldiers have been settled on the land. All are working hard on their holdings and are shaping well. With the financial assistance rendered by the Government they should eventually become prosperous tenants.

Lamont Settlement was purchased and subdivided into five sections, four of which have been selected. The other nine are on worked-out bush lands of good quality. All settlers are of a good class. Another estate has been purchased, and will be opened during the coming year. It consists of first-class dairying land, and will be subdivided into suitable holdings.

TABLE 1.

AREA OF LAND PROCLAIMED FOR SETTLEMENT UNDER THE DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT ACT, 1915.

District.	Under Section 3 of the Act. (Ordinary Tenures.)		Under Section 4 of the Act. (Special Tenures.)		Total Area proclaimed.	
	For the Year ended 31st March, 1917.	Total to 31st March, 1917.	For the Year ended 31st March, 1917.	Total to 31st March, 1917.	For the Year ended 31st March, 1917.	Total to 31st March, 1917.
<i>Ordinary Crown Lands—</i>	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Auckland	6,825	6,825	32,339	32,780	39,164	39,605
Hawke's Bay	4,561	4,561	780	58,798	5,341	63,359
Taranaki	8,340	8,340	..	..	8,340	8,340
Wellington	884	884	49,934	50,040	50,818	50,924
Nelson	8,588	8,588	3,725	3,786	12,313	12,374
Marlborough	..	..	484	484	484	484
Westland	5,582	5,582	149	149	5,731	5,731
Canterbury	..	..	253	253	253	253
Otago	13,840	13,840	23,233	23,233	37,073	37,073
Southland	..	..	308	1,696	308	1,696
Totals	48,620	48,620	111,205	171,219	159,825	219,839
<i>Cheviot Estate, Canterbury ..</i>	2,097	2,097	1,356	1,356	3,453	3,453
<i>Land for Settlements—</i>						
Auckland	..	..	4,125	4,481	4,125	4,481
Hawke's Bay	..	..	1,574	1,712	1,574	1,712
Taranaki	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wellington	707	707	16,829	17,427	17,536	18,134
Nelson	..	..	..	..	..	..
Marlborough	..	..	6,968	7,490	6,968	7,490
Westland	..	..	..	..	..	..
Canterbury	43,406	43,406	565	608	43,971	44,014
Otago	5,148	5,148	86	86	5,234	5,234
Southland	745	745	..	..	745	745
Totals	50,006	50,006	30,147	31,804	80,153	81,810
<i>National Endowment—</i>						
Auckland	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hawke's Bay	..	..	..	..	..	..
Taranaki	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wellington	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nelson	2,856	2,856	..	..	2,856	2,856
Marlborough	..	..	..	..	..	..
Westland	775	775	..	..	775	775
Canterbury	14,770	14,770	..	..	14,770	14,770
Otago	14,275	14,275	..	..	14,275	14,275
Southland	183	183	..	..	183	183
Totals	32,859	32,859	..	..	32,859	32,859
Grand totals	133,582	133,582	142,708	204,379	276,290	337,961

TABLE 2.
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND LAND ALLOTTED DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1917, UNDER THE DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT ACT, 1915.

District.	Number of Applications received during the Year.			Under Section 3 of Act (Ordinary Tenures).						Under Section 4 of Act (Special Tenures).						Totals.										
				Sale (including Deferred Payment).			Lease and License.			Total.			Sale (including Deferred Payment).			Lease and License.			Total.							
	Under Section 3 of Act (Ordinary Tenures).	Under Section 4 of Act (Special Tenures).	Total.	Number of Allotments.	Area.	Number of Allotments.	Area.	Number of Allotments.	Area.	Acres.	Number of Allotments.	Area.	Number of Allotments.	Area.	Acres.	Number of Allotments.	Area.	Number of Allotments.	Area.	Acres.	Number of Allotments.	Area.				
Ordinary Crown Lands—	Auckland ..	..	44	..	..	..	..	..	..	362	29	6,570	30	6,932	1	362	29	6,570	30	6,932	1	362	29	6,570		
	Hawke's Bay ..	..	103	..	..	..	..	..	..	16	54	17,658	55	17,674	1	16	54	17,658	55	17,674	1	16	54	17,658		
	Taranaki ..	12	..	..	4	1,976	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..			
	Wellington ..	1	66	67	1	684	1	684	1	684	12	61	22,905	63	22,917	2	12	61	22,905	64	23,601	2	12	61	22,905	
	Nelson ..	2	8	10	1	1,047	1	1,047	1	1,047	..	2	1,865	1	865	..	..	2	1,865	2	1,912	2	1,912	2	1,912	
	Marlborough ..	..	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Westland ..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Canterbury ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Otago ..	..	16	16	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14	17,707	14	17,707	..	..	14	17,707	14	17,707	..	..	14	17,707	
	Southland ..	..	10	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	1,223	9	1,223	..	..	9	1,223	9	1,223	..	..	9	1,223	
Totals ..	15	252	267	..	..	6	3,707	6	3,707	4	390	170	67,413	174	67,803	4	390	176	71,120	180	71,510	4	390	176	71,120	
Settlement Lands—	Auckland ..	..	89	..	..	13	745	..	..	..	..	28	2,952	28	2,952	..	..	41	3,697	41	3,697	..	..	41	3,697	
	Hawke's Bay ..	..	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	104	2	104	..	..	2	104	2	104	..	..	2	104	
	Taranaki ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Wellington ..	..	105	105	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	60	10,467	60	10,467	..	..	60	10,467	60	10,467	..	..	60	10,467	
	Nelson ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Marlborough ..	5	3	8	..	5	2,171	..	..	..	..	2	18	2	18	..	..	7	2,189	7	2,189	..	..	7	2,189	
	Westland ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Canterbury ..	26	..	26	..	15	35,813	15	35,813	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	35,813	15	35,813	..	..	15	35,813	
	Otago ..	4	..	4	..	2	502	2	502	..	..	4	588	4	588	..	..	2	502	2	502	..	..	2	502	
	Southland ..	..	5	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	588	4	588	..	..	4	588	
Totals ..	35	205	240	..	..	35	39,231	35	39,231	..	..	96	14,129	96	14,129	..	..	131	53,360	131	53,360	..	..	131	53,360	
National-endowment Lands	Auckland ..	1	..	1	..	1	253	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	253	1	253	..	..	1	253		
	Hawke's Bay ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Taranaki ..	5	..	5	..	3	1,144	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	1,144	3	1,144	..	..	3	1,144		
	Wellington ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Nelson ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Marlborough ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Westland ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Canterbury ..	6	..	6	..	2	6,967	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	6,967	2	6,967	..	..	2	6,967	..	..
	Otago ..	3	..	3	..	2	10,290	2	10,290	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	10,290	2	10,290	..	..	2	10,290	..	..
	Southland ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals ..	15	..	15	..	8	18,654	8	18,654	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	18,654	8	18,654	..	..	8	18,654	..	..	
Other Estate—	Canterbury ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Grand totals	65	457	522	..	..	49	61,592	49	61,592	4	390	266	81,542	270	81,932	4	390	315	143,134	319	143,524	4	390	315	143,134

TABLE 3.

TOTAL LANDS ACQUIRED BY DISCHARGED SOLDIERS AND HELD AT THE 31ST MARCH, 1917.

Land District.	Sale (including Deferred Payment).			Lease and License.			Totals.	
	Number.	Area.	Price.	Number.	Area.	Annual Rental.	Number.	Area.
<i>Under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915.</i>								
		Acres.	£		Acres.	£		Acres.
Auckland ..	1	362	440	69	10,368	3,174	70	10,730
Hawke's Bay ..	1	16	240	53	16,835	6,088	54	16,851
Taranaki ..	..	..	..	6	2,630	211	6	2,630
Wellington ..	2	12	191	129	36,221	11,329	131	36,233
Nelson ..	..	..	..	2	1,912	96	2	1,912
Marlborough ..	..	..	..	9	2,673	639	9	2,673
Westland ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Canterbury ..	..	..	..	17	42,780	4,138	17	42,780
Otago ..	..	..	..	18	28,499	1,172	18	28,499
Southland ..	..	..	..	13	1,811	529	13	1,811
Totals ..	4	390	871	316	143,729	27,376	320	144,119
<i>Under other Acts. (This includes lands selected at ordinary ballots, leases and licenses purchased at auction, and holdings acquired by transfer or otherwise.)</i>								
Auckland ..	..	..	..	7	2,342	197	7	2,342
Hawke's Bay ..	..	..	..	3	3,970	443	3	3,970
Taranaki ..	1	1	12	2	633	76	3	634
Wellington ..	..	..	..	4	3,028	289	4	3,028
Nelson ..	..	..	..	2	10,542	47	2	10,542
Marlborough ..	..	..	..	1	1,236	49	1	1,236
Westland ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Canterbury ..	..	..	..	4	655	278	4	655
Otago ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Southland ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals ..	1	1	12	23	22,406	1,379	24	22,407
Grand totals ..	5	391	883	339	166,135	28,755	344	166,526

LANDS SELECTED BY MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

Forty members of the Expeditionary Force have by their agents selected 142,566 acres, the total rental of which is £4,112 per annum.

DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT ACCOUNT.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS.

	Receipts.		Payments.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Debitures	..	..	..	..
Proceeds from sale of fencing-wire, &c.	..	36,000 0 0	..	2,155 4 1
Repayment of advances	..	..	..	1,438 16 2
Interest	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	716 7 11
	..	..	..	30,315 14 0
	..	..	..	0 17 6
	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	6,824 2 11
	..	..	..	21 10 0
	..	..	..	6,845 12 11
	..	..	..	£37,878 12 4

STATEMENT OF MORTGAGE ACCOUNT TRANSACTIONS.

District.	Advances authorized and Number of Soldiers.		Advances made and Number of Soldiers.		Accrued Interest to 31st March, 1917.	Total.	Advances repaid.	Interest paid.	Total.	Outstanding at 31st March, 1917.
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.						
Auckland	60	£ 24,488 0 0	30	£ 6,902 7 4	£ s. d. 135 14 7	£ s. d. 7,038 1 11	£ s. d. 207 16 5	£ s. d. 14 3 0	£ s. d. 221 19 5	£ s. d. 6,816 2 6
Taranaki	3	940 0 0	2	330 0 0	2 2 2	332 2 2	..	0 5 0	0 5 0	331 17 2
Hawke's Bay	36	14,103 13 2	34	10,582 1 8	279 4 6	10,361 6 2	400 0 4	145 17 1	545 17 5	10,315 8 9
Wellington	78	17,774 0 0	63	11,493 8 6	206 10 6	11,699 19 0	591 8 0	53 3 8	644 11 8	11,055 7 4
Marlborough	3	530 0 0	2	135 10 0	1 19 3	137 9 3	..	..	..	137 9 3
Otago	7	1,835 0 0	3	365 0 0	6 2 10	371 2 10	..	..	..	371 2 10
Southland	12	2,750 0 0	9	1,147 16 7	10 13 7	1,158 10 2	..	0 8 10	0 8 10	1,158 1 4
Balances outstanding	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,199 4 9	213 17 7	1,413 2 4	..
							29,756 19 4	428 9 10	30,185 9 2	30,185 9 2
	199	62,420 13 2	143	30,956 4 1*	642 7 5	31,598 11 6	30,956 4 1	642 7 5	31,598 11 6	..

* Advances made Accounts not paid by Treasury at 31st March, 1917

£	s.	d.
30,315	14	0
640	10	1
£30,956	4	1

REVENUE ACCOUNT.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
4 per cent. interest on debentures (£36,000)	..	..	..	Interest on mortgages to 31st December, 1916	..	..	295 12 10
Printing debentures	..	..	..	Interest to 31st March, 1917, being part of half-year's interest for period ended 30th June, 1917, not recoverable until 1st July, 1917	..	..	346 14 7
				Balance, being loss transferred to Suspense Account	..	..	135 7 5
							<u>£777 14 10</u>

BALANCE-SHEET.

Liabilities.				£	s.	d.	Assets.			
Debentures	..	..	..	36,000	0	0	Advances secured on mortgage in the District Offices for balances owing, including £147 8s. 10d. transferred from Stock Account not adjusted in Treasury at 31st March, 1917			
Accounts not settled by Treasury at 31st March, 1917, and charged up in books of District Offices	..	..	..	640	10	1	..	..	..	29,756 19 4
Interest on debentures paid out of Consolidated Fund to 1st March, 1917	..	..	..	635	10	8	..	..	..	428 9 10
Accrued interest on debentures, 2nd March, 1917, to 31st March, 1917½	..	..	..	121	6	8	..	..	£398 6 9	
							Less transfers to advances not adjusted in Treasury books at 31st March, 1917			
							..	..	..	147 8 10
							Cash in Public Account ..			
							..	..	..	6,824 2 11
							Cash in hands of imprestees ..			
							..	..	..	21 10 0
							Suspense Account. 3 19 5 ..			
							..	..	..	135 7 5
							£37,417	7	5	

T. N. BRODRICK,
Under-Secretary for Lands.
J. H. O'DONNELL,
Chief Accountant.

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