

1920.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY:
DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT.
REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1920.

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, 14th July, 1920.
In accordance with the provisions of the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, I have the honour to submit herewith the report of the operations under the Act for the year ended 31st March, 1920.
I have, &c.,
T. N. BRODRICK,
Under-Secretary.
The Hon. D. H. Guthrie, Minister of Lands.

REPORT.

INCREASE IN OPERATIONS.

THE chief feature of the settlement of discharged soldiers on the land during the past year has been the great expansion of operations which commenced about February, 1919, and has continued until the present time. This was due to the return of the Main Body of the Expeditionary Force, and the desire of a large proportion thereof either to secure suitable holdings in the country, or else, where they held positions in the towns, to obtain houses in which to live. This great and rapidly increasing demand, coupled with the depletion of the staff of the Department through members being absent in the Expeditionary Forces, &c., threw a very heavy strain on to the other officers of the Department, and, although every effort was made to cope with the situation, it was extremely difficult to do so in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. As fast as officers returned to New Zealand they were reposted to offices of the Department, and a large number of junior officers from other Departments, or discharged soldiers who were seeking employment in the Public Service, were given positions to assist to cope with the work. Owing to the lack of training of these latter, however, this was not an easy matter, but every man worked to the utmost of his ability, with the result that the strain has been gradually easing and conditions are much more normal than they have been for some time past.