

### NAVAL AND MILITARY SETTLERS' AND VOLUNTEERS' LAND-CLAIMS.

In accordance with the recommendations contained in the report (H.-13, 1898) by Mr. Commissioner J. C. McKerrow, appointed under "The Naval and Military Claims Settlement and Extinguishment Act, 1896," of the sum of £3,485 voted by Parliament last year in settlement of the 110 claims £3,425 has been expended.

Vouchers were prepared for all claims as soon as possible after the money was voted; £3,055 passed for payment prior to the 31st March last. It was found that, out of the 110 claimants recommended, seventeen were deceased persons, and there was no evidence of legal succession or probate.

Under these circumstances the department moved the Treasury to take steps under the provisions of "The Public Payments without Probate Act, 1869," and after the statutory period had elapsed under the regulations of 1870 the survivors who claimed and applied were paid.

Thus fifteen have been paid since the 31st March last, and two claims are still unpaid; in one of these cases no one has made claim, and in the other there are several claimants, and it is not yet decided how the matter shall be adjusted.

### CHEVIOT ESTATE.

The land transactions within the above estate were confined to a few miscellaneous leases, and the report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands given in the Appendix shows that the estate continues to progress satisfactorily. The value of improvements required by law amounted to £16,832, but the actual value at the time of inspection was £49,738; whilst the number of people residing on the estate was 838. The past has been a fairly prosperous year for the settlers, notwithstanding that the caterpillars had somewhat reduced the yield from the crops. The area in crop amounts to: Cereals, 4,019 acres; green and root crops, 7,374 acres; English grasses, 11,430 acres. The dairy factory has proved a great assistance to the settlers during the year, especially to the smaller settlers near Mackenzie.

The following figures show the state of the Cheviot Account at the 31st March last:—

#### CHEVIOT ESTATE: RETURN of OUTLAY and INCOME as at 31st March, 1899.

OUTLAY.										£
Balance from previous year	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	262,429
Administration and contingencies	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	647
Balance of interest chargeable to 31st March, 1899	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,642
Rents accrued, included in former account	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,204
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£275,922
INCOME.										£
Cash—Instalments of purchase-money of freehold	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,234
Rents	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13,515
Interest	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	225
Shipping and port charges	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	69
Rents accrued to 31st March, 1899	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,155
Balance	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	254,724
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£275,922

There were nineteen settlers in arrear with their rents at the 31st March, to the amount of £171 18s. 8d. There were no forfeitures or surrenders.

### LAND FOR SETTLEMENT.

There have been fewer estates dealt with during the year ended the 31st March last than in the previous period, the number for 1899 being seven, containing an area of 90,708 acres 1 rood 4 perches, whilst that for 1898 was fourteen, of a total area of 58,691 acres 1 rood 31 perches.

The following table shows the new estates which have been handed over to this department and dealt with during the year, and the attached table shows various particulars respecting them, and also of all the estates that have been dealt with since the policy of acquiring estates from private owners was initiated in 1894.

#### ESTATES OFFERED for SELECTION during the TWELVE MONTHS ending 31st March, 1899.

Land District and Name of Estate.	Area of Estate.			Number of Selectors.	Area unselected, 31st March, 1899.			Annual Rental payable of Lands leased.			Date opened for selection.
	A.	R.	P.		A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	
Auckland—											
Rangiatea ...	4,004	0	0	17	753	0	0	564	6	2	June 22, 1898.
Karapiro ...	2,270	3	9	13	69	1	0	394	15	0	Oct. 21, 1898.
Hawke's Bay—											
Mahora ...	1,133	3	0	27	268	1	27	1,260	1	8	Mar. 22, 1899.
Willows ...	775	1	36	16	190	1	0	573	10	4	Mar. 22, 1899.
Canterbury—											
Pawaho ...	52	0	18	21	7	0	22	108	14	6	April 5, 1898
Waikakahi ...	48,248	0	21	139	6,426	2	11	14,838	14	10	Mar. 20, 1899.
Marlborough—											
Starborough (leasehold surrendered, 1,625 ac.)	34,224	0	0	43	3,949	0	0	4,893	10	10	Mar. 13, 1899.
Totals ...	90,708	1	4	276*	11,663	2	20	£22,633	13	4	

\* The number of applications received for these estates was as follows: Rangiatea, 37; Karapiro, 44; Mahora, 90; Willows, 90; Pawaho, 59; Waikakahi, 867; Starborough, 402.