

1911.
NEW ZEALAND.

WORKERS' DWELLINGS

(REPORT ON), BY THE HON. THE MINISTER OF LABOUR.

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

IN accordance with section 18 of the Workers' Dwellings Act, 1910, I have the honour to present herewith report of the Superintendent, Workers' Dwellings, on the work done under the Act for the year ending 31st March 1910.

J. A. MILLAR,
Minister of Labour.

SIR,—

15th May, 1911.

I have the honour to report on the working of the Workers' Dwellings Act during the year ending 31st March, 1911.

As intimated in last year's report on workers' dwellings, the Amendment Bill passed last year has effected various improvements on the provisions contained in the old Act. In accordance with the same, the benefits of the Act will now be available to "workers" in all parts of the Dominion, instead of, as formerly, in the principal centres only. By your direction, however, operations will be limited to places where there are at least six applicants, as it is impracticable to erect dwellings in smaller groups. Another important feature of the new Act is that in future the Department will not proceed with the erection of any dwellings until definite applications (including deposits) are made. In this way it will be possible to meet the wishes of each applicant, and at the same time avoid the risk of having empty houses thrown on the hands of the Department. Fifteen different designs, with specifications, have been prepared for the use of applicants (ranging from two to six rooms, with all conveniences, including, where the local conditions allow, electric light or gas, hot and cold water, drainage, bathrooms, &c.), and in selecting his design each applicant will be at liberty to ask for any reasonable alterations to meet his particular requirements. As far as possible applicants will also be given the choice, amongst themselves, of their sections of land, and where more than one applicant applies for one section the matter will be decided by ballot. The land already set apart for workers' dwellings is located as follows:—

AUCKLAND.

Ellerslie, 43 sections; Otahuhu, 20 sections. Adjoining the Ellerslie and Otahuhu Railway-stations, five and nine miles respectively from the centre of the city.

Inquiries are being made for the acquisition of suitable land in or nearer the city than the above for those applicants whose work does not permit of their living any distance from the city. In the meantime applications for dwellings at Ellerslie and Otahuhu will be dealt with.

WELLINGTON.

Heretaunga, twenty minutes' walk from the Petone Railway-station: 92 sections.

Melling Settlement (alongside Melling Railway-siding, Lower Hutt district), 41 sections.

Hawtreys Settlement (near the Johnsonville Railway-station), 19 sections.

As these settlements are nearly an hour's journey to the city, it is hoped to secure two small blocks of land at opposite ends of the city itself at a reasonable price. (The land at Coromandel Street is already built upon.)

CHRISTCHURCH.

Walker Settlement, Addington; and Camelot Settlement, Sydenham: 9 and 11 sections respectively.

These blocks are within easy reach of the city, and are in every way suitable. Applications in this district will therefore be dealt with without delay.

DUNEDIN.

Windle Settlement: 33 sections.

This land has been partly built upon, and there are sections still available. Inquiries are also being made for another block at the other end of the city.

NAPIER.

There is a block of 18 sections of Crown land already available at Awatoto, one and a half miles by road and railway from the centre of the town. As this land is suitable for the purpose, it is proposed to set it apart under the Act. If the proposed tram scheme is carried out, cars will run close to this settlement.

PALMERSTON NORTH.

The Loughnan Settlement (34 acres), near Terrace End Railway-station, Palmerston North, which is already set apart for workers' dwellings, is suitable for the purpose, and applications for dwellings to be erected thereon will be considered as early as possible.

Negotiations are also proceeding for the purchase or setting-apart of suitable land in Wanganui, Timaru, Invercargill, and various other towns. Some delay in dealing with applications for dwellings will necessarily take place in such localities pending the completion of the negotiations for land.

Under the provisions of the new Act the control of workers' dwellings is now vested entirely in the Labour Department. Formerly the Department had jurisdiction only up to the erection of the dwellings, when the same were handed over to the Lands Department for disposal. This dual control is now done away with, and the result should be the establishment of more uniformity and economy of administration.

The Act provides for the disposal of workers' dwellings by purchase, lease, or tenancy, but it has been decided to give preference to applications for purchase. The purchase of a worker's dwelling is effected by a small deposit (of £10), the balance payable in instalments computed at the rate of 7 per cent.—viz., 5 per cent. for interest, the balance for payment of principal, which under the schedule will be paid off in twenty-five years and a half. Thus, in the case of a six-roomed dwelling in Christchurch costing £560 (including section), the payments due will be £38 10s. per year, or approximately 15s. per week, which with rates and fire insurance will cost a total of about 16s. 6d. per week. It is proposed to offer the purchase under the same conditions to the lessees and tenants of the 126 existing dwellings.

Arrangements have been made with the Government Life Insurance Department by which, under a special scale any purchaser of a worker's dwelling may insure his life for as nearly as practicable the amount that may be owing on his dwelling at the time of his death, should such occur. Thus, by the payment of 2s. 9d. per week, a purchaser of a dwelling costing £560, if he is thirty years of age, would insure the payment of the balance owing on his dwelling at any time that his death might occur. The amount of insurance effected is actually greater than the amount owing from time to time, it being the nearest practical sum; and, in the case of death, the balance of the insurance-money, after paying the residue on the dwelling, is paid to the credit of the insured's estate.

The workers' dwellings scheme possesses many advantages for workers: for example, except for the deposit of £10 no capital is required; the land is cheap, the Government being able to secure convenient blocks at a lower price than is ordinarily paid for single sections; the cost of erection is reduced to a minimum; there are practically no legal charges, and every facility will be given to purchasers to pay any extra sums off the principal owing whenever they may be able to do so.

The illustrations appended to this report show some of the dwellings erected under the old Act, and as those to be erected are of much the same size and style, they are given for general information.

Since the passing of the Act the necessary regulations have been prepared and gazetted, and application forms, explanatory pamphlets, &c., issued. It is fully expected that a large number of applications will shortly be received, particulars of which will be reported in due course next year.

There was no expenditure during the preceding financial year for the acquisition of land. A sum of £28 16s. 2d. was expended for repairs, alteration, and maintenance of dwellings, and £2 13s. 4d. in preliminary, administrative, and travelling expenses. A statement as to the number of houses which have been erected in each district and the rents outstanding as at 31st March, 1911, is shown in the schedule hereto marked "A." There were no additional dwellings erected during the year just ended.

The rents of all workers' dwellings will be collected in future by the Public Trustee as agent of the Department.

The Hon the Minister of Labour.

J. LOMAS,
Superintendent of Workers' Dwellings.

SCHEDULE A.

District.	Number of Houses erected.	Rents outstanding as at 31st March, 1911.			
		Exclusive of Current Payments (Arrears).		Inclusive of Current Payments.	
		£	s.	d.	£ s. d.
Otahuhu and Ellerslie, Auckland	35	28	13	1	61 16 7
Petone, Wellington	28	55	16	8	96 6 6
Coromandel Street, Wellington	12	Nil			15 9 2
Sydenham and Addington, Christchurch	31	49	2	5	86 10 9
Windle, Dunedin	20	40	9	11	57 4 3
	126	174	2	1	317 7 3*

* Of this amount £147 5s. 4d. has since been paid. These accounts are now in the hands of the Public Trustee for immediate collection.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation; not given; printing (2,000 copies); £6.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1911.

Price 3d.]

WORKERS' DWELLINGS ACT, 1908.



SYDENHAM, CHRISTCHURCH.
4, 5, and 6 rooms. Rents range from 9s. 4d. to 11s. 4d. per week.



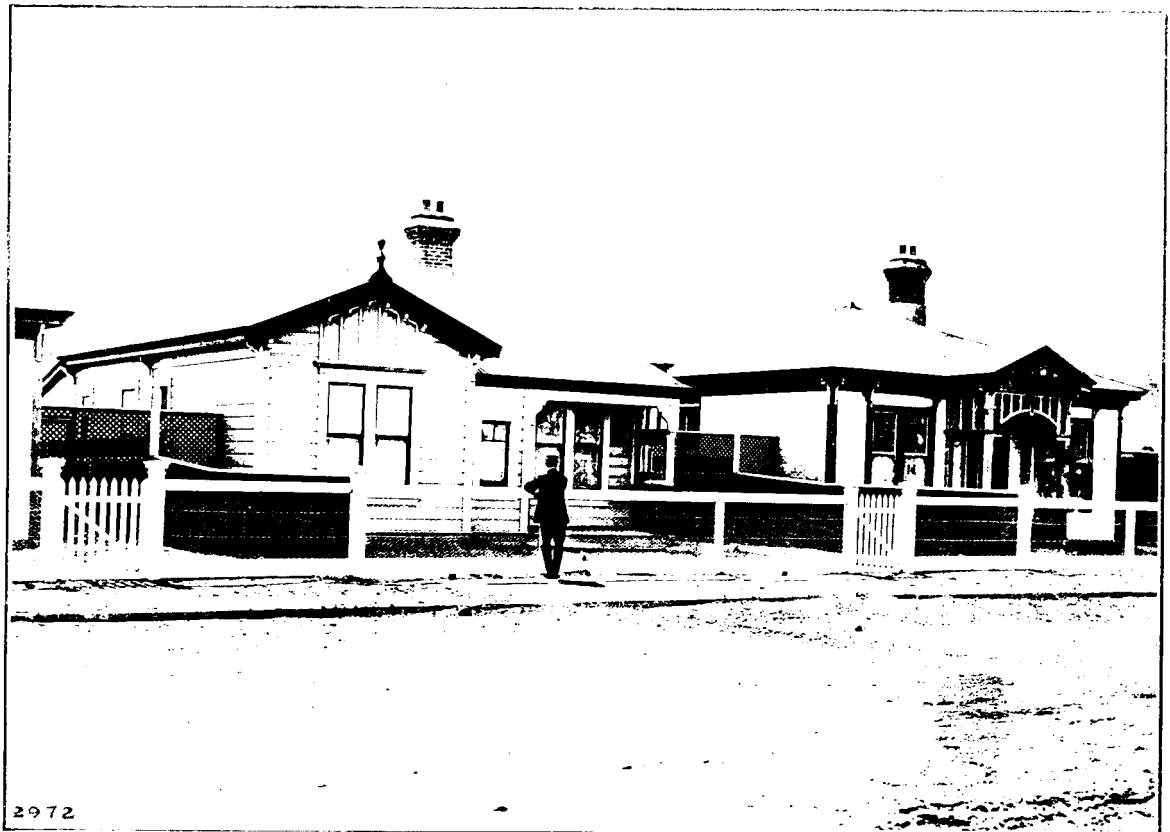
SYDENHAM, CHRISTCHURCH.
6 rooms. Rent, 11s. 4d. per week.



ELLERSLIE, AUCKLAND.
4 rooms. Rent, 12s. 4d. per week.



ELLERSLIE, AUCKLAND.
5 rooms. Rent, 13s. 7d. per week.



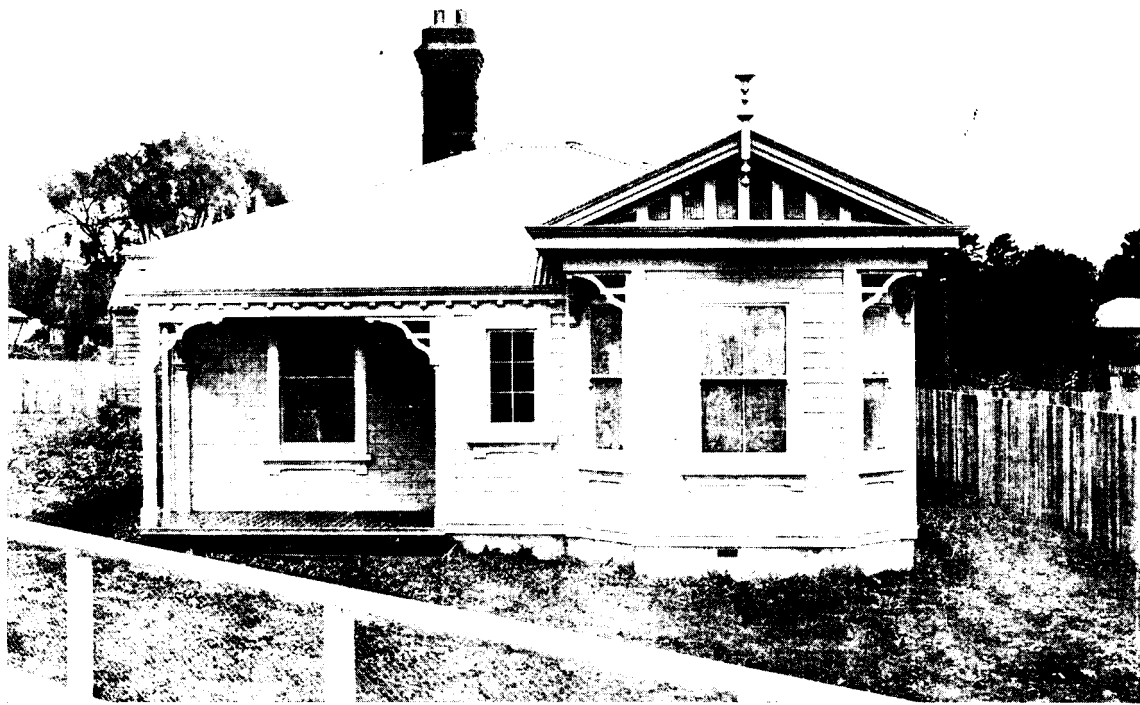
PETONE, WELLINGTON.

5 rooms. Rents, 12s. 5d. and 12s. 7d. per week, including rates and insurance.



PETONE, WELLINGTON.

5 rooms. Rents range from 12s. 5d. to 12s. 7d. per week, including rates and insurance.



ELLERSLIE, AUCKLAND.
5 rooms. Rent, 13s. 8d. per week.



GROUP OF DWELLINGS AT ELLERSLIE, AUCKLAND.
4 and 5 rooms. Rents, from 12s. 4d. to 13s. 10d. per week.



ELLERSLIE, AUCKLAND.
4 and 5 rooms. Rents, from 12s. 4d. to 13s. 10d. per week.