

11. REGISTRATION OF CLAIMS AGAINST RUSSIA.

(i.) *General*.—In view of the change of Government in Russia and the consequent dislocation of trade and communications, it was considered desirable by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in consultation with the President of the Board of Trade, to institute a register of all claims by British subjects to property or other interests in Russia. The registration of these claims in the United Kingdom was undertaken by the Foreign Claims Office, Foreign Office, London S.W. 1.

(ii.) *Registration in New Zealand*.—On the 20th March, 1919, a notice was published in the *Gazette* requiring all persons, firms, and companies of British nationality in New Zealand owning property in territory which on the 1st August, 1914, formed part of the Russian Empire, or having claims against the Russian Government (including any Government exercising *de facto* authority in any part of that territory), or against any person, firm, or company, or municipal or other local authority in that territory, to transmit particulars of their claims to the Public Trustee at Wellington (on the requisite form) for registration by the Foreign Claims Office. It was specifically stipulated that the registration of a claim did not imply any undertaking on the part of His Majesty's Government to forward such claim, or any assurance that if same was forwarded it would be satisfied. Three claims, totalling £3,775 9s. 4d., were registered with the Public Trustee by persons in New Zealand. Full particulars of these claims have been forwarded to the Foreign Claims Office for registration. No information has been received as to the prospects of an early settlement of these debts.

12. GERMAN CHURCH TRUST.

(i.) *General*.—In 1917 it was reported to the Government that three bells belonging to the German Protestant Church in Worcester Street, Christchurch, had been cast from French cannon captured by the German Army at Sedan in 1870. The French Vice-Consul at Auckland made representations that the bells should be destroyed.

(ii.) *Property vested in the Public Trustee*.—The Government decided to introduce legislation to deal with the property of the German Church Trust, and by section 78 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1917, this property was vested in the Public Trustee upon such trusts and with such powers, discretions, and authorities as the Governor-General in Council might from time to time direct.

(iii.) *Powers of Public Trustee defined*.—An Order in Council dated the 6th August, 1918, authorized the Public Trustee at his discretion to exercise with respect to such property all or any of the powers conferred on him by section 29 of the Public Trust Office Act, 1908, as extended by section 21 of the Public Trust Office Amendment Act, 1913: Provided that the consent in writing of the Attorney-General should be required in lieu of an order by a Judge of the Supreme Court where such order was ordinarily necessary.

(iv.) *Destruction of Bells*.—In accordance with directions received these bells were taken to a foundry at Christchurch, where they were broken up and melted down in the presence of the Local Deputy Public Trustee and the Consular Agent for France. The analysis of the metal was as follows: Copper, 67.32 per cent.; tin, 21.51 per cent.; zinc, 9.30 per cent.; iron, &c., 0.40 per cent.; lead, 1.47 per cent. As the bells were composed of bell-metal, and not of gun-metal as was asserted, the remains of the bells were subsequently sold.

(v.) *The Church Premises leased*.—The Church premises are at the present time leased, and the Public Trustee is collecting the rent.

13. STATEMENT OF AMOUNT HELD UNDER THE WAR REGULATIONS.

The balances held under the War Regulations as at the 31st March, 1921, may be summarized under the following headings:—

	£	s.	d.
(1.) Proceeds of liquidation of German assets in New Zealand	38,048	3	2
(2.) Proceeds of liquidation of Austrian assets in New Zealand	67	7	5
(3.) Proceeds of liquidation of enemy firms	108,545	1	8
(4.) Estates of deceased German nationals under administration	39,764	6	2
(5.) Estates of deceased Austrian nationals under administration	171	0	10
(6.) Proceeds of property and shares belonging to British-born wives of German nationals	85,969	17	10
(7.) Property belonging to British subjects by birth or naturalization residing in Germany	8,308	16	11
(8.) Property belonging to friendly aliens (to be released)	5,532	14	3
(9.) Property belonging to repatriated prisoners of war which will be released on completion of administration	1,050	13	4
(10.) Miscellaneous (including German Church Trust, Christchurch)	989	12	5
(11.) Amounts collected from New Zealand nationals on account of claims received through the German Clearing Office—			
Collected by the Public Trustee	2,255	3	10
Collected by the High Commissioner	5,136	12	7
	7,391	16	5
Less amount paid to Central Clearing Office	3,641	7	11
	3,750	8	6
	292,198	2	6
Less sundry debit balances	80	8	9
	£292,117	13	9