

## DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT ACCOUNT.

The following statement shows the extent of the financial operations in regard to loans authorized and advances made under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, and amendments, up to the end of the financial year :—

Section 6, Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915 : Advances on current account :—	Authorized. £	Advances made. £
4,160 returned soldiers .. .. .	3,908,852	3,486,613
Section 2, Discharged Soldiers Settlement Amendment Act, 1917 : Advances towards purchase of farms, market gardens, orchards, and discharge of mortgages :—		
5,443 returned soldiers .. .. .	8,776,534	8,768,847
Section 2, Discharged Soldiers Settlement Amendment Act, 1917 : Advances towards purchase and erection of dwellings and dis- charge of mortgages thereon :—		
10,789 returned soldiers .. .. .	7,724,185	7,489,490
20,392 returned soldiers.	<u>£20,409,571</u>	<u>19,744,950</u>
Repayments of principal .. .. .	1,457,659	
Transfers to Realization and other accounts—Securi- ties in course of realization .. .. .	82,992	
Transfers to Property Account—Securities bought in by Department on default of mortgagors ..	<u>32,669</u>	<u>1,573,320</u>
Balance out on mortgage .. .. .		<u>£18,171,630</u>

The gross receipts for the year amounted to £1,258,611. Of this sum £553,346 represents repayments of advances, while receipts in respect of interest and sundries total £705,265.

The fall in prices and adverse conditions affected repayment of advances, with the result that relief had to be afforded by means of additional loans and postponements, while, on the other hand, a considerable amount of arrears was outstanding. Postponements in force at the end of the year amounted to £26,470, whilst arrears in respect of payments of instalments of interest and principal amount to £385,845. Every encouragement is held out to men who are industrious and thrifty and have a reasonable prospect of making successful farmers. A small percentage of men who from want of experience and other causes would not succeed even under favourable conditions are gradually giving up their holdings and seeking more suitable employment.

Heavy demands were made for loans to finance the purchase of farms for subdivision, also for the erection of dwellings. The Government was reluctantly compelled to restrict its operations to granting loans for the purchase of stock and improvement of land held by soldiers, as well as helping invalided and disabled men to purchase small farms and erect dwellings. With the repayment of instalments it was subsequently found possible to authorize a large number of loans to assist soldiers to erect dwellings where, through a misunderstanding, contracts had been entered into at the time of the notification of the stoppage of loans.

## SWAMP DRAINAGE RECLAMATION.

The acquisition of latest modern dipper-dredge equipment and excavators has considerably facilitated operations, and has made for economical construction. The whole of the plant ordered is to hand, and 70 per cent. of it in active commission.

The most important new project undertaken was the Hikurangi swamp area, the major work of which is well advanced. Operations on Hauraki, Rangitaiki, Kaitaia, and other areas are being steadily pushed on. As a result of these drainage undertakings the value of the reclaimed land has already been increased by over £3,000,000.