

to £304,435, aided by repayments of loans, to grant further loans for houses to 574 soldiers, aggregating £456,795. These figures are apportioned as follows :—

42 purchases of dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	£ 31,670
532 erections of dwellings ..	..	..	..	..	..	425,125
						<u>£456,795</u>

The authorities in respect of purchase of dwellings were granted to T.B., shell-shock, and other disabled men, as specially urgent cases.

*Dwellings.*—Considerable attention having been drawn to the necessity for providing dwellings with a view to overtaking the housing shortage, the following table, indicating the loans that have been granted to finance the purchase of dwellings and the erection of dwellings, will be of interest :—

					Number.	£
Erection of dwellings on farms ..	..	..	..	..	4,300	1,290,000
Town and suburban—						
Erection of dwellings	..	..	..	..	3,876	3,280,114
Purchase of dwellings	..	..	..	..	7,487	4,900,866
						<u>15,663</u>
						<u>£9,470,980</u>

In the past the annual reports omitted reference to dwellings erected out of advances on farms, and it is reasonable that the provision for housing, whether in city, suburban, or rural areas, should be considered as a part of the housing scheme in so far as men have been provided with homes, notwithstanding their occupation.

*Curtailment of Loans.*—It was with regret that it became necessary to somewhat restrict operations to Current Account advances to stock and improve farms, to aid T.B., wounded, and other disabled men in the purchase of small farms, and to finance the erection of a limited number of dwellings. It was hoped that repayments of loans would have enabled the Department to deal more generously with the housing question, but, unfortunately, the slump experienced for two successive years seriously handicapped the farming community, with the result that repayments did not realize expectations.

*Receipts and Payments.*—The Receipts and Payments Account discloses that repayments of advances during the year under review amounted to £716,667, being an average of £59,723 per month ; interest receipts totalled £649,463, being an average of £54,122 per month. The average monthly receipts for principal and interest were £113,845, as against £93,304 for each month of the previous year. For the purpose of comparison the figures showing repayments for the previous year are given hereunder :—

					1922-23.	1921-22.
					£	£
Principal ..	..	..	..	..	716,667	553,345
Interest ..	..	..	..	..	649,463	556,301

The account further discloses that a sum of £304,435 fresh capital was provided by the Government, which materially aided the granting of loans for the erection of dwellings. Under this head it will be seen that cash advances amounting to £469,785 were made.

Other items of interest are receipts, amounting to £40,868, derived from the temporary investment of cash in the account. A sum of £8,694 was received from the sale of live and dead stock.

On the "expenditure" side it will be observed that advances under all heads were made, amounting to £1,225,753 ; interest on debentures amounting to £869,158 was paid ; loans amounting to £45,210 were redeemed ; while the expenses of administration, including travelling-expenses of Supervisors and Inspectors, and Audit fees, amounted to £45,829. Included in the latter figure are the expenses of Inquiry Boards, amounting to £4,681.

*Revenue Account.*—The net loss during the year was £78,893, which, added to the loss brought forward from the previous year (£43,154), brings the aggregate net loss to £122,047. The main features contributing to the loss for the year may be summed up as follows :—

Charges and expenses in raising loans ..	..	..	..	..	£ 14,833
Expenses of management, Inquiry Board expenses and Audit fees, travelling-expenses of Supervisors, &c.	..	..	..	..	45,829
Rebates of interest ..	..	..	..	..	39,466
Loss on realization of securities ..	..	..	..	..	38,623

In addition to these, loss must have resulted through properties not earning revenue during the period that they remained unoccupied.

The loss so far ascertained represents 0.649 per cent. of capital invested on mortgage, land owned by the Crown, and properties in course of realization, or £5 13s. 1d. per soldier assisted. This cannot be considered a large figure, more especially as a substantial portion of the loan raised equals or exceeds the rate of interest authorized to be charged to discharged soldiers under the Act. The account has paid interest and sinking fund on loans raised, in addition to management and other expenses ; but there is little doubt that with further losses that must inevitably ensue the capital will be a diminishing quantity. As the community has not been called upon to pay in hard cash by taxation or otherwise to cope with the difficult problems of soldier settlement, as the aftermath of the war, it is considered