

In response to a request for information the German representative to the British Clearing Office advised that the Court at Darmstadt had given a decision on a case placed before them directing payment of a mortgage in gold marks, but that, in view of the far-reaching nature of the decision, it was decided to enter an appeal in order that the case might be remitted to the Reichgericht, a Court which apparently corresponds to our Court of Appeal. No further details have yet been received.

ARCHIVES OF THE GERMAN AND THE AUSTRIAN CONSULATES IN NEW ZEALAND.

57. During the war the archives of the German and the Austrian Consulates were handed to the Public Trustee for safe custody. The Swiss Consul, at whose disposal the German archives were placed, did not desire to take possession of them, and consequently they are still held pending the receipt of instructions from the German Government. On the 27th June, 1923, the German Ambassador and the Austrian Minister at London were requested to nominate some person to whom these archives could be transferred.

CLAIMS IN RESPECT OF PROPERTY IN TURKEY.

58. The following facts which are of general interest have been taken from a comprehensive statement which appeared in the *Board of Trade Journal* dated the 13th December, 1923.

Under Articles 65, 66, and 70 of the Treaty of Lausanne the property rights and interests in Turkey belonging to Allied nationals are to be restored to them, subject to the provision that if they have been liquidated before the 24th July, 1923, the proceeds of the liquidation can be paid to the owner in discharge of the obligation to restore. All disputes concerning the restoration of Allied property are to be submitted to a Mixed Arbitral Tribunal to be established when the Treaty of Peace comes into force. Claims must be lodged with the competent Turkish authorities within six months, or, if necessary, with the Mixed Arbitral Tribunal within twelve months, of the date of the coming into force of the Treaty. Claims in respect of Allied property belonging to absentees or refugees dealt with under the Turkish law relating to abandoned property should be lodged by the Allied owners with the District Liquidation Commission within six months of the establishment of the Commission for the district in which the property is situated.

59. Except for certain Ottoman Bonds, which are dealt with under separate provisions of the Treaty with Turkey (see next para.), no claims in respect of British property rights and interests in Turkey have been registered with this Office.

60. *Ottoman Bonds*.—In a letter dated the 30th November last, received from the Colonial Office in regard to certain Ottoman bonds held in New Zealand, it is pointed out that under Articles 46 to 55 of the Treaty of Lausanne no action is required at present on the part of the holders of the pre-war Ottoman public debt. The method of carrying out the distribution of the nominal capital of the debt is to be determined by a Commission under Article 49 of the Treaty, which is to meet within four months after the date upon which the Treaty shall come into force. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury suggest that the holders of the bonds in question should make inquiries of the financial house by which the bonds were issued unless this step has already been taken, as in certain cases a payment on account of the arrears due in respect of the service of the Ottoman loans has been made since the Armistice.

CLAIMS AGAINST RUSSIA.

61. At the suggestion of the British authorities arrangements were made in 1918 for the registration of claims by British subjects resident in New Zealand against the Russian Government, or against any person, firm, or company in the former Russian Empire, or in respect of property situated in Russian territory. Only four claims by New Zealand nationals, totalling £4,615 9s. 4d., have been registered with this Office.

62. It is understood that the question of the settlement of British claims against the Russian Government and Russian nationals has been discussed on several occasions by representatives of the British Government and of the Russian Soviet Government, but so far no agreement has been reached.

The following extract from the third report of the Controller of the Central Clearing Office, London, sets forth the present position :—

The Russian Claims Department was founded in September, 1918, for the purpose of collecting and classifying the claims of British subjects against Russia or individual Russian nationals. Claims had formerly been notified to the Foreign Claims Department of the Foreign Office, and these were transferred to the new Department for classification and registration. From the outset the Department was careful to impress upon claimants that its activities must not be taken to imply any immediate prospect of a settlement of the claims notified to it or any guarantee that the claims would be met. The sole object which it had in view was to collect and classify the necessary information to enable it to notify to the Soviet Government the individual claims of creditors immediately that Government consented to meet its obligations.

Up to the present thirty-five thousand persons have registered claims with the Department, and these are being added to from time to time.

The claims as valued by the claimants are, in round figures, as follows :—

	Registered in Pounds.	Registered in Roubles.
Holdings (at nominal value) of bonds issued or guaranteed by the Russian State, municipalities, or other public bodies	56,000,000	232,000,000
Claims in respect of debts, requisitions, damage to property, injury to person, &c.	23,000,000	625,000,000
Value of properties in Russia of which restitution has been demanded	180,000,000	

It cannot be stated what proportion of the amounts expressed in roubles is calculated on the basis of the ratio of the pre-war rouble to the British sovereign.

The Department can accept no responsibility for the accuracy of these figures, which, as stated above, are compiled from estimates supplied by the claimants themselves and which the Department has no means of verifying.