

FIELD EXPERIMENTS IN MOUTERE HILLS DISTRICT.

Experiments are being carried out by the Cawthron Institute on a Crown settler's property in Pigeon Valley, Moutere Hills, with a view to ascertaining the most practical means of remedying the heavy mortality amongst sheep that is experienced in that locality. A progress report on the experiments so far conducted has been supplied and is published as Appendix V of this report.

FORFEITURES AND SURRENDERS.

In the case of Crown areas held under permanent tenures the following forfeitures and surrenders occurred during the year :—

				Number.	Area. Acres.	Annual Rental. £
Forfeitures	..	..	..	277	81,823	5,325
Surrenders	..	..	..	158	147,397	7,550
Totals	..	..	..	435	229,220	£12,875

The total forfeitures and surrenders represent 1.443 per cent. of the number of settlers holding permanent leases and licenses. The total area of 229,220 acres involved appears large, but it includes approximately 115,000 acres of pastoral-run country.

Forfeitures and surrenders of miscellaneous and temporary leases numbered 435, covering a total area of 82,878 acres.

RECEIPTS.

The receipts for the year from all sources (excluding, of course, Discharged Soldiers Settlement Account receipts) total £1,275,106, a decrease of £15,750 on last year's figures. The sum of £359,906 was derived from ordinary Crown lands, £600,354 from lands held under the Land for Settlements Act (including Hutt Valley Settlement and Cheviot Estate), £141,606 from the national endowment, and £130,922 from the education endowment.

Cash received on the conversion of leaseholds to freehold tenures has shown a decrease of approximately £3,000, although the actual number of purchasers shows a small increase.

The following table gives the relation of this freehold revenue to total receipts during the past five years :—

				Conversions to Freehold.	Amount yielded therefrom.	Total. Receipts.
					£	£
Year ending 31st March, 1926	..	..	..	305	107,148	1,297,488
„ 1927	..	..	..	304	76,570	1,245,338
„ 1928	..	..	..	261	69,276	1,271,821
„ 1929	..	..	..	317	111,119	1,290,856
„ 1930	..	..	..	323	107,550	1,275,106

Of the 323 conversions to freehold during the year, 258 were in the North Island districts.

POSTPONEMENTS.

Postponements of payment of rent were granted to 162 tenants during the year, involving the sum of £20,559. At the 31st March £119,093 remained postponed on account of 886 tenants, as against £125,406 on account of 919 tenants at the 31st March, 1929.

ARREARS.

Rents in arrear at the 31st March amounted to £88,582, a decrease of £67,627 on last year's figures. The following shows the position in regard to arrears of rent for the past five years :—

					£
Year ended 31st March, 1926	..	..	..	..	222,148
„ 1927	..	..	..	..	227,191
„ 1928	..	..	..	..	197,919
„ 1929	..	..	..	..	156,209
„ 1930	..	..	..	..	88,582