

ENEMY PROPERTY AND CLEARING-OFFICE WORK IN NEW ZEALAND.

84. The duties in regard to the liquidation of enemy property in New Zealand and the control of the New Zealand Clearing Office which was set up for the settlement of pre-war debts were entrusted to the Public Trustee. Briefly stated these duties were :—

- (a) The settlement, through the Clearing Office procedure provided for by the Treaty of Versailles, of claims in regard to pre-war debts and to New-Zealand-owned property in Germany :
- (b) The control, liquidation, and disposal of the proceeds (by credit to the liquidation account of the ex-enemy countries concerned, or by release in appropriate cases) of property or businesses in New Zealand owned by alien enemies or in which there were alien enemy interests.

SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS THROUGH THE CLEARING OFFICE.

85. The claims received for settlement through the New Zealand Clearing Office were :—

Claims under Article 296, Treaty of Versailles—	£	s.	d.
(a) Claims by New Zealand nationals against German nationals	53,034	3	8
(b) Claims by German nationals against New Zealand nationals	211,408	15	4
Claims under Article 297, Treaty of Versailles—			
(c) Claims by New Zealand nationals against the German Government	53,103	8	5
	<u>£317,546</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>

These claims have now all been disposed of either by admission or by withdrawal.

REALIZATION AND DISPOSAL OF EX-ENEMY PROPERTY IN NEW ZEALAND.

86. The proceeds of ex-enemy property retained and liquidated under the Treaties of Peace are credited to the Liquidation Account of the country of which the owner is a national. Under the Treaties of Peace the ex-enemy Governments undertake to compensate their nationals in regard to the property so retained and liquidated.

During the year further credits totalling £603 3s. have been passed to the German Liquidation Account under Article 297 of the Treaty, being the proceeds of the realization of property in New Zealand belonging to German nationals. The total amount now credited to Germany is £267,335 1s. 8d. Credit for a further sum of £2,100 approximately, being the proceeds of New Zealand Government stocks on the Bank of England register, owned by ex-enemy nationals, will shortly be made.

87. An application has been received for the release of an amount of approximately £12,000 credited to the German Liquidation Account. The applicant states that he is a non-enemy subject and had acquired by purchase prior to the outbreak of war the property liquidated. The claim has not been admitted, but the claimant has instructed local counsel in the matter and possibly litigation will result.

88. The amount credited to the Austrian Liquidation Account during the year, in terms of Article 249 of the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye, is £46 2s. 3d., the credits to the Liquidation Account totalling in all £1,774 17s. 6d. An amount of £66 16s. 3d. has been withdrawn, leaving a net credit to the account of £1,708 1s. 3d.

89. An agreement which was concluded recently between the Government of the German Reich and the New Zealand Government regarding the release of the property of German nationals subject to the charge created in pursuance of the Treaty of Versailles, but at the date of the agreement remaining unliquidated, became operative during the year. The property coming within the terms of this agreement was made up, in the main, of assets of trusts or settlements the German