

1899.

NEW ZEALAND.

# OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

(STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1899.)

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 62 of "The Old-age Pensions Act, 1898."*

The REGISTRAR, Old-age Pensions, to the Hon. the COLONIAL TREASURER.

Old-age Pensions Office, Wellington, 19th June, 1899.

I HAVE the honour to make the following report for your information, and to supply the particulars required for the statement to be laid before Parliament in terms of section 62 of "The Old-age Pensions Act, 1898."

The Act came into force on the 1st day of November, 1898. In the same month a Registrar was appointed, and in December old-age pension districts were constituted, deputy registrars were appointed, and notices were issued throughout the colony that forms of claim were obtainable at all post-offices.

The number of pensions granted during January, 1899, in respect of which payments were made up to the 31st day of March, 1899, inclusive, was 2,133, and the amount paid in respect thereof was £3,124 1s. 8d. The amount paid in respect of other than pensions up to the 31st day of March, 1899, inclusive, was £510 8s. 1d.

The total number of pensions granted up to the 31st day of March, 1899, inclusive, was 7,487, representing a yearly payment of £128,082; the average pension being about £17 2s. Tables are attached showing (1) the number of pensions at each rate; (2) the number of pensions granted in each old-age pension district.

The amount of absolutely forfeited instalments up to the 31st day of March, 1899, inclusive, was £12 5s.

The number of pensioners who died before the 31st day of March, 1899, inclusive, was thirty-eight, and the number of pensions cancelled up to that date was six, representing altogether a yearly payment of £763.

The number of pension-certificates transferred from one old-age pension district to another, up to the 31st day of March, 1899, inclusive, was twenty-three.

It is scarcely to be expected that the administration of a new measure will be altogether smooth at first. It is, therefore, a matter for congratulation that few difficulties have presented themselves, and that an entirely new experience had been generally anticipated in the detailed provisions of the Act and regulations.

Under the existing Act no provision is made for any payment to the representatives of a deceased pensioner. It seems reasonable that the portion of an instalment accrued up to the date of the pensioner's death should be paid to the person who has defrayed the expenses of burial. It seems desirable also that near relatives from whom a pensioner may legally claim maintenance should not be relieved by the Old-age Pensions Act of such responsibility. I recommend also that the Colonial Treasurer should be empowered to pay an instalment of pension which has been forfeited through non-delivery of the pension-certificate or other cause, not being the fault or neglect of the pensioner.

In many districts no resident Government officer is qualified to give a certificate as required on claims made by aboriginal natives. I suggest that whenever a Maori claimant has a knowledge of English the Stipendiary Magistrate might be authorised to accept the claim without such certificate.

Subsection (3) of section 13, relating to the method of calculating the joint income of husband and wife has not been uniformly interpreted. It might be well to remove all doubt as to the intention of this provision.

The claims of some persons, who are otherwise qualified, have been rejected on the ground that they have not been naturalised subjects for five years, as prescribed by section 64 of the Act. I suggest some modification of this disability.

For the past six months the work has been done at high pressure, as well as under difficulties by reason of inconvenient office accommodation, and I gladly acknowledge the industry and care of

those clerks who have been entrusted with responsible work, as well as the efficient co-operation of the officers of the General Post Office, so that, notwithstanding the rush of work, the monthly instalments have been punctually paid to the pensioners.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer. EDMUND MASON,  
Registrar of Old-age Pensions.

TOTAL NUMBER of PENSIONS, at each Rate, granted up to the 31st of March, 1899.

Yearly Pension.	Number of Pensions.	Amount.
18	6,399	£115,182
17	123	2,091
16	128	2,048
15	124	1,860
14	78	1,092
13	99	1,287
12	109	1,308
11	65	715
10	71	710
9	47	423
8	60	480
7	46	322
6	28	168
5	37	185
4	27	108
3	18	54
2	21	42
1	7	7
Totals	7,487	£128,082

TOTAL NUMBER of PENSIONS in each OLD-AGE PENSION DISTRICT granted up to the 31st March, 1899.

District.	Number of Pensions.	Amount.	District.	Number of Pensions.	Amount.
		£			£
Akaroa	31	506	Nelson	241	4,040
Amberley	4	72	New Plymouth	152	2,566
Ashburton	136	2,382	Oamaru	150	2,596
Auckland	436	7,262	Onehunga	221	3,698
Balclutha	93	1,571	Otaki	24	428
Blenheim	105	1,732	Paeroa	20	345
Chatham Islands	3	54	Pahiatua	34	575
Christchurch	824	14,060	Palmerston North	84	1,426
Clyde	72	1,288	Palmerston South	37	616
Coromandel	54	893	Patea	8	143
Culverden	4	72	Port Awanui	8	144
Dannevirke	70	1,158	Port Chalmers	112	1,865
Dargaville	21	345	Queenstown	67	1,202
Dunedin	613	10,387	Raglan	12	207
Fairlie	5	90	Rawene	13	232
Feilding	34	573	Reefton	102	1,787
Geraldine	54	918	Riverton	68	1,175
Gisborne	42	756	Rotorua	45	809
Greymouth	297	5,241	Russell	44	674
Greytown	57	992	Stratford	23	414
Hamilton	124	2,115	Taupo	10	180
Havelock	2	36	Tauranga	57	990
Hawera	18	303	Te Aroha	10	180
Helensville	145	2,502	Thames	209	3,578
Hokitika	382	6,715	Timaru	98	1,689
Invercargill	354	6,145	Waimate	47	820
Kaipoi	177	2,967	Waipawa	14	252
Kaikoura	17	286	Wairoa	7	126
Lawrence	116	1,990	Wanganui	91	1,600
Marton	37	655	Warkworth	56	923
Masterton	63	1,087	Wellington	364	6,335
Maungaturoto	44	735	Westport	156	2,730
Milton	81	1,354	Whakatane	18	297
Mongonui	18	294	Whangarei	110	1,900
Motueka	61	967	Whangaroa	7	117
Napier	122	2,027			
Naseby	52	893			
			Totals	7,487	£128,082

RETURN showing COST of ADMINISTRATION of "The Old-age Pensions Act, 1898," for the Financial Year ended 31st March, 1899.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Salaries—						
Registrar ... ..	100	1	1			
Deputy Registrars ... ..	40	3	10			
	<hr/>			140	4	11
Other Expenses—						
Advertising and printing... ..	16	6	0			
Clerical assistance ... ..	247	18	0			
Interpreting (S.M. Courts) ... ..	7	9	3			
Shorthand-writer (S.M. Courts) ... ..	19	0	0			
Travelling allowance and expenses ... ..	76	2	2			
Sundries ... ..	3	7	9			
	<hr/>			370	3	2
Total ... ..				£510	8	1
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The Treasury, 23rd June, 1899.

ROBERT J. COLLINS,  
Accountant to the Treasury.

