

1901.
NEW ZEALAND.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS:

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED THE 31ST MARCH, 1901.

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

The REGISTRAR of OLD-AGE PENSIONS to the Right Hon. the COLONIAL TREASURER.

SIR,—

Old-age Pensions Office, Wellington, 31st May, 1901.

I have the honour to furnish the following statement of particulars required for presentation to Parliament in terms of section 2 of "The Old-age Pensions Act, 1898," for the year ended the 31st March, 1901.

Last session an amending Act was passed, containing the following provisions:—

1. As an alternative condition in respect of residence, an absence of four years from the colony is allowed, provided that the claimant was not absent during the year ended 31st October, 1898, and provided that the total period of actual residence is not less than twenty-five years.
2. The property and income of husband and wife is to be computed as belonging to them jointly, and their united yearly incomes, including the pension, is limited to £78.
3. Extended powers are granted to Deputy Registrars in respect of statutory declarations to be taken by them.
4. The portion of the monthly instalment accrued up to the date of the pensioner's death may be applied, on the authority of the Colonial Treasurer, in or towards defraying burial expenses.
5. The currency of each instalment is for one calendar month, with power to the Colonial Treasurer to extend the period in special cases.
6. The right of pensioners to admission to charitable institutions is protected.
7. The limit as to time of the operation of the principal Act is rescinded, and the authority to pay made absolute.
8. In certain cases, pension-claims may be reinvestigated.
9. In the case of naturalised persons, the term of qualification preceding the establishment of a pension-claim is reduced from five years to one year.

The number of pensions in force on the 31st March, 1901, inclusive of 1,098 granted to Maoris, was 12,405, representing a yearly payment of £211,965.

During the year ended the 31st March, 1901, 2,227 pensions were granted, 815 pensioners died, 227 pension-certificates were cancelled (inclusive of 202 renewal claims rejected), and 65 pensions lapsed through non-application for renewal. The number of claims rejected under the respective subsections of section 8 of the Act were—2 under subsection (5), 26 under subsection (6), and 174 under subsections (7) and (8).

Tables are attached showing—(1) The number of pensions in force on the 31st March, 1901, at each rate; (2) the number and annual value of such pensions in each old-age pension district; and (3) the number of pensions granted since the Act came into operation, the number of deaths of pensioners, the number of certificates cancelled, the number of pensions lapsed, and the number of pensions in force at the end of each year.

The total amount paid in respect of pensions during the year was £197,292 13s. 6d. This amount includes £685 16s. 2d. charged to a vote provided for the purpose of paying forfeited instalments in special cases, and portions of instalments accrued up to date of death. The cost of administration was £2,415 10s. 7d.

The total amount of absolutely forfeited instalments during the year was £2,926 3s. 4d.

During the year, 532 pension-certificates were transferred from one old-age pension district to another.

The former regulations were revoked and new regulations gazetted on the 13th December, 1900.

EDMUND MASON,
Registrar of Old-age Pensions.