

The following table shows the position of the Land for Settlements Account for the year:—

<i>Dr.</i>	£	s.	d.	<i>Cr.</i>	£	s.	d.
Cash and instalments, 31st March, 1910	202,497	7	2	Purchase-money .. .. .	158,796	8	9
New Zealand State-guaranteed Advances Office, in terms of section 5 of New Zealand State-guaranteed Advances Act, 1909 .. .. .	33,000	0	0	Charges and expenses:—			
Receipts under Land Act, section 177 .. .. .	11,543	16	11	Debentures .. .. .	33	17	0
Receipts under Land Act, section 191 .. .. .	1,955	13	8	Individual estates .. .. .	16,720	1	0
Rents .. .. .	271,199	7	7	Incidental expenses .. .. .	8,869	8	10
Net profits on sale of securities .. .. .	482	3	11	Interest .. .. .			25,623 6 10
Credits .. .. .	361	18	7	Sinking fund .. .. .			224,143 10 0
				Balance, 31st March, 1911 .. .. .			59,079 7 7
							53,397 14 8
	<u>£521,040</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>				<u>£521,040 7 10</u>

*Land Settlement Finance Act.*

The operations under the Land Settlement Finance Act may be considered as highly satisfactory. The Act has really only been in existence for a year, and already eleven associations have been incorporated, with a membership of sixty-eight members and an area of 9,153 acres, valued at £132,802.

There are nine other associations under consideration. Some ten have been declined for various reasons—a few on account of their unsuitability, but the largest number owing to the high value placed upon the land. There is a tendency amongst members to enter into the agreement without first making themselves thoroughly conversant with its provisions. Probably the desire to get a piece of land without any great immediate outlay has something to do with this. Notwithstanding an agreement, the Board has in nearly every instance secured a material reduction on the price agreed upon, and at the same time arranged for a more equal apportionment of the purchase-money and a better division of the area.

The amendments passed last session have simplified the preliminary proceedings, but there are still several defects in the Act which should be remedied.

The Board finds that the intention of the Act as regards residence is not in all cases being complied with. To effectually meet this, and at the same time to insure the expenditure of a reasonable amount on buildings, it is recommended that a deposit not exceeding 10 per cent. of the purchase-money should be deposited at the time of application, and, upon the certificate of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the district that buildings to a like amount have been erected, such sum or part thereof shall be refunded as payment towards the cost of such buildings, any surplus to go towards reduction of purchase-money.

It is pleasing to say that the *personnel* of the members of the associations is, in the opinion of the Board, highly satisfactory, and that they are likely to do full justice to their allotments.

Judging from the number of inquiries for information, the provisions of the Act are becoming better known. Therefore, as time goes on, it is anticipated that large areas will be successfully settled under this Act.

Appended are explanatory tables.

I have, &c.,

JOHN D. RITCHIE.

The Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward, Bart., Minister of Lands.