

following table shows the proportion of British and New Zealand born applicants admitted to the roll since the first New-Zealander was granted a pension in 1904 :—

Year ended 31st March	Pensions granted.	British- born.	New-Zealand- born (Whites).	Maoris.
1904	1,063	958	1	26
1905	1,210	1,106	2	30
1906	2,075	1,833	10	125
1907	2,031	1,814	16	88
1908	1,740	1,556	23	80
1909	2,113	1,916	52	110
1910	2,304	2,109	66	90
1911	2,399	2,200	85	79
Total			255	

One hundred and ninety of last year's new pensioners represent applicants who were previously on the roll, and struck off for some reason or other.

The total claims lodged since the Act came into operation on the 1st January, 1899, now number 42,271. Of these, 32,433 have been established as pensions, and 49 per cent. of the latter are still on the books.

A large proportion of the applicants are still unable to furnish any proof of age, and, as indicating the extent of the assistance rendered to these in proving their eligibility, it may be mentioned that in 810 separate cases during the year, out of the 2,963 who applied, inquiries were made by Head Office for proof of age in all quarters of the globe. Of these, 502 were found to be eligible, while no less than 114 were proved to be short of the pension-age. In 116 cases no evidence was obtainable, and the remaining seventy-eight represent cases in which replies are awaited from outside the Dominion. Of the sixty-nine cases in which the searches were not complete at the date of my last annual report, twenty-seven were found to be of the required age and five not, while no evidence could be traced in the other thirty-seven. In addition, searches were instituted by Head Office for verification of date of arrival in 489 cases, four of which were proved to be ineligible. In connection with those cases where, after every known source of information has been exhausted, no evidence of age is forthcoming, it may be stated that they are submitted without further delay to the Magistrate, who has power by law to dispense with documentary evidence and grant a pension, if from the appearance of the applicant he is satisfied that the pension-age has been reached. In cases of advanced age, where no evidence is available at the date of application, the investigation by the Magistrate proceeds without awaiting the result of any search for age that may be deemed necessary.

The following table shows the proportion of applicants on whose behalf proof of age has been sought by Head Office during the past five years, together with the number proved to be under the required age :—

Year ended 31st March.	New Claims.	Searches for Age.	Proved to be under Age.
1907	2,577	672	229
1908	2,327	639	144
1909	2,834	812	157
1910	2,892	874	142
1911	2,963	810	114

It is interesting to note, with regard to the new participants, that a larger proportion is now being admitted immediately the pension-age is reached than formerly. During last year the number of these was 838, out of a total of 2,320 whites. The figures for the past five years are as follows :—

Year ended 31st March.	New Pensioners (European).	Admitted at Age 65.
1907	1,942	550
1908	1,660	538
1909	2,003	582
1910	2,214	658
1911	2,320	838

Full particulars regarding the claims made in each district, and how dealt with, are embodied in Table V of the appendix. Tables VI and VII contain particulars relating to the nationality, sex, and conjugal condition of the new pensioners.

The number of new pensioners who were admitted during the year under the provisions of section 6 of the Amendment Act of 1908, whereby the Magistrate is empowered to exempt earnings during the twelve months preceding the date of application, was 163. The total number of pensioners who have benefited by this section since it became law is 345.

ANNUAL PAYMENTS.

The gross payments made on account of pensions during the year totalled £383,392 10s. 8d., being an increase on the figures of the previous year of £20,896 19s. 8d.

After deducting the sum of £653 2s. 8d., representing overpayments of pension refunded, and making allowance for payments held over from the previous year on account of some informality, the net charge against the Consolidated Fund stands at £382,791 11s. 1d., to which has been applied a credit of £16,758 9s. 8d., being revenue from the national-endowment lands.