

Rents accrued during the year amount to £101,750, while rental receipts, inclusive of arrears, totalled £65,088.

The net loss on the Revenue Account now stands at £167,439, which, as stated above, will be increased by further adjustments.

Balance-sheet.

At the 31st March, 1924, the capital value of lands under lease was £2,958,421. Adjustments so far recorded in the books as the result of decisions of the Dominion Board and by the Land Boards have reduced the capital value to £2,179,540. Arrears of rent amount to £75,779; postponed rents, £72,303; and remissions of rent, £22,339. Interest due to the Consolidated Fund amounting to £200,732 still remains unpaid.

GENERAL.

Revaluation Board Decisions.

The report of the Dominion Revaluation Board, which is included in this report, deals with the causes leading to reductions in mortgages and capital values. Naturally, this Department would have desired the whole of the original valuation work to have been undertaken by the Valuer-General, and it was unfortunate that the claims on his staff for revision of the county rolls at the time were so heavy that he was unable to arrange for his officers in certain localities to undertake valuation work for the Department. To overcome the difficulty for loan purposes Land Boards were entrusted with the selection of expert local valuers with considerable farming experience, some of whom at times made valuations for the Valuation Department, while others were employed by some of the leading lending institutions. In connection with the purchase of properties for settlement of returned soldiers, local Land-purchase Boards were set up consisting of the Commissioner of Crown Lands (Chairman) and three men of wide experience in farming pursuits.

LANDS PROCLAIMED.

During the year 2,914 acres were set apart for selection by discharged soldiers. From the inception of the scheme to the 31st March, 1925, a total area of 1,412,340 acres has been proclaimed for soldier settlement. This area is made up as follows:—

Class of Land.	Area, in Acres.
Ordinary Crown land	587,286
Cheviot Estate land	3,356
Land-for-settlements land	390,700
National-endowment land	430,998
Total	1,412,340

Proclamations have been issued revoking the setting-apart of 175,706 acres of Crown land and 72,810 acres of settlement lands.

APPLICATIONS FOR LAND.

Only 123 applications for land under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act were received during the year. The following table gives the number of applications and the areas allotted during each year from the inception of soldier settlement to the 31st March, 1925:—

Year ending	Applications received.	Allotments made.	
		Number.	Area.
31st March, 1916	272	2	Acres. 629
„ 1917	522	319	143,524
„ 1918	513	313	103,362
„ 1919	1,379	348	117,018
„ 1920	5,041	932	403,891
„ 1921	5,396	1,087	414,867
„ 1922	878	403	97,972
„ 1923	284	146	25,113
„ 1924	216	79	16,910
„ 1925	123	47	9,014
Totals for ten years	14,624	3,676	1,332,300

The figures given above in regard to the allotments of land made to soldiers under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, are very instructive as showing clearly the incidence of repatriation. Prior to 1918 soldier settlement was comparatively modest in extent, and consisted chiefly in the placing on the land of men who had been returned wounded or otherwise unfit. But it had all along been recognized that the crucial test would be experienced when the main body of New Zealand troops returned home in rapidly increasing numbers, and preparations were made accordingly. Busy years were experienced in 1918 and 1919; but the settlement scheme reached its climax during the twelve months ended on the 31st March, 1921, when over one thousand men were placed on holdings of Crown and settlement land, exclusive of those who purchased land by means of Government advances. Since that time settlement has steadily declined, until at the present day it can be said that the settlement of discharged soldiers on the land has been completed, and lands are now once again being opened for general application, although discharged soldiers still receive a certain amount of preference at the ballots.