

The assets of the Board are as follows :—

	£
Cash balances	1,861
Deposits with Native Trustee	47,604
Mortgages and charges	86,195
Office premises, furniture, &c.	15,382
Sundry debtors (excluding trust)	660

Specific reserves and Reserve Funds total £63,308, while total liability to Native beneficiaries is £96,288.

*Native Housing.*—Full advantage has been taken of the Government's policy of providing financial assistance to improve the housing-conditions of Natives within the district, but no entirely satisfactory solution has yet been found to meet the cases of indigent Natives, many of whom are living in town or borough areas and who have neither the land on which to erect a house nor the financial resources to meet the repayments required. The general report on the work undertaken in the district is more particularly referred to in the report of the Board of Native Affairs.

*Maori Welfare Work.*—The wide ambit of the functions of the various branches of the office involves a large measure of direct and indirect Native welfare work, and every assistance is given to and by various organizations and bodies with similar objectives and with whom the officers of the Department are in constant contact. The field staff in particular have shown a keen and helpful interest in this phase of their duties.

### *Tairawhiti District.*

*Native Land Court.*—In all, twenty-five sittings of the Court were held at the usual large centres of Maori population extending from Mohaka in the south to Te Araroa in the north. Keen interest was maintained by the Natives in the proceedings, and the assistance afforded by the Court and its officers in matters affecting economic, social, educational, and general welfare was freely availed of by the Natives. That the Court possesses the full confidence of the Maori people is reflected in the ever-increasing volume of business transacted, and the number of orders made during the year reached the high figure of 6,299.

Succession orders during the period totalled 2,315, as against 1,745 for the preceding year, an increase brought about by the acceleration of work in connection with the Northern Waiapu consolidation scheme. This necessarily increased the work of the Maori Land Board in the distribution of rents and other moneys to the successors of the deceased persons affected.

In those localities where consolidation has not yet been undertaken, there is a growing tendency on the part of the Natives to effect the aggregation of their scattered interests by way of exchange in order to secure to themselves areas sufficiently large for economic farming. This method calls for particular diligence and investigation by the Court to ensure that the interests of all parties are adequately protected.

Rate-charging orders made were not as numerous as last year, and it is satisfactory to note that in one county there has been a record collection of Native rates. This county contains a large proportion of the Native land in the Tairawhiti district occupied and managed by the owners, and carrying approximately 40 per cent. of the rates levied in the county. This satisfactory position is brought about in no small measure by the co-operation of this office with the Valuation Department, the Natives, and the local body concerned, particularly in the collection and settlement of rates by compromise and otherwise. It also reflects the beneficial results achieved by the introduction of Native land development.

There is no diminution in the number or wide diversity of orders made. These include the determination of rights to land, the disposition of personal property, and many other matters affecting the rights and obligations of the Maori people and their advancement and well-being.

*Consolidation.*—The first instalment of the Northern Waiapu scheme is now in its final stages, and it is expected that approximately fifty titles will issue at an early date. The second instalment has been completed, and covers the vesting of certain lands in the Crown which were previously offered in settlement in connection with the survey liens compromise, the Matakaoa rates compromise, and part of the Waiapu rate compromise. Further progress has been made in connection with the third instalment of the scheme, which was the subject of section 10 of the Native Purposes Act, 1937. The fourth instalment affected certain of the Tikitiki Township sections, and titles have issued therefor to the Natives and the Crown. The groups in the fifth instalment of the scheme have been brought up to date, and the necessary locations are now being finalized preparatory to submission to the Native Minister.

The Mohaka scheme as submitted by the Court and which was under consideration by the Lands and Survey Department has been confirmed by the Native Minister, but there is still considerable detailed work to be undertaken before final orders can be made.

*Native Rates.*—The method of collecting rates on Native lands by the appointment of a Receiver is being increasingly employed by local authorities in the Tairawhiti district, and in most cases the Maori Land Board has been appointed for this purpose. The service cannot be regarded as a normal function of the Board, but it has been found that no other body is able or willing to safeguard the interests of the Maori ratepayers. Special staffing is being provided to carry out these new duties.