

1941.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE DEPARTMENT.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1941.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, NATIVE DEPARTMENT, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF NATIVE AFFAIRS.

SIR,—

Native Department, Wellington, 30th May, 1941.

I have the honour to present herewith the annual report upon the activities of this Department, excluding Native land development and Native housing, which are dealt with in a separate report submitted by the Board of Native Affairs. The report covers the financial year ended 31st March, 1941.

I have, &c.,

O. N. CAMPBELL,
Under-Secretary and Native Trustee.

The Hon. F. Langstone, Minister of Native Affairs.

GENERAL REPORT.

During the past year all activities of Native administration have been well maintained and, notwithstanding war conditions, there has been some expansion of the Department's operations. As at the 31st March, 1941, the personnel of the Department totalled 484 officers, comprising office staff (215 permanent and 153 temporary) and field staff (21 permanent and 95 temporary). In addition, the Department has on its pay-roll 145 men who are employed on a weekly-wage basis as stockmen, shepherds, ploughmen, teamsters, truck-drivers, and general farm hands. Apart from these employees the necessary labour for land development and farming activities is supplied by Natives who are engaged wherever possible on a contract basis. The aggregate increase in personnel during the year amounted to 70 officers, a number of whom are female temporary clerks appointed for the duration of the war to replace men on active service. In all, 61 members of the staff are serving with the armed forces, there being 45 in the Expeditionary Force, 9 in the R.A.F. and R.N.Z.A.F., 2 in the Navy, 1 in the Fleet Air Arm, 1 in the Y.M.C.A. overseas, and 3 on home-service duty. It is pleasing to note that no less than 16 of these officers have gained commissions, and it is gratifying, also, to record the response made by Maori members of the staff to the call for volunteers for the 28th (Maori) Battalion. In addition to officers serving in the forces, 7 are on loan to the various Defence Services Departments. The Department now has 5 district offices and 17 sub-offices, new branches having been opened during the year at Hawera and Masterton.

The Department continued to co-operate with the Social Security, Education, and Health Departments on matters affecting the general welfare of the Maori people, and during the past year the field staff has been able to render valuable assistance to the Army Department in the recruiting campaign for the Maori Battalion.

The Maori population has again shown a steady increase, the figure at the 31st March, 1941, being 92,248, as compared with 90,980 at the corresponding date last year.

Native land development operations have been continued, and every effort is being made to increase the productivity of all suitable areas. Despite difficulties caused by war conditions very satisfactory progress has been made with the Native-housing programme.

The difficulties previously encountered by visiting Maoris in obtaining temporary accommodation in Hamilton have now been solved by the establishment of a Maori hostelry, the cost of which is being met by public subscription and by grants from local bodies in the district together with a pound-for-pound subsidy from Civil List (Native Purposes) funds. The building is in the course of erection and should be completed shortly.