

## AOTEA DISTRICT.

*Native Land Court.*—Due to the indisposition of Judge Browne, and his later retirement at the end of 1940 after a long and valuable official career extending over three score years, this district had been dependent on the services of relieving Judges from other districts for a period of approximately twelve months. The appointment of Judge Dykes to the Bench in June, 1941, thus enabled a full programme of eighteen sittings to be held during the year at the customary centres of Wanganui, Hawera, New Plymouth, Tokaanu, and Taumarunui. The necessity for a resident Judge in the district is partly reflected in the increase in the volume of business transacted by the Court in the year now under review. As compared with 1,107 in the previous year, orders were granted in some 1,296 cases, covering 55 partitions, 916 successions, and 325 miscellaneous orders.

Alienations finally confirmed showed a slight decrease, being 121, as against 128 in the previous year. The majority of these were fresh or new leases of fully or partially developed land where the existing tenancies had expired. The demand for timber arising out of the war is the cause for many new applications for timber-cutting rights, and this type of alienation continues to receive the very close attention of the Court. In this connection reference must also be made to the close co-operation and interest of the State Forest Service, which is most helpful and ever-watchful to see that the interests of the Native owners are fully protected.

*Maori Land Board.*—The ordinary activities of the Board have been maintained during the past year in spite of the difficult times through which the country is now passing. The receipts for the year totalled £116,049, as against an expenditure of £113,773, which discloses that the efforts of the Board to utilize its revenue for the benefit of the Natives in the district have been successful. During the year a total of £2,410 was advanced on mortgage to assist Natives in farming and housing activities.

A reduction in amounts held on deposit with the Native Trustee has resulted, due to the appreciation by this Board of the necessity to divert to war purposes all surplus funds not immediately required for the fulfilment of its financial undertakings. To this end an investment of £10,000 was made in the 3 per cent. War Loan on behalf of the Board, and an amount of £2,170 was invested on behalf of particular beneficiaries. The Board's efforts in this direction will be continued as the necessity for further loans arises.

Assets of the Board as at the close of the year were :—

	£
Cash balances .. .. .	3,216
Deposits with Native Trustee .. .. .	49,135
Mortgages and charges .. .. .	81,935
Government securities .. .. .	15,225
Office premises and equipment .. .. .	16,588

The net liability to Native beneficiaries at 31st March, 1942, was £96,577, while specific reserves and the general reserve fund totalled £65,535.

## IKAROA AND SOUTH ISLAND DISTRICTS.

*Native Land Court.*—During the past year thirty-four sittings of the Court were held at centres extending from Hastings to Invercargill. A variety of business was transacted by the Court, and the Court heard a number of applications for assessment of compensation. Applications of this nature being dealt with are increasing with the demand for land being made by the Public Works Department for sites for camps, aerodromes, and other defence works. Alienations show a considerable decrease, which is due, no doubt, to the existing conditions.

*Housing.*—Considerable assistance has been afforded Natives in obtaining building-sites by partition exchange, and vesting orders. Although the present position, and the restrictions on building, have hindered the housing activities considerably, the Natives are being encouraged to proceed with their applications, and have been given every assistance so that building construction can be commenced as soon as circumstances permit. In some cases proposals to purchase houses are favourably considered, and several purchases have been made.

*Maori Land Boards.*—The position of the finances of both Boards is satisfactory, and compared with the previous year there has been a marked increase in the volume of cash business transacted. Receipts for both Boards total £98,723, as against £69,753, and payments amount to £81,149, in comparison with £68,669, for the previous year. The total liability to Native beneficiaries at 31st March, 1942, was £90,021, as against £77,278 at the end of the preceding financial year.

In addition to their ordinary functions, the Boards act as agent for the Native Trustee for the collection and distribution of revenue from Native reserves, and during the year under review £19,423 was collected and £17,581 distributed to the Native beneficial owners.

The policy of the Boards to lend surplus money to Maoris for farming and housing purposes on approved securities and mortgages, and other investments, total £47,115. While maintaining ample funds to meet ordinary demands, the two Boards were able to invest £3,150 in Government war bonds.

The following is the financial position of the Boards at 31st March, 1942 :—

	Ikaroa. £	South Island. £
Total receipts .. .. .	84,320	14,403
Total payments .. .. .	68,451	12,698
Mortgage and other investments .. .. .	39,430	7,685
Deposits with Native Trustee .. .. .	21,847	18,344
Cash balances .. .. .	4,082	3,028
Liability to Native beneficiaries .. .. .	63,590	26,431
Reserves .. .. .	8,504	2,805