

1945
NEW ZEALAND

NATIVE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1945

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave

The UNDER-SECRETARY, NATIVE DEPARTMENT, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF NATIVE AFFAIRS
Native Department, Wellington, 21st August, 1945.

SIR,—

I have the honour to present herewith the annual report upon the activities of this Department, excluding Native-land development, rehabilitation, and Maori 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, 1945.

I have, &c.,
G. P. SHEPHERD,
Under-Secretary and Native Trustee.

The Hon. H. G. R. Mason, Minister of Native Affairs.

GENERAL

The activities of the Department have continued to expand during the year under review. The special Welfare Branch has now been established, and a summary of its operations is included in this report. A qualified horticulturist has been attached to the Department with a view to encouraging and assisting Maoris in market-gardening, fruit-production, and cropping, leading to intensive utilization of small holdings by that means. A more detailed report of horticultural activities appears in parliamentary paper G.-10. An important innovation made during the year was the establishment within the Department of a complete housing construction organization responsible for the administration of the housing activities, architectural work and village planning, construction and repair of houses, and the training of Maori youths in the various building trades. The erection of houses under the Native Housing Act has hitherto been carried out by the Public Works Department, by private tender, and by Maori workmen under the supervision of the Native Department. The new organization has been set up to accelerate the building of houses and to provide for trade training of Maoris and rehabilitation of ex-soldiers in the building trades.

It is recognized that the provision of better and more comfortable housing accommodation for Maoris is one of the most pressing of their needs to-day. The Department has all the financial and other facilities necessary to provide the housing requirements of the Maori people (subject, of course, at the present time to the physical limitations imposed by the shortages of material and labour). Every opportunity is being taken, to arouse the interest of the Maoris in the betterment of their living conditions and to make known the ability and willingness of the Department not to give them houses, but to provide the means whereby they can, if they will make the necessary application, obtain a house upon very generous terms. A detailed report of housing operations is contained in parliamentary paper G.-10.

The return of numbers of Maori servicemen has also called for an expansion of rehabilitation activities.

Staff

At 31st March, 1945, the personnel of the Department, including 5 Judges of the Native Land Court, numbered 564 officers, comprising office staff (233 permanent and 216 temporary) and field staff (18 permanent and 97 temporary). These figures include 127 men in the Armed Forces either overseas or in New Zealand, and 15 officers seconded for duty with other Departments for the duration of the war. This Department has on its roll 90 wartime assistants (principally female clerks). Approximately 23 per cent. of the departmental personnel—*i.e.*, 130—are members of the Maori race. In addition, the Department employs considerable numbers of men (chiefly Maoris) on a weekly, daily, and hourly basis as stockmen, shepherds, truck-drivers, general farm hands, and development and building workmen.

To the relatives of the six members of the staff who were reported killed on active service, the fellow-officers of the Department extend their deepest sympathy.

There were five retirements on superannuation during the year. Mr. R. L. Jellicoe, Chief Clerk, retired on 25th December, 1944, after forty years' service. He held the positions of Accountant at Wellington, Wanganui, and Head Office, being appointed Chief Clerk, Head Office, in December, 1938.