

The book-keeping and accounting of each Board has increased greatly, and, as an indication of the amounts handled by the Boards, I have only to draw attention to the balance-sheets attached hereto.

Embodied in the various accounts of the Boards are transactions as under :—

	£	s.	d.
Ikaroa	156,402	11	3
Aotea	69,760	14	3
Waikato-Maniapoto	151,124	4	10
Tairarwhiti	42,840	11	5
Tokerau	109,150	0	3
Waiariki	62,223	6	11
	£591,511	8	11

While the cash received by way of fees, rents, and purchase-moneys is,—

	£	s.	d.
Ikaroa	71,381	12	1
Aotea	32,083	7	0
Waikato-Maniapoto	77,690	10	5
Tairarwhiti	22,288	9	4
Tokerau	70,095	7	5
Waiariki	50,546	11	8
	£324,085	17	11

The larger portion of this is purchase-money, which shows that alienation of the fee-simple is proceeding apace.

Table B herewith sets out in detail the operations of the Boards, together with their statements of receipts and disbursements, which total a sum of £591,511 8s. 11d., being fully three times the amount shown in previous year.

The table as prepared for this report shows all the transactions, and includes all the information contained in parliamentary papers G.—6A and G.—10A, and will thus obviate the necessity of preparing the said returns in future.

The revenue derived from fees for the financial period ended the 31st March, 1912, amounts to £4,506 9s., almost one-third in excess of the amount for last year.

NATIVE-LAND PURCHASES.

The purchase of Native lands has been pushed ahead. Numerous offers have been received and considered by the Board. During the year the Board held eleven meetings. An area of 91,495 acres has been acquired, and negotiations are pending affecting an area of 187,051 acres. Table C shows in detail the operations of the Native Land Purchase Board.

SURVEYS.

As previously pointed out in former reports, survey and roading are the crux of the whole position. If these could be kept abreast of demands, the Native Department would, as far as Native lands are concerned, satisfy the most pessimistic, as in a very short time there would be no such thing as "unoccupied Native land" that could be considered of a productive nature.

NATIVE INTERPRETERS.

During the period eight first-grade and three second-grade licenses were issued. I regret having to record that one person holding a second-grade certificate had to be proceeded against for acting as, and signing himself, a first-grade interpreter.

The total fees collected under this head and for *Kahiti* translations for the financial period ended 31st March, 1912, amounted to £75 13s.

MAORI COUNCILS.

In last year's report I drew attention to the necessity for bringing Maori Councils (Health) Act into a more satisfactory position. I can only reiterate my previous remarks on the subject.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

The settlement of Native land still appears to be a vexed question, although it is admitted an improvement has taken place since the Native Land Act, 1909, came into operation.

To make the position clear, take the end of the financial year 1910-11. The return set out in parliamentary paper G.—9, 1911 (page 4), gives 231,375 acres as the area alienated by way of lease or sale, and in addition thereto the Native Land Purchase Board had acquired 75,437 acres, making a total of 306,812 acres.

Of this area, 194,844 acres were passed by way of private alienation, being transactions between the Native owners and the parties acquiring, and which were duly approved by the Maori Land Boards. Of that area, 116,499 acres were disposed of by way of lease to 435 applicants, and 78,346 acres by way of sale to 660 applicants, comprising an average holding by way of lease of 267 acres and by way of sale of 199 acres.