

1934.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1934.

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

SIR,—

Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 2nd July, 1934.

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report of the Department for the year ended 31st March, 1934.

I have, &c.,  
MALCOM FRASER, Under-Secretary.

The Hon. J. A. Young,  
Minister of Internal Affairs.

## REPORT.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

THE year was again unique in the number of intricate and complex problems arising in the local-government activities of the Department.

*Counties.*—Five County Councils passed special orders under the authority of the Counties Amendment Act, 1931, abolishing the system of separate-riding finance in their respective counties. This made a total of twenty-three County Councils to avail themselves of that legislation. Three County Councils held their annual meeting on a date other than the statutory one, and their action in each case was validated.

The Counties' Conference was held in Wellington on the 26th and 27th July, 1933. A number of resolutions were passed recommending alteration in the law relating to county government. Several of such resolutions affected Acts administered by the Department, and such action as was necessary was taken in each case. The Department was represented throughout the whole of the Conference.

Matakaoa County: Mr. C. H. Bull, of Gisborne, was appointed Matakaoa County Commissioner on the 1st May, 1933, and immediately entered upon his duties. He made an early tour of the county, reviewed the financial position, and submitted to the Department a report as at the close of the first three months of his administration. That report, after touching on certain geographical and administrative features, dealt mainly with the position of the county under the following headings:—

- (a) Problems of European occupation, arising out of land inferiority, market isolation, and excessive borrowing.
- (b) Problems with respect to Native rates and occupation.
- (c) Rating situation generally.
- (d) General administration, and administration of Hicks Bay Harbour.
- (e) Accounting statements.
- (f) A general review of the financial position.
- (g) A suggested scheme for the rehabilitation of the county.