

ALIENATIONS OF NATIVE LAND.

Although, compared with last year, the number of alienations other than to the Crown increased by 53 to 525, the area affected decreased by 41,739 acres to 49,793 acres. Particulars are as follow :—

	1935-36.		1936-37.	
	Number.	Area.	Number.	Area.
Sales	196	Acres. 20,480	248	Acres. 14,881
Leases	276	71,052	277	34,912
Totals	472	91,532	525	49,793

Native land purchased by the Crown totalled 71 acres only, compared with a yearly average since 1910 of 123,134 acres. A total of 3,324,813 acres have been acquired by the Crown since the passing of the Native Land Act, 1909.

The estimated area of Native land still owned by Maoris in the Dominion, much of it of inferior quality, is slightly in excess of 4,000,000 acres, an average of under 50 acres per head of the Maori population. There are approximately only 200,000 acres of Native land in the South Island, where the Maori population numbers 3,262.

NATIVE HOSTELRIES.

These are established in certain localities, principally towns, where Maoris find difficulty in obtaining accommodation. Rigid rules relating to sanitation, limitation of stay, conduct, &c., govern these hostelries, which are expressly for the use and convenience of travelling Maoris. The hostelries are situated at Tuakau, Tauranga, New Plymouth, Bluff, Havelock, Auckland, and Nelson. The four first mentioned are financed mainly from the Civil List, Native Purposes, and the latter three from funds administered by the Native Trustee. Statistics are not kept for all of these hostelries, but for New Plymouth alone the number of Natives accommodated during the year was 400.

DISTRICT REPORTS.

Brief extracts from reports, as under, on the departmental operations in each district (exclusive of Native-land development) will prove of interest. Each district has its separate problems, all dealing with the general welfare of the Maori people.

TOKERAU DISTRICT.

Court activities have radically changed since consolidation of titles began in the north. No longer are useless partitions and expensive and unnecessary surveys desired by the Natives or allowed by the Native Land Court. Family disputes and conflicting occupational rights are usually adjusted by experienced consolidation officers and staff surveyors at friendly meetings in the villages. The Court itself visits the villages now to enable the old people to attend, to save the Natives the expense of visiting the towns, and to permit of convenient inspection of the lands under action. These visits to the villages, together with tactful handling of a sensitive but virile people, have engendered a feeling of friendliness between family groups long at enmity with each other. The results are seen in frequent reconciliations in acts of outstanding generosity towards former enemies, and in the happiness and joy of the people as each final consolidation sitting stabilizes the individual titles they have been waiting for for many years.

The present stage of consolidation of titles in the Tokerau District is evidenced by the following figures as at 31st December, 1936 :—

Total Native area under consolidation (acres)	..	..	..	522,287
Number of Native blocks .. .. .	..	..	..	6,583
Number of owners prior to consolidation	..	..	..	42,266
Further successors under consolidation	..	..	..	48,194
Number of sections finally consolidated	..	..	..	1,293
Area finally consolidated (acres)	..	..	..	81,135
Individuals in consolidated titles (including children)	..	..	..	5,086
Number of development units	..	..	..	883
Number of further sections ready for development	..	..	..	111

In addition, most of the laborious detail work of consolidation has been finished for the remaining 441,000 acres. Thus there is a separate card for every Native in North Auckland showing all his share interests in land and their values. Also data lists with names, shares, and values have been prepared for every Native block in the north. Coloured lithos show the location of all Native land in each county. Numerous topographical plans are ready. Also the grouping arrangements for all families have been ascertained and noted up.