

Health and Living-conditions of Natives.—Generally speaking, there has been a marked improvement in the health of the Natives of this district. It is significant that this is particularly evident, and especially so as regards infant-mortality, in areas where land-development is in progress. During the past year a large number of prominent elders of the race have passed away, and their loss is severely felt in the councils of their respective hapus and tribes.

Living-conditions have been improved considerably where land-development is in progress, and many Natives are seeking to improve their positions under the provisions of the Native Housing Act.

Consolidation Schemes.—There are eighteen consolidation schemes affecting four land districts and embracing seven counties. The total area involved is 891,855 acres, comprised in 5,321 titles, with a total of 68,689 owners to be dealt with. The titles are necessarily separate and distinct, but the same Native may appear many times in a series either as an original owner or by succession to a deceased owner.

Prior to the introduction of land-development in 1930, three schemes—namely, Maketu, Taheke, and Ruatoki—were in the course of field action, while the data for the other schemes was being prepared within the office. The Ruatoki Scheme proper (21,266 acres) was completed, except for the survey of new titles, in 1933, and the Maketu Scheme (4,330 acres) was completed and surveyed during the same year. The Taheke Scheme (19,775 acres) has been submitted for Ministerial approval. Apart from the above three schemes, little consolidation work was attempted until early in 1936, when the consolidation officers were released entirely from development duties. Works undertaken during the year are as follows :—

(a) Area for which titles were issued during 1936–37 financial year :—	Acres.
(1) Waiohau - Te Teko series	7,773
(2) Rotomahana Parekarangi Scheme	29
	7,802
(b) Area under action but not completed at close of 1936–37 financial year :—	
(1) Ngaitai Scheme	27,495
(2) Horohoro series	6,170
	33,665

TAIRAWHITI DISTRICT.

Native Land Court Activities.—In the Tairāwhiti district the work of the Native Land Court continues to increase. The inconvenience caused to applicants and litigants through the Judge of the district being compelled to take also the Native Land Court sittings of the Waiariki district will be remedied early in the year by the appointment of Judge Ayson to the Waiariki district.

Consolidation Schemes :—

- (1) Tutaekuri : The land involved in the Tutaekuri Consolidation Scheme comprises 3,745 acres. The scheme was finalized during the year by the issue of twenty-five new title orders.
- (2) Mohaka : This scheme comprises the Mohaka, Waihua, Waipapa, Putere, Whareraurakau, and Rotokakarangu Blocks, having an area of 42,300 acres. This scheme was commenced in 1930, when grouping was effected. Location work was confined to an award of approximately 5,000 acres to the Crown. Location of the Native interests and the balance of the Crown's area had to be deferred until development operations had proceeded far enough to attract settlers away from their original cultivations. This has now been practically accomplished, and the consolidation scheme is being drafted by the Court for the approval of the Native Minister.
- (3) Waiapu-Matakaoa : This is the largest scheme yet attempted. The area affected is 126,600 acres, having a value of £545,900. Owing to the magnitude of this scheme and the shortage of trained staff, little progress has been made during the five years since its commencement, but two instalments, affecting an area of 4,626 acres, practically all dairying land, have been submitted for approval by the Native Minister. Completion of the titles, however, is held up owing to the delay in carrying out the compromise in connection with Crown survey liens arranged in 1933. A further instalment of 1,692 acres, known as the Tikapa series, is under preparation for submission to the Native Minister.

Board Operations.—The annual statements of the Tairāwhiti Board's activities for the year show a substantial increase in the amount of rents and other revenues from Native lands handled by the Board.

The payments to beneficiaries this year reached the record total of £63,274, being £22,137, or 35 per cent., greater than the previous year, although less than 10 per cent. of the total consisted of purchase-money.

The lending operations of the Board also reflect the return to prosperous times. A total of £13,409 was received during the year on account of principal repayments and interest on mortgage investments. This is an increase of £5,145, or 38 per cent., above the figures for the previous twelve months. The total receipts and payments for each of the past two years are as follow :—