

GENERAL MAORI WELFARE.

The activities of the Department in promoting the general welfare of the Maori people have been vigorously pursued and, with the full co-operation of the other Government Departments concerned, particular attention has been given to health and education.

The Arawa, Taranaki, and Tuwharetoa Trust Boards continue to exercise their functions in the provision of amenities for the tribes within their boundaries, and the judicious application of their funds is reflected in the improvement manifested in the standard of living conditions amongst their people.

For those Maoris who are unable, through age or disability, to provide for themselves, the Department utilizes its organization actively to assist them to obtain relief by way of invalidity, old-age, or other pensions. In the relatively few cases which are ineligible for this form of relief the funds of the Civil List (Native Purposes) are made available towards their support and maintenance.

The increasing Maori population, though a hopeful and encouraging indication of the regeneration of the Maori people, creates problems which throw added responsibilities on the Department in its guardianship of the race: indeed, the problem facing statesmen to-day is to provide not for a declining race, but for a virile people whose numbers are rapidly growing. The economic and living conditions of the Maori people have received careful consideration and have been materially improved by the Native-land-development schemes and the housing schemes, both of which are the subject of special mention in the report of the Board of Native Affairs.

With the continued benefits provided by these amenities it may reasonably be expected that the Maori will ultimately emerge with a greater degree of attainment and a willingness to undertake his share in state and civic responsibilities.

NGARUAWAHIA CELEBRATIONS.

An event of signal importance, particularly to the Waikato tribes, was the occasion of the opening of King Koroki's House at Ngaruawahia by His Excellency the Governor-General on the 18th March, 1938.

A feature of the ceremony was the transporting of the vice-regal party by Maori canoe down the Waipa River to Ngaruawahia Pa. Prior to the formal ceremony of opening the house, which is called Turongo, His Excellency invested Princess Te Puca Herangi with the insignia of Commander of the British Empire, an honour conferred upon Te Puca in recognition of her outstanding services to her people.

The gathering was attended by representatives of tribes throughout the North Island and a considerable number of Europeans.

MAORI LAND BOARDS.

The volume of work accomplished by the seven Boards has been fully maintained.

Receipts and payments for the year totalled £322,252 and £311,072 respectively, as compared with £295,437 and £313,171 for the previous year, while funds held or invested by the Boards at 31st March, 1938, amounted to £585,566.

Details of these funds are as follows:—

	£
Government securities	62,824
Mortgages and charges	358,359
On deposit with Native Trustee	157,015
Cash balances	7,368
Total	£585,566

Native land remaining vested in the Boards at 31st March, 1938, totalled 652,816 acres.

NATIVE TRUSTEE.

Business has been maintained in all phases of the work of the Native Trust Office, which division of the Department acts as trustee or agent for approximately ten thousand Native beneficiaries.

Estates under administration number 1,629, involving funds totalling £100,635, while the annual rent-roll from a large number of Native reserves containing an aggregate area of 94,000 acres under lease amounts, in round figures, to £41,000.

The following brief statistics relating to the eight stations farmed by the Native Trustee, details of which are shown in the report of the Board of Native Affairs, indicate the extent of the operations for the past year:—

Total area	38,162 acres.
Wool produced—	
Number of bales	1,360
Number of pounds	482,693
Stock sold	
Sheep	£25,077
Cattle	£1,907
Live-stock on hand at 31st March, 1938	
Sheep	57,486
Cattle	6,278