

conditions production is expected to be considerably less than that for the preceding year. Primary-production activities account for a substantial proportion of the financial transactions of the Board, and this proportion will tend to increase while such production is necessary and required by the country.

TAIRAWHITI DISTRICT.

Native Land Court.—In all, nineteen sittings of the Native Land Court were held in different centres in the district, and, notwithstanding the exigencies of the times, interest in the proceedings remained unabated, opportunity being taken by the Natives to solicit the assistance of the Court and its officers in obtaining the advantages afforded them by legislation for the development of their lands, for housing, education, and their general welfare. This has led to an increase in the volume of business transacted, with its attendant increase in fees. The number of orders made reached the high total of 5,263, and fees imposed amounted to £1,188. Succession orders made totalled 1,982, which involved a considerable amount of detailed work in their recording, the assessment and payment of Native succession duty, and the distribution of rents and farm profits affected thereby to the persons entitled.

Native succession duty, amounting to £1,128, was collected and paid to the Stamp Office on behalf of the Maori Land Board, East Coast Trust, and various corporate bodies operating in the district. Partition and exchange orders also constituted a not inconsiderable proportion of the work of the Court, owing to the many and varied interests affected and the great degree of search and accuracy required in the apportionment of encumbrances, liens, and other charges to which the lands affected were subject. Numerous suitable areas have been provided for the erection of houses for development and other public and communal purposes. Other orders made number 3,202, in which are included charging orders numbering 1,367 securing rates to local authorities.

Native Rates.—The number of charging orders made in this respect shows a reduction on the previous year. Due largely to the co-operation between the office and the local bodies, there has been a record collection of current and outstanding rates by the four local authorities within whose boundaries are situated the greater part of the Native land in this district.

Receiverships.—During the year some thirty-three leases granted by the Receiver, appointed by the Court, in the Uawa County have been approved, thus ensuring the collection of current rates and also enabling arrears of rates to be liquidated. Numerous compromises and settlements of a considerable amount of rates have been effected with the majority of local bodies in the district.

Consolidation.—Finality has been reached with the Mohaka scheme, and consolidation orders have been prepared and now form the basis of 327 new titles embracing an area of over 30,000 acres of a total value of almost £65,000.

Further satisfactory progress has been made in the issue of consolidation titles for the Tikapa series of the Northern Waiaapu scheme, upon which are settled about twenty farm units, most of the lands being now in production. Since the inception of this scheme, interests of the owners in some 15,709 acres to a value of £101,167 have now been consolidated, and, with the exception of a portion for which orders have yet to issue, practically the whole of the land in the scheme south of the Maraehara River has been clothed with new titles to the number of 191 inclusive of Crown awards, reserves for communal and public purposes, and road-lines. There remains still the major portion of the scheme north of the Maraehara River to be dealt with, further progress being withheld pending the decision of the special tribunal set up in respect of the ownership of two of the largest blocks in this area.

Alienations.—Despite war conditions and the effects thereof, and the drain on manpower, the number of applications for confirmation of alienations of Native lands is much the same as in previous years. As is usual, the majority of the alienations have been by way of lease, and it is noted that well over 50 per cent. of the alienees have been Maoris. This resumption of occupation of Native lands by the owners gives much satisfaction, and is due to the effects of development and the assistance and encouragement given by the Department to this end.

Maori Welfare.—Work in connection with Maori welfare is being vigorously pursued, and considerable assistance is rendered for the betterment of their communal conditions, their education, and the obtaining of sickness and other benefits provided by the Social Security Department. It is pleasing to record the co-operation that exists between and the mutual assistance rendered this Department by the Child Welfare, Education, Social Security, and Health Departments in improving the conditions of the Maori people. A disquieting feature must be admitted, however, in connection with the social security benefits. It is certain that a large proportion of the payments, particularly family allowances, are wasted in hotel bars, and drastic measures to strengthen and educate Maori mentality towards resistance to such temptation are necessary. At present the demoralizing effect of “easy money” is insufficiently combated.

Native Housing.—Owing to the prevailing war conditions, Native housing operations have been brought almost to a standstill. Shortage of material occasioned by the large demand for defence work and the dearth of manpower have been the major causes of what almost amounts to a cessation of the erection of new houses, but, nevertheless, the scheme has been of inestimable value, both in the provision of better housing conditions and also the production of Maori tradesmen. Many of the youths trained as carpenters and painters have been absorbed into industry, and inquiry shows that their training has fitted them to engage in their trades on not unequal terms with their pakeha fellow-tradesmen. It is interesting to note that with regard to the Special Housing Fund (indigent Natives), payments during the year on account of interest amounted to £324 and repayments in reduction of loans totalled £1,838, which is approximately 20 per cent. of the outstanding advances.

Maori Land Board.—Particulars of the Board's financial transactions and its investments to 31st March, 1942, are shown hereunder:—

	£
Total receipts (including Native Trust stations)	130,150
Total expenditure (including Native Trust)	125,371
Government securities	61,923
Advances on mortgages, loans, and overdrafts	72,060
On deposit with Native Trustee	14,214
Cash balances	7,352
Reserves	55,053
Liability to Native beneficiaries	102,209

The increase of £10,000 shown under the heading of Government securities as compared with that of last year is due to a special investment by the Board in war bonds as a national war effort.