

The decentralization of the administration to the Registrars of the various Native Land Court districts is proceeding as staff and accommodation permit. Following the earlier transfer of the Native Reserves and West Coast Settlement Reserves, section 3 of the Native Purposes Act, 1945, gave wide authority to the Native Trustee to delegate any of his powers and functions to Registrars. During the past year the administration of Common Fund investments was transferred to the appropriate districts, with the exception of the Wellington district, where accommodation did not permit. The machinery for the decentralization of the administration of Maori estates is being set up, and this will complete the matter. This policy should enable the closer supervision of reserves, mortgage securities, and estates, and should make for closer personal relationships between the beneficiary and the office. It should also tend to increase the business of the Native Trustee.

In addition to the ordinary administration of the estates of deceased Maori soldiers—some 600—all next-of-kin were assisted so far as their applications for gratuities were concerned. All such applications were received by the Native Trustee from Base Records and later reported on by Judges of the Native Land Court for the information of the Hon. Minister of Defence.

MAORI INTERPRETERS' BOARD OF EXAMINERS

There was an unusually large entry for the Maori Interpreters' Examination held in March, 1947. Twenty-two candidates were examined, but only four were able to attain the high standard necessary for a licensed interpreter. All of the successful candidates were Maoris, two being members of the staff. Notwithstanding the low percentage of passes, the number of entrants is a healthy indication of a revival of interest in the Maori language.

FINANCE

The following table summarizes the financial transactions of the Department during the year :—

-----	Total Payments.	Total Receipts.
Consolidated Fund—	£	£
Civil List (Native Purposes)	4,997	..
Special Acts ; Payments in respect of confiscated lands (Arawa, Ngaitahu, Taranaki, and Waikato-Maniapoto)	31,000	..
Vote, " Native "	429,248	..
Recoveries from Native Trustee, Maori Land Boards, and miscellaneous receipts	..	26,451
Court fees	..	6,249
Sub-totals	465,245	32,700
Land for Settlements Account : Native land settlement and housing	1,046,899	917,761*
Total; State funds	1,512,144	950,461
Native Trust and Maori Land Boards	874,159	897,912
	2,386,303	1,848,373

* Includes receipts from Native land development schemes, £663,387 ; grant from Consolidated Fund, £193,000 ; receipts under Native Housing Act, £40,323 ; miscellaneous recoveries, £21,051.