

Public moneys expended on all agricultural and pastoral schemes controlled by the Department amounted to £1,075,156, compared with £842,250 for the previous year. The Loan Account Assignment of the receipts from farming operations amounted to £1,066,848, as compared with £890,192 last year. As interest charges, £149,656 was paid to the Consolidated Fund.

Cash collections continue to show an increase, and the year's figures again reflect the advanced prices being paid for primary products. The following increases are noted: butterfat, £7,408; wool, £88,609; live-stock, £134,465.

The finances of the seven Maori Land Boards and the Maori Trustee indicate a sound position. The investments of these bodies now total £1,621,696, made up of mortgages, £483,356; Government securities, £975,967; and advances to farming and primary production undertakings carried on by those bodies, £162,373. The total funds now held for beneficiaries amount to £1,069,727.

Horticulture.—The Maori people continue to display an ever-widening interest in this branch of farming, and on this account the departmental Horticultural Officers have been very busy in advising, assisting, and encouraging those whose interests lie in this direction. The services of the departmental Produce Marketing Officer are available at all times to assist in the marketing of produce to the best possible advantage.

The response by the Maori people generally to the efforts and suggestions of the Department's experts has been very encouraging, and it is apparent that there is a desire among them to profit by the advice given. In a large number of cases vegetable-growing in the home garden has been taken up with enthusiasm.

Small holdings in areas suitable to the cultivation of crops and small fruits are an avenue that offers attractive prospects for the settlement of the Maori people who are interested in undertaking this class of work.

Ahuichenua Trophy.—This handsome cup was very generously donated by the Right Hon. Viscount Bledisloe during his term as Governor-General of this Dominion, and its presentation indicated the donor's faith in the Maori people to answer the challenge to excel. Its purpose was to foster amongst the Maori farmers a keenness to be outstanding in this sphere, and in the years that have intervened there have come to the front as trophy winners a number of Maori farmers whose winning entries have shown not only a natural pride of accomplishment, but have reflected a steady endeavour over a period of years of changing, in many cases, scrub- or bush-covered land into fertile and productive areas which are a great advantage to the country and to the production which is the life-blood of the Dominion.

This year's winner of the trophy was Mr. Eruera Hoera, of Takahue, Northland, second place being filled by Mrs. Waerata Harris, of Tarata, Taranaki. The Board, of which I am Chairman, offers its congratulations to these two successful Maori farmers and expresses the hope that those not successful this year will continue the good work and endeavour to secure the prize on the next occasion.

Hitherto the annual reports of the Board of Maori Affairs and of the Department of Maori Affairs have appeared as two separate publications. These reports have been amalgamated and are now presented in one volume.

The Board desires once again to express appreciation of the whole-hearted co-operation and enthusiasm of the Under-Secretary, Mr. Ropiha, and the officers of the Department of Maori Affairs in carrying out the policy of the Board and thereby advancing the interests of the Maori people.

T. Fraser.

Minister of Maori Affairs,
Chairman of the Board of Maori Affairs.