

Mr. T. T. Ropiha, formerly Assistant Under-Secretary and Deputy Maori Trustee, succeeded Mr. Shepherd as Under-Secretary and Maori Trustee on 1st October, 1948.

Mr. Ropiha was succeeded as Assistant Under-Secretary early in 1949 by Mr. M. Sullivan, who was formerly Assistant Director of Rehabilitation.

Mr. N. W. Smith was appointed Deputy Maori Trustee in January, 1949, this office being regarded as a substantive one owing to the increase in volume of the Trust work of the Department. All Mr. Smith's service has been spent in the Department of Maori Affairs, where he formerly held the position of Chief Clerk.

The personnel of the Department as at 31st March, 1949 numbered 620, which represents an increase of 20 over the previous year. Details are as follows, the corresponding figures for last year being shown in parentheses :—

|                 |           |             |           |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Clerical Staff— |           |             |           |
| Permanent       | 402 (362) | } 426 (412) |           |
| Temporary       | 24 (50)   |             |           |
| Field Staff—    |           |             |           |
| Permanent       | 138 (129) | } 194 (188) | 620 (600) |
| Temporary       | 56 (59)   |             |           |

The increase over last year's figures is accounted for by additional appointments, mainly in the clerical staff. The difficulty of obtaining experienced clerical staff continues. However, a few more Cadets have become available. During the year a further number of temporary employees were appointed to the permanent staff by the Public Service Commission.

### MAORI INTERPRETERS' BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Eight candidates sat for the Maori Interpreters' Examination, First Grade, during the year, three of these being officers on the staff of the Department. Four of the eight candidates qualified as Licensed Interpreters of the First Grade, of whom two are members of the staff. The eight candidates who sat the examination were members of the Maori race.

In the past the provision of an oral test for candidates for the Maori Interpreters' Examination has been at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. Experience has shown that the essential test of a candidate's knowledge of the Maori and English languages is his ability to speak these languages fluently, as well as the ability to write well in both languages. The oral test has now been made a compulsory subject for the Maori Interpreters' Examination, First Grade, thus ensuring that the candidates who qualify as Licensed Interpreters of the First Grade attain a high standard of proficiency.

A practice of fixing minimum marks to be obtained for a pass in the examination has been adopted, and when the results of the examination are issued candidates are notified of the marks awarded to them.

The desire of so many applicants to qualify as Licensed Interpreters is an encouraging sign that interest in this branch of Maori culture is reviving, and it is pleasing to see that an increasing number of Maori officers in this and other Departments are entering for the examination.

The loss of Mr. Kingi R. Tahiwi, O.B.E., whose death occurred in December, 1948, on the eve of his retirement from the Department, is felt deeply by Maoris and Europeans alike. Mr. Tahiwi served for thirty-three years in the Department of Maori Affairs, and for the last twenty-seven years was Translator to the Department. Mr. Tahiwi was also for many years Co-Examiner for the Maori Interpreters' Examination, First Grade.