

NATIVE-LAND PURCHASE.

During the year ninety-five blocks, comprising 91,627 acres, were proclaimed Crown land: 143,445 acres were purchased during the year, including purchases in blocks partly acquired, as compared with 143,528 acres acquired during last year. Negotiations are in progress at present in respect of approximately 913,176 acres 1 rood 9 perches.

During the eight years that have elapsed since the passing of the Native Land Act, 1909, the sum of £1,577,007 19s. 6d. has been expended through the Land Purchase Board in the purchase of Native lands for settlement.

The total area of Native land alienated by way of sale during the same period is approximately 2,016,044 acres, and of this total some 809,005 acres have been acquired on behalf of the Crown.

In the Urewera Reserve, which comprises thirty-six blocks, containing 656,000 acres, negotiations have been in progress in respect of twenty-three blocks, containing 437,719 acres, and up to the 31st March last a total area of 248,108 acres had been purchased, or more than one-half; 64,603 acres being purchased during the past year. Arrangements are being made to commence purchasing in the remaining blocks.

Preparations are also being made to negotiate for the purchase of a number of blocks in the Taupo district, and prohibitions against alienation by private persons have been issued.

Details of the operations for the year will be found in Table C.

DEPARTMENTAL.

The total expenditure for the year was £26,324, including the sum of £2,081 on account of the Native Land Settlement vote, as against £26,281 for the previous year. The revenue received from all sources amounted to £12,712 16s. 3d.

During the year sixteen applicants for Native licenses sat for examination, and of these seven were successful in obtaining first-grade licenses, and six were granted second-grade licenses.

The staffs of the various offices have worked well during the year, and have done their best to cope with the extra work thrown upon them owing to the number of officers on military service.

C. B. JORDAN, Under-Secretary.
