

SESSION II.
1918.
NEW ZEALAND.

EAST COAST NATIVE TRUST LANDS

REPORT, BALANCE-SHEET, AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 1917.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in pursuance of Section 13 of the East Coast Native Trust Lands Act, 1902.

REPORT BY THE EAST COAST COMMISSIONER.

SIR,—

Gisborne, 28th January, 1918.

I have the honour to forward herewith the balance-sheet and statement of accounts of the Trust estate as at the 31st March last, together with schedules of the lands in the Trust at that date.

Compared with the figures shown in last year's accounts the surplus in the estate has increased from £266,399 4s. 9d. to £296,232 3s. 9d., the value of the freeholds from £312,839 to £343,175, and the value of live-stock from £22,285 2s. to £28,980 15s.

The statement of receipts and payments shows increases in several items. Rents received have increased from £5,709 6s. 9d. to £6,227 3s. 11d., and sales of wool and live-stock from £15,647 4s. 1d. to £18,931 19s. 11d. The net profits on farming for the year are £13,262 17s. 4d., as against £13,105 18s. 2d. for the previous year. For clearing bush, fencing, buildings, and other permanent improvements the sum of £6,026 8s. 7d. was expended, as against £2,628 5s. 6d.; and out of rents and farm profits £8,488 9s. 5d. was paid out to the Native owners, as against £5,026 10s. 5d. Purchases of sheep, cattle, and horses are about the same—£4,559 6s. 1d. for last year as against £4,500 16s. 5d. for the previous year.

On the Mahurangi Farm the erection of a shearing-shed and shearers' quarters has been completed, shearers' quarters and men's accommodation have been provided on Waimaha Farm, and improvements have been made to the buildings on Te Kopua. Further areas of good bush land have been felled and grassed on Papuni and Waimaha. Additional fencing is being steadily proceeded with on all the farms.

Lands available for sale or lease aggregate 68,487 acres. Nearly the whole are for sale, and are without road access, which cannot at present be provided because of the scarcity of suitable labour. Until access is provided satisfactory realization of the lands is impossible.

I have, &c.,

T. A. COLEMAN,

East Coast Commissioner.

The Hon. the Minister of Native Affairs, Wellington.