

1924.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LAND COURTS
AND OTHER MATTERS UNDER CONTROL OF NATIVE DEPARTMENT.
REPORT FROM UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 1924.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

Native Department, 30th June, 1924.

Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

HEREWITH is submitted a report upon the activities of the Department for the year ending 31st March, 1924.

R. N. JONES, Under-Secretary.

NATIVE LAND AND NATIVE APPELLATE COURTS.

The subjoined tables show the business disposed of by the Courts, including the number of sittings held and the orders made. A sum of £6,508 2s. 5d. was collected for fees, as against £6,505 12s. 10d. in the previous year. A new Judge was appointed, and occasion was taken to redistribute various circuits, the changes coming into effect as at the 31st March.

MAORI LAND BOARDS.

The Boards this year granted confirmation to the following dealings: Sold: No. 718—area, 32,824 acres 1 rood 9·5 perches. Leased: No. 301—area, 26,543 acres and 24 perches.

The accumulated funds held by the Boards on behalf of Maoris invested with the Native Trustee amount to £478,414 6s. 6d. A large proportion of this is being advanced by the Native Trustee to Maoris for the purpose of facilitating the improvement of their lands, and encouraging them to undertake pastoral and agricultural pursuits.

The lands remaining vested in the Boards are as follows:—

					A.	R.	P.
Area as at 31st March, 1923	..	..	..	..	694,315	2	6·0
Area sold or revested	..	..	..	..	1,585	2	6·6
Balance remaining under Board's control	..	..	..	..	692,729	3	39·4

The earnings of the Boards were: Fees, £2,323 8s. 6d.; commission, £7,244 14s. 6d. The figures for the previous year were—Fees, £2,051 12s. 6d.; commission, £4,098 16s. 5d.

NATIVE LAND PURCHASE BOARD.

An area consisting of 29,560 acres of Native land was purchased on behalf of the Crown. Ninety-four blocks, comprising 44,786 acres, were declared Crown land and made available for disposition. The total area purchased by the Board since the 1st April, 1910, is 1,328,283 acres, at a cost of £3,337,345 8s. 11d.

GENERAL.

Applying the figures given in previous returns, the following is an estimate of land now remaining in the hands of Maoris in the North Island:—

					Acres.	Acres.
Estimated area as at 31st March, 1923	..	..	..	..	..	4,380,916
Sold to Crown	..	..	..	..	29,560	
Sold to individuals	..	..	..	..	31,972	
						61,532
Leaving a balance estimated at	..	..	..	..		4,319,384