

The estimated area of Native land still owned by Maoris in the North Island is as follows :

					Acres.	Acres.
Estimated as at 31st March 1931	..	..	..	..	..	3,879,863
Sales to Crown	..	..	..	..	5,624	
Sales to individuals	..	..	..	..	10,197	
						15,821
						3,864,042

GENERAL.

The system of development of Native land by Maoris has steadily progressed, and is now beginning to show results for the expenditure that has been incurred. Unfortunately in one sense, but providentially in another way, the commencement of the main operations began at a time when world prices took a downward trend and economic conditions occurred which upset the calculations of all financial experts. The hope, however, that something was at last to be done to help the Maoris to develop their lands gave them renewed confidence in the future, especially as, while improving their lands, they were to obtain a partial subsistence.

This expenditure became a charge upon the land owned by them, and thus somewhat minimized the burden that had fallen upon the general taxpayer. A full report on the progress of the various schemes and the expenditure thereon was tabled last year, and it is expected this will be supplemented with another return this year, so that it is unnecessary to give the full details. It will be sufficient, therefore, to indicate that there are now some forty-nine schemes in progress, and that, although less than twenty of them have so far reached the revenue-producing stage, the Maoris have been enabled, in spite of the low prices and strenuous times, to repay over £10,000 of the indebtedness incurred on their behalf. In the coming year it is expected that many more will reach a partially productive basis.

The Maoris have suffered owing to the economic crisis in common with the rest of the population, and all funds available for the assistance of indigent Maoris have been strained to the utmost in an endeavour to relieve urgent necessities. With the help of many welfare associations and the assistance of charitably disposed Europeans, the distress has been alleviated as far as practicable. This still left many cases of privation unprovided-for, but these Maoris have accepted their straitened circumstances with philosophical resignation and the belief that brighter days are in store for them.

Native interpreters' licenses have been issued to three persons during the year.

TABLE A.—NATIVE LAND COURTS.
RETURN OF BUSINESS AND FEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1932.

Native Land Court.				Native Appellate Court.			
Number of sittings	..	..	96	Number of sittings	..	..	2
Number of cases notified	..	..	16,416	Number of cases notified	..	..	37
Number of cases for which orders were made	..	..	6,348	Native Land Court decisions varied	..	..	2
Number of cases dismissed	..	..	1,424	Native Land Court decisions affirmed	..	..	1
Number of cases adjourned <i>sine die</i>	..	..	8,746	Native Land Court decisions referred back to Native			
Number of partitions made	..	..	216	Land Court	..	..	3
Area affected (acres)	..	..	54,425	Native Land Court decisions annulled	..	..	2
Number of investigations of title	..	..	10	Appeals dismissed or withdrawn	..	..	23
Area affected (acres)	..	..	106	Appeals adjourned <i>sine die</i>	..	..	5
Number of succession orders made	..	..	6,129	Applications under section 208 ordered	..	..	Nil
Number of other orders made	..	..	2,729	Applications under section 208 dismissed	..	..	Nil
				Applications under section 208 adjourned <i>sine die</i>	..	..	1
				Court Fees.			
				£ s. d.			
Fees received				.. 3,877 12 10			

TABLE B.—MAORI LAND BOARD.
OPERATIONS—1ST APRIL, 1931, TO 31ST MARCH, 1932.

Board.			Leased.			Sold.			Mortgaged.		
			A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.
Ikaroa	..	..	4,758	0	27	679	0	2-35	68	0	5
Aotea	..	..	13,085	2	36-66	898	1	8-47	355	0	3-6
Tairāwhiti	..	..	5,041	3	11	559	3	30	16,481	1	29
Wairariki	..	..	904	0	22-9	4,372	1	15-2	1	2	6
Waikato-Maniapoto	..	..	1,754	2	0-265	1,993	2	11-9	51	0	4
Tokerau	..	..	120	0	34	1,723	1	21-5	14	3	11
South Island	..	..	2,173	0	10-9	418	3	37-3	287	3	5-6
Totals	..	..	27,837	2	22-725	10,645	2	6-72	17,259	2	24-2
North Island	..	..	25,664	2	11-825	10,226	2	9-42	16,971	3	18-6
South Island	..	..	2,173	0	10-9	418	3	37-3	287	3	5-6
Totals	..	..	27,837	2	22-725	10,645	2	6-72	17,259	2	24-2