

1946
NEW ZEALAND

NATIVE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st MARCH, 1946

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave

The UNDER-SECRETARY, NATIVE DEPARTMENT, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF
NATIVE AFFAIRS.

SIR,—

Native Department, Wellington, 1st June, 1946.

I have the honour to transmit to you the annual report upon the general activities of this Department for the year which ended on the 31st March last. Certain important aspects of the Department's administration—Native-land development, housing, rehabilitation, and so forth—are dealt with in a separate report from the Board of Native Affairs.

I have, &c.,

G. P. SHEPHERD,

Under-Secretary and Native Trustee.

The Hon. H. G. R. Mason, Minister of Native Affairs.

GENERAL

There has been a further expansion of the activities of the Department during the year covered by this report. One of the principal new measures introduced was the Maori Social and Economic Advancement Act, 1945, which provides greater facilities for dealing with the general Maori welfare and for closer co-operation between the Department and the people. Another additional field of operations will result from the secondment of an engineer to the Department. The services of an experienced engineer were made available by the Public Works Department for several months during the year 1945–46 to carry out a survey of lime deposits with a view to obtaining lime urgently needed for development work, and arrangements are now being made for the permanent secondment of the engineer to this Department. This will fill a long-felt need for expert advice on such matters as laying off road-lines on scheme lands, bridging and culverting, drainage and water-supplies, river erosion and protective works, and many similar problems which frequently arise in the course of the Department's work.

Mr. D. G. B. Morison, LL.B., was appointed Chief Judge on the 1st September, 1945, in succession to Mr. G. P. Shepherd, who found the duties of the combined offices of Chief Judge, Under-Secretary, and Native Trustee more than it was possible to perform with justice to each office, and who had asked to be relieved of the position of Chief Judge for that reason. Mr. Morison, in the course of twenty-five years of practice as a barrister and solicitor at Wellington, has had a wide experience in matters connected with Maori land laws and has frequently represented Maoris in the Native Land Court and before the Maori Affairs Committee. His long experience in conveyancing and in the administration of trusts and estates will be of the greatest value in his judicial work in the Native Land Court.