

NATIVE-LAND PURCHASE.

During the year 145,389 acres were purchased, and sixty-three blocks comprising 125,769 acres were proclaimed Crown land. Negotiations are in progress in respect of blocks comprising approximately 774,863 acres.

Since the passing of the Native Land Act, 1909, £1,713,816 10s. 9d. has been expended through the Native Land Purchase Board in the purchase of Native lands for settlement, an average of nearly £200,000 per year, the area purchased being approximately 955,394 acres.

The total area of Native land alienated by way of sale during the same period is approximately 2,258,738 acres, including the 955,394 acres referred to above as having been acquired on behalf of the Crown.

The area purchased in the Urewera Native Reserve during the year was 42,693 acres, making the total area purchased at 31st March last 290,602 acres.

In the Tokaanu-Taupo district 56,541 acres were purchased.

DEPARTMENTAL.

The total expenditure for the year was £27,896, including £2,202 on account of the Native Land Settlement vote, as against £26,324 for the previous year. The revenue received from all sources amounted to £12,784 1s.

During the year nine applicants for Native Interpreter's licenses sat for examination. Four were successful in obtaining first-grade licenses and one was granted a second-grade license.

The influenza epidemic interfered greatly with the work of the Native Land Courts, Maori Land Boards, and Native-land-purchase operations, the sittings of the Courts having to be suspended for some months. I regret to have to record the death of Judge Wilson, which occurred during the epidemic while he was holding his Court at Whakatane, and also of his Clerk, Taare Waaka. A large number of other officers were incapacitated, making it very difficult to carry on the work of the various offices. The members of the staff have given very loyal assistance during the year, and the return of men from military service will enable the staffs to be brought up to strength necessary for the efficient working of the offices.

The Hon. Native Minister.

C. B. JORDAN, Under-Secretary.
