

being a large area of Native land available for general settlement, it would seem that there is barely sufficient for the requirements of the Natives themselves.

Seeing that the Europeans have acquired about 62,000,000 acres of Native land, it might not be thought unreasonable to allow the Native owners to retain the small area remaining to them, for it may safely be said that the lands leased to Europeans will never return to the occupation of the Native owners. The great problem is to get them settled upon their individual holdings; but this is an object not likely to be fully realized, as all Maoris will not become farmers any more than will all Europeans.

The Native Department is sometimes twitted with not publishing figures and making statements in regard to the position of Native lands, but there are ample figures published in the various returns for any one who is intelligent enough to understand them. All the figures and the statements that can be made will not alter the position, which is that the Maoris have disposed of nearly all the lands that they can dispose of without leaving the bulk of them landless, and later, probably, to become a charge on the State.

*South Island.*—The total area of land owned by Maoris in the South Island and the Chatham Islands is: South Island, 212,786 acres; Chatham Islands, 65,725 acres 1 rood 3 perches: total, 278,511 acres 1 rood 3 perches. The land is held as follows: South Island—Leased to Europeans, 35,780 acres; held by Maori owners, 177,006 acres. Chatham Islands—Leased to Europeans, 9,723 acres 3 roods 37 perches; held by Maori owners, 56,001 acres 1 rood 6 perches. (Note: The above includes land administered by the Public Trustee.)

#### DEPARTMENTAL.

The total expenditure of the Department for the year was £33,096, including £4,638 on account of the Native Land Settlement vote, as against £27,896 for the previous year. The revenue received from all sources amounted to £15,361 17s. 7d.

During the year thirteen applicants for Native Interpreters' licenses sat for examination, and five were successful in obtaining first-grade licenses.

I regret to have to record the death of the Chief Judge of the Native Land Court, Mr. Jackson Palmer, which occurred in August last. The late Chief Judge possessed a wide experience of the Native land laws and Native matters generally, and his loss will be much felt by the Department.

Judge R. N. Jones, the senior Judge of the Native Land Court, was appointed Chief Judge in succession to Judge Palmer; and Mr. H. F. Ayson (who has been acting as Judge of the Cook Islands Land Court) and Mr. F. O. V. Acheson were also appointed Judges to fill the vacancies caused by the death of the late Judge Wilson and the resignation of Judge Jack.

I desire to thank the members of the staffs of the various offices for the manner in which their duties have been carried out during the year.

TABLE A.—NATIVE LAND COURTS.

RETURN OF BUSINESS AND FEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1920.

<i>Native Land Court.</i>						
Number of sittings .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	169
Number of cases notified .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	28,954
Number of cases for which orders were made .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	10,399
Number of cases dismissed .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	3,000
Number of cases adjourned <i>sine die</i> .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	15,834
Number of partitions made .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	904
Area affected (acres) .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	358,791
Number of investigations of title .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	11
Area affected (acres) .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	557
Number of succession orders made .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	8,511
Number of other orders made .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	2,386
<i>Court Fees.</i>						
Fees received .. .. .	..	..	..	..	£	5,960 5 0
Fees outstanding for period .. .. .	..	..	..	..	£	121 9 0
<i>Native Appellate Court.</i>						
Number of sittings .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	16
Number of cases notified .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	251
Native Land Court decisions varied .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	26
Native Land Court decisions affirmed .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	20
Native Land Court decisions referred back to Native Land Court .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	6
Native Land Court decisions annulled .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	18
Appeals dismissed or withdrawn .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	127
Appeals adjourned <i>sine die</i> .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	14
Applications under section 208 ordered .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	3
Applications under section 208 dismissed .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	3
Applications under section 208 adjourned <i>sine die</i> .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	4
<i>Court Fees.</i>						
Fees received .. .. .	..	..	..	..	£	34 4 0
Fees outstanding for period .. .. .	..	..	..	..	£	4 0 0