

SESSION II.
1923.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LAND COURTS

AND OTHER MATTERS UNDER CONTROL OF NATIVE DEPARTMENT.

REPORT FROM UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 1923.

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

Hon. Native Minister, Wellington. Native Department, 30th June, 1923.
HEREWITH is submitted a report upon the activities of the Department for the year ending 31st March, 1923.

R. N. JONES, Under-Secretary.

ANNUAL REPORT.

During the year Sir William Herries, a former Native Minister, passed away. His loss was mourned by the Maoris as that of a true friend who had always had their best interests at heart.

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 £6,505 12s. 10d. was collected for fees, as against £6,809 4s. 5d. for the previous year.

MAORI LAND BOARDS.

The Boards have granted confirmation to the following dealings: Sold, 41,285 acres; leased, 18,773 acres. The accumulated funds of the Boards invested with the Native Trustee now amount to £463,398 2s. 4d. Some £70,000 of this has been advanced to Natives during the year for the purpose of facilitating the improvement of their lands.

The following figures disclose the position of the lands that have been vested in the Boards:—

					A.	R.	P.
Area vested as at 31st March, 1922	..	..	..	..	694,331	3	17
Sold by the Boards	..	..	..	..	16	1	11
Total remaining under Boards' control	..	..	..	..	694,315	2	6

Legislation was passed during the year affording a readier means of revesting, and this is being taken advantage of by the Maori owners so as to get the control back into their own hands of such lands as the Boards are unable to satisfactorily dispose of.

The earnings of the Boards were—Fees, £2,051 12s. 6d.; commission, £4,098 16s. 5d. The totals of the previous year were—Fees, £2,602 2s. 6d.; commission, £3,590 16s. 7d.

NATIVE LAND PURCHASE BOARD.

During the year 51,523 acres of Native land were purchased on behalf of the Crown. Sixty-three blocks, comprising 14,944 acres, were declared Crown land and made available for settlement. Active steps were also taken towards freeholding the Taumarunui and Te Kuiti Native Townships. The total area of Native land purchased since 1st April, 1910, is 1,298,723 acres, at a cost of £3,129,370 9s. 5d.