

to a minimum, if not removed ; and in regard to financial assistance the security of the land might be made available to the fullest extent by the users, being themselves in fact the owners, to any lending institution that might favour it.

In furtherance of the plan the 5,479 titles were closely and minutely examined, and steps were taken to tabulate the data relating to—

- (a) The value of each holding.
- (b) The liabilities against each holding for—
  - (i) Outstanding title fees and succession duties ;
  - (ii) Survey costs ; and
  - (iii) County rates.
- (c) The manner of occupation, and, if leased, the terms on which leased and the position as to rent payments.
- (d) The proposals of individuals or family groups regarding exchanges, aggregation, or location of consolidated interests.

In regard to valuations it was found that the Valuation Department was engaged in a revaluation of counties throughout the North Auckland District. The data was furnished from time to time to the Auckland Branch of the Native Department, but was not completed until April, 1931.

In regard to outstanding rates, it was found impracticable to proceed with the assessment of liabilities on the Native titles unless some arrangement was made with the local bodies. This was effected during 1928, and compromises were made which in the case of Whangarei settled outstanding rates as at the 31st March, 1928, and in the case of the other local bodies, except those comprised in the Kaipara consolidation district, to the end of March, 1930. Further compromises were arranged at a conference between the local bodies concerned and the consolidation officers, which took the settlement to the end of March, 1931. On the Kaipara side the consolidation staff arranged settlements to the 31st of March, 1932. The following are the particulars of these settlements :—

Rate Compromises, North Auckland.

Local Body.	Five years' Rates to 31st March, 1930.	One Year, 1930-31.	To 31st March, 1932.	Total.	Paid.	Settled to
	£	£	£	£	£	1931.
Mangonui .. .. .	10,250	1,944	..	12,194	3,986	31 March.
Hokianga .. .. .	25,330	5,066	..	30,396	5,816½	31 „
Kohukohu Town Board .. .. .	3,267	630	..	3,897	908	31 „
Whangaroa .. .. .	23,480	4,654	..	29,359	3,314	31 „
Bay of Islands .. .. .	1,225		..			
Kaikohe Town Board .. .. .	4,650*	1,532	..	9,731	2,533	31 „
Whangarei .. .. .	3,549		..			
Kaipara—						1932.
Otamatea .. .. .	..	..	2,668	2,668	400	31 March.
Rodney .. .. .	..	..	1,198	1,198	200	31 „
Hobson .. .. .	..	..	4,512	4,512	600	31 „
Totals .. .. .	71,751	13,826	8,378	93,955	17,757½	

\* In the first compromise in 1928 the Whangarei Council settled only up to 31st March, 1928. The two years to 31st March, 1930, were arranged later.

In the discussions with the local bodies their representatives, while stressing the needs of their respective districts and urging the more equitable distribution of the burden of local taxation between pakeha and Maori owners and occupiers of land, expressed their willingness to assist the consolidation officers and the Department in carrying out the policy, which was directed towards the comprehensive adjustment of Native land titles for purposes of settlement, and was calculated to remove many of the difficulties in the way of the effective collection of rates.

The payments to the local bodies were made out of the Native Land Settlement Account, and were in fact purchases by the Crown of undivided interests in Native lands, which under the consolidation schemes would, with other interests acquired by the Crown in other ways be aggregated in compact areas in various parts of the North Auckland region. The detail work involved, which had to be carried out by the consolidation staff, was the apportionment to each title of the amount paid on its behalf by the Crown.

Survey Liens.

The next formidable liability to be faced was that of survey costs, which had been accumulating through the years, increasing with every attempt of the Native Land Court to individualize the Native land holdings. Reference should be made to the report of the conference held in November, 1930, between representatives of Treasury, the Lands and Survey Department, and the Native Department, when recommendations were made affecting survey liens on Native lands comprised in consolidation schemes in various parts of the North Island, and amounting to £116,217. (See parliamentary paper G.-7 of the present session.) The conference recommended the remission of interest and a proportion of the principal, while, for the balance which remained, lands were to be awarded to the Crown through the consolidation schemes. Some of the local authorities with which