

Particulars of the funds invested or held by the Native Trustee at 31st March, 1938, are given as under:—

| | £ |
|---|-----------------|
| Local bodies' securities | 5,100 |
| Mortgages— | £ |
| To Natives | 390,920 |
| To others | 8,590 |
| | 399,510 |
| Station and other overdrafts | 167,908 |
| Properties acquired under mortgages | 12,939 |
| Fixed deposits | 75,000 |
| Cash balance | 17,499 |
| | <u>£677,956</u> |

The Native Trustee's liability to beneficiaries including the Maori Land Boards, at 31st March, 1938, was £435,148 and his accumulated reserves amounted to £119,427.

During the year the detail work involved in the collection and distribution of revenues from the West Coast Settlement Reserves in Taranaki, comprising an area of 72,000 acres leased to 468 lessees with an annual rent-roll of £28,000, was transferred to the Department's District Office at Wanganui. This measure of decentralization will provide a more efficient organization ensuring better service to the beneficiaries, who are mainly resident in the Aotea District.

It is hoped to make greater use in the future of the facilities available in the local district offices in respect of the various activities of the Native Trust Division.

FINANCE.

The following figures indicate the volume of business transacted by the Department during the year. The corresponding amounts for last year were—payments, £1,460,050; receipts, £1,046,707.

| | Total Payments. | Total Receipts. |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Consolidated Fund— | | |
| Civil List Native Purposes | 5,284 | .. |
| Vote: Native | 188,078 | 32,751 |
| Court fees | .. | 5,839 |
| Unauthorized Expenditure Account (Housing).. .. . | 50,000 | .. |
| Public Works Fund— | | |
| Vote: Native Land Settlement | 814,135 | 559,308* |
| Native Trustee's Account | 343,800 | 352,851† |
| Maori Land Boards | 311,072‡ | 322,252‡ |
| Totals | 1,712,369 | £1,273,001 |

* Does not include loan-moneys, but includes a grant of £335,500 from the Employment Promotion Fund.
† Includes £100,000 from the Consolidated Fund for Native Housing Fund. ‡ Does not include deposits and withdrawals in respect of Deposit Accounts with Native Trustee.

NATIVE LAND COURTS.

The business transacted by the Courts, including the Native Appellate Court, during the year is set out in Table A. An all-round increase is manifest.

NATIVE-LAND CONSOLIDATION.

The consolidation of Native land titles is one activity on which little progress has been made for the reason, as stated in my last report, that intricate work of this nature requires the services of trained staff, which is not yet available. Brief reference is made in the reports from the district offices to the progress made on the various schemes.

NATIVE HOUSING.

Active steps were taken during the year in connection with the erection and renovation of dwellings to provide adequate and suitable accommodation for the Maori people. This branch of the Government's housing policy is undertaken by this Department for the reason that officers of the Department are in close touch with the Native race and are aware of the special problems which are known to exist. The constructional work is, wherever possible, undertaken by the Public Works Department.

The progress made is shown in the report submitted by the Board of Native Affairs.

NATIVE RATES.

Reports from district offices show a decline in the numbers of applications by local authorities for rate-charging orders and for receivership orders in respect of lands on which rates are owing. Whilst this could be attributed, in part, to other causes it is evident that the improvements in