

SECOND-GROWTH COUNTRY.

The experimental work on the hilly country reverting to secondary growths in the centre of the North Island has been carried on, particularly in the Whangamomona County, and full reports have been published, as the information became available, in the Department's *Journal*.

The Lands Department is now conducting a demonstration farm in the Whangamomona County under the provisions of the Deteriorated Lands Act. This farm is being run on economical lines, but, with the work that is being put in to it on good-management methods, considerable improvement both as regards carrying-capacity and appearance is already being shown. The instructional officers of the Division continue to co-operate with the officers of the Lands Department in the work necessitated in connection with advances under the Deteriorated Lands Act, particularly in the King-country.

INSTRUCTION IN AGRICULTURE.

The demands for instruction and advice received from the farming community of the Dominion are increasing rapidly, and it is pleasing to record that the instructional staff was strengthened during the year by the appointment of several additional Instructors. Without this additional assistance the work of the Division could not be carried out either with satisfaction to the Department or to the country in general. It is evident that the instructional staff will still have to be strengthened from time to time as suitable men are offering for appointment.

FARM ECONOMICS.

The farm-economics section of the Division is making fair headway in its work, and two articles were published in the Department's *Journal* during the year. A bulletin dealing with a survey of over 200 dairy farms in the Waikato and Taranaki districts is now almost ready for the press. The securing of sufficient data to enable a proper examination to be made in respect of any particular branch of farming is a work of some magnitude, and rapid progress cannot be expected. At the present time two officers of the farm-economics section are wholly employed gathering data in confined districts, and both officers report that the farmers generally are quite prepared to supply data when the object the Department has in view is explained to them. One looks forward with hope to the farm-economics section being of considerable help in the near future in improving the general standard of farm-management methods in the Dominion.

EXPERIMENTAL FARMS AND AREAS.

Puwerā.—Dairying operations were continued on this area, and the herd increased to thirty-eight head. The results secured from the herd are conclusive evidence that the clay gum-lands of the North are capable of being converted into small dairy farms, provided finance is available for the initial breaking-in of the land. A full report of the operations at Puwerā for the 1927-28 season will be supplied later as a special report.

Marton.—The work at this area, which comprises mainly wild white-clover seed production and an elaborate series of top-dressing trials, has been much on the same lines as last year. Full details will be supplied later in a special report.

Ashburton.—The work carried out on this farm in former years has been continued. This work consists mainly of wheat-variety trials and work in the selection of pure lines of seed potatoes. A special report will be supplied later.

Gore.—Variety-testing of roots and potatoes represents the main work of the year on this area. In the case of roots the work is particularly from the aspects of dry-rot and club-root.

Galloway.—Dairying operations have been continued at Galloway to demonstrate the butterfat capacity of irrigated soil in Central Otago. A detailed report will be submitted so soon as the season has closed.

Waimaunga.—Dairying has been continued on this farm during the year, and so soon as the season closes a detailed report will be furnished.

Subsidized Farms.—The subsidized farms at Stratford, Manaia, Dargaville, and Winton have continued to do much useful demonstration work.

CO-OPERATIVE EXPERIMENTS.

Co-operative experimental work has been continued in various localities throughout the Dominion. The majority of these experiments are conducted on modern lines, under which the results can be accurately interpreted by the statistical method; but a few of the experiments—more especially those in isolated districts—have been of a demonstrational character.

WINTER FARM SCHOOLS.

The holding of farm schools was continued during the winter of 1927. In nearly every case the classes were limited to two days in each centre, and the attendances at all lectures and the interest shown by those attending were most gratifying to the lecturers. On account of the period at each centre being limited to not more than two days, lecturers were enabled to visit an increased number of centres, and consequently a larger number of farmers attended the lectures than would otherwise have been the case.