

Board, it appears that the areas under development, to be developed, or in respect of which special advances will be made to the selectors, will amount to about 130,000 acres, which should provide approximately five hundred new farms. The greater part of this area is at present almost totally unproductive, and its development and settlement should materially assist in increasing the production of the Dominion.

The Ngakuru Blocks of pumice country are breaking in satisfactorily, the results achieved in the laying-down of pastures and general development being very encouraging. Satisfactory progress is also being made with the development of the Tapuwae Estate purchased under the Land for Settlements Act.

The system of advances for development purposes is becoming more widely known, and, as referred to at a later stage of this report, is assisting greatly in the selection of unimproved areas.

The following summary of operations up to the 31st March last, under Part I of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1929, is furnished in accordance with the provisions of section 10 of the Act:—

- (a) The several areas of unoccupied Crown lands in respect of which development works have been undertaken—

(1) The Wharekohe Block, of 3,700 acres of gum land, Whangarei District: It is proposed to plough and develop about 1,450 acres. Operations had barely commenced at the 31st March, but a good many men will eventually be employed on this block, which should finally provide twenty farms.

(2) The Ngakuru No. 1 Block, of 2,200 acres of light pumice land: At the 31st March, 1,213 acres had been cleared, of which 1,160 acres had been sown in grass. Shelter-belts have also been planted, and about thirty-three miles of fencing erected.

(3) The Ngakuru No. 2 Block, comprising about 6,000 acres, of which approximately half is ploughable: Some 1,975 acres cleared and 400 acres cultivated. Small area sown in grass.

(4) Te Kauwhata Block, of 1,000 acres of wattle country: This land is being converted into eight dairy-farms. Work on three farms almost completed, and that on a fourth should be finished during next spring. The remaining area is being cleared of fallen timber, and will be ploughed during the winter and sown down next autumn.

(5) The Onepu Block, of 3,400 acres, situated near Te Teko, on the southern end of the Rangitaiki Plains: This area is being developed by draining, scrubbing, ploughing, and sowing-down in grass. A considerable length of new drains has been constructed, old drains reconditioned, manuka cut and burned, &c. The sowing and manuring of 200 acres had been completed by the end of the year, while a further 200 acres will be grassed in the spring and 750 acres next autumn.

(6) The Koromatua Block, of 833 acres, in the Elstow District, Hauraki: Drainage, roading, and cultivation will be carried out, and at the 31st March, two and a half miles of drains had been constructed.

(7) Reporoa Settlement areas of 3,215 acres, comprising the unlet sections in the settlement: Comprises mostly easy hill country with small areas of good-quality swamp. A considerable amount of drainage has been carried out, and further development is under consideration.

(8) Tapuwae Estate, King-country: A purchased estate of 3,350 acres, comprising tableland country of good quality. Some 730 acres of bush has been felled, burnt, and sown, and 150 acres drained.

(9) The Easterfield Block, near Westport, comprising 250 acres of pakihi land: Grassing experiments are being carried out by the Department of Agriculture.

- (b) The total cost of development works carried out to the 31st March, 1931—

	£	s.	d.
(1) Wharekohe Block	410	6	3
(2) Ngakuru No. 1 Block	15,300	12	7
(3) Ngakuru No. 2 Block	5,747	10	0
(4) Te Kauwhata Block	18,941	2	3
(5) Onepu Block	960	16	8
(6) Koromatua Block	574	8	9
(7) Reporoa sections	142	10	5
(8) Tapuwae Estate	7,525	12	1
(9) Easterfield Block	348	13	8

Total expenditure to 31st March, 1931 .. £49,952 2 8

In addition to the expenditure on the blocks set out above, funds have been expended on the roading, survey, &c., of various other blocks in respect of which the actual development is to be carried out by the selectors. The total expenditure on roading, surveys, and development (apart from roading costs payable out of the Public Works Fund) up to the 31st March, 1931, was £64,200 15s. 3d.