

In so far as Crown lands are concerned, as many as possible of the available **Crown lands.** areas have been opened for selection. During the period 1st December, 1928 (when the United Government took office), to the 31st May, 1931, a total area of over 940,000 acres of all classes of Crown lands has been selected on various tenures, involving over 4,350 subdivisions, which include some 700 entirely new rural sections selected on permanent tenures.

The number of settlers actually placed on the land, however, while considerable, does not cover the whole of the Government's activities in this respect, as the areas which are being developed by the Crown have not yet been offered for selection. It is satisfactory in this connection to note that every unoccupied block of Crown land in the Dominion has been specially reported upon, and as a result arrangements are being made to settle a large number of sections, the settlers to receive financial assistance for the further development of the land in terms of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1929.

Good progress is also being made in the development of large areas of gum and pumice country in various localities. The Ngakuru blocks of pumice land in the Rotorua district are breaking in satisfactorily, and the results so far achieved in the laying-down of pastures and general development are most encouraging. Satisfactory progress is also being made with the development of certain estates purchased under the Land for Settlements Act. Approximately 3,000 acres has so far been laid down in pasture in various blocks and further large areas are in preparation, incidentally giving employment to a large number of men.

In addition to the development of Crown lands, the Government has also **Land purchases.** acquired some fifty-four properties, covering a total area of approximately 110,388 acres, and capable of subdivision into over 350 farms. Included in the purchases were nineteen properties, totalling 10,940 acres, which were acquired under Part II of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1928, on behalf of sixty-seven approved applicants. In this connection I may mention that strict supervision is exercised over the purchase of private estates, for, as a general rule, it is preferable to expend the funds available in developing Crown land rather than in the purchase of private estates. Most of the properties purchased for ordinary settlement have been subdivided and selected, but amongst those not yet offered are two or three estates on which development work prior to selection is being carried out by the Crown; and in this connection I would specially mention the Galatea Estate (between Whakatane and Lake Taupo), which it is proposed to cut up into blocks ranging from 100 to 200 acres, the objective being to place 120 settlers in occupation on these holdings. In the meantime the roading and general development of the estate is providing employment for several hundred men.

Before leaving the subject of land-settlement, I desire to refer to the very **Native-land settlement.** successful results which have been accomplished in connection with the Native-land-development schemes.

In the North Auckland province development work is being proceeded with energetically, and some 404 separate holdings are at present under supervision.

In the Waikato and King-country districts several large areas are being broken in for settlement, while in the Rotorua—Bay of Plenty districts the area under development exceeds 30,000 acres. Work is also being carried out in the East Coast, Poverty Bay, and Wairoa districts, and at Wairau (Marlborough) and Southland in the South Island.

A feature of the Native-land development is that all labour, both skilled and unskilled, is recruited from the Maoris, who, I am pleased to state, have so far fulfilled every requirement, which augurs well for their adaptability to farm-management when the lands are eventually settled by them.

The full advantage of these schemes will, of course, accrue in the future, but from the brief outline which I have supplied it will be agreed, I feel sure, that both the intensive and extensive cultivation of the land is being encouraged by the Government in every possible way.