

Unfortunately the wet season prevented the burning of the bush in time for an autumn sowing, except two small isolated sections. Grass-seed assembled in anticipation of a burn had to be stored until the end of the following spring, when a good burn was secured. The failure to burn the bush introduced an element of uncertainty into the programme for the succeeding year.

Mr. Dudson, who took stock of the progress of these schemes in the last quarter of the 1930-31 financial year, visited Colac Bay for the same purpose in April, 1932. Arrangements were made for the hire of a hall for a store-room and of a room for the Supervisor's use as an office. The dairy cattle were reported as in good condition, but there were losses of sheep difficult to account for. These losses were made good by the Board.

The settlers urged for a definite allocation of sections on the schemes. They professed their willingness to effect improvements without any sustenance allowance if they were assured of the benefits of the same accruing to themselves. There seemed to be more applicants than there were sections. The question of subdivision into suitable holdings was raised by the Registrar of the Maori Land Board, but its consideration was postponed until the Minister could visit the schemes. On the 31st March, 1932, there were fourteen settlers in occupation and in receipt of assistance.

The expenditure to the 31st March, 1932, on these two schemes reached £7,792, reduced by unemployment subsidies and repayments by settlers to £7,093. The heaviest item was £3,033 for bush-felling. Grass-seed and other seeds cost £1,464, fencing and material £574, the purchase of dairy cattle, sheep, and working horses £1,151. The other items are set out in the accompanying schedules.

BULK PURCHASES.

At the end of the schedules to this statement there is an analysis of expenditure under the above item. The Bulk Purchases Accounts are suspense accounts, through which pass purchases of stock, grass-seed, fencing-material, fertilizers, and sundry goods. When the stock or material is allocated to any particular scheme the cost is apportioned. In the case of stock, whether dairy or beef cattle or sheep, no allocation is made where the stock are passed from scheme to scheme, either to consolidate the pasture on light soils, or to crush the fern or other growth, or to control ragwort, or to feed off pastures in preparation for permanent stocking.

The bulk-purchase of seed, fencing-material, and fertilizers has enabled the Department to make good bargains and to give to Maori settlers the full advantage.