

WAIARIKI MAORI LAND DISTRICT.

The early history of development in this district can be obtained from a study of the parliamentary papers G.—10 issued between 1931 and 1935. Steady progress has been maintained on all schemes throughout the year, and the revenue for 1935-36 has increased by over 100 per cent. on the previous year's figures. The progressive increase in revenue since inception can be seen from the table appended.

RECEIPTS FROM INCEPTION TO 31ST MARCH, 1936.

Year.			Number of Schemes.	Cream.	Cattle.	Wool.	Sheep.	Crops.	Sundries.	Total.
				£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1930-31	..	..	4	181	..	..	4	..	222	407
1931-32	..	..	14	2,706	118	99	2,079	..	576	5,578
1932-33	..	..	23	7,714	2,303	506	4,455	..	2,268	17,246
1933-34	..	..	40	12,054	3,889	4,747	13,011	..	2,615	36,316
1934-35	..	..	42	13,234	327	1,839	11,088	247	3,320	30,066
1935-36	..	..	42	24,054	13,007	6,396	15,420	458	5,170	64,505
			..	59,943	19,644	13,587	46,057	705	14,171	154,107

These figures are very satisfactory, especially in view of the fact that the Department obtains only one-third of the total cream cheques in a large number of cases.

In a district such as this, extending from Cape Runaway to Tauranga, and taking in all the intervening country of the Bay of Plenty, Urewera, Rotorua, Taupo, and Tokaanu districts, the weather that has to be contended with varies widely from place to place. Nevertheless, climatic conditions experienced as a whole throughout the district during the past year have been favourable, and development operations have not been retarded. Erection of cow-sheds and cottages, establishment of dairy herds, and general development works were proceeded with during the year.

The number of loan accounts for individual settlers total 429.

Development operations have satisfactorily absorbed the greater proportion of surplus Maori labour available, and at times in the Bay of Plenty area it has been difficult to carry out the normal programmes arranged by the supervisors. The main difficulty experienced during the year was in the supply of fencing-posts for the Bay of Plenty. This is becoming quite a problem, and it will be essential to obtain a source of supply in the Rotorua district.

A committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Mr. A. Jordan, District Valuer, of Te Kuiti, last May to consider further extension of development in the Tokaanu district, and it is hoped that development in earnest will be commenced in this area during the coming season.

The sheep-raising operations of the district have been fairly successful this season, as will be seen from the fact that some £6,396 was received from the sale of wool and £15,420 from the sale of sheep. The sheep in many instances are used for crushing and consolidating pastures, and this is a benefit which cannot be measured in cash. The menace of ragwort cannot be lost sight of, for, although it has been adequately kept in check over the last year or two, it is an ever-present problem in all the areas in the district.

The appointment of a chief supervisor has proved of benefit to the local Maori leaders and the departmental supervisors, and investigation on the spot of many of the matters that have caused concern in the past have been more easily and favourably settled.

Brents Farm.

This property, situated three miles and a half from Rotorua on the Rotorua-Whakatane Road, comprises 335 acres, made up of 294 acres leasehold and 41 acres freehold.

Since inception of development in the Rotorua district, Brents Farm has been used as a central base for all stock movements in the Rotorua Central area. It has been an integral part of the system of utilizing stock for consolidating and improving the pastures of the land under development in the pumice belt. It is an ideal area for this purpose as it is a particularly fertile block of country, due to the fact that it has a liberal covering of "Rotomahana mud"—a volcanic deposit from the Tarawera eruption. The pastures are in first-class order and there is an absence of noxious weeds, due to the healthy land and the heavy grazing that has been carried out in the course of the period under review.

During the year a wool-shed, implement-shed, and shearers' cottage were erected. This has resulted in first-class facilities being made available for the handling of the sheep in the central area. The wool-shed is spacious, and has earned the praise of the many visitors who have inspected it. It has night pens for 1,200 sheep, and for shearing and other seasonal operations there are available a four-stand electric plant and a two-stand portable plant. The portable installation is found to be of great service in handling small flocks of sheep on those schemes which are located at a distance from the wool-shed.