

Tokaanu.

This scheme was taken over by the Department from the Native Trustee in March, 1932, and extends along both banks of the Tongariro River from Tokaanu Village to the bridge at Turangi. The total area gazetted is 3,325 acres, of which 2,683 acres are capable of development.

The land is of good-quality loam with a sprinkling of pumice, all of which is ploughable. Ten sections have been allotted to settlers, but owing to the isolated nature of this district, dairying has not been commenced. This country has proved to be ideally suited for sheep-farming, as is shown by the fact that for the past two seasons the wool-clip has averaged 10 lb. per sheep, and during the past year the ewes lambed 100 per cent.

To date there are 1,080 acres of permanent pasture and 180 acres of rough feed, 67 acres having been sown down this year. To provide winter feed, 80 acres of hay were harvested, and an area of 90 acres of swedes produced an excellent crop.

Live-stock on the scheme as at the 31st March, 1938, comprised 2,181 breeding-ewes, 24 wethers, 1,272 lambs, 69 rams, 267 run cattle, and 16 working-horses.

The programme of development provided work for twenty-eight men who, together with the settlers supported 108 dependants, and the health of these people is excellent. The year's activities also included 276 acres of clearing and stumping, 204 chains of new fencing with 816 chains of repairs, 36 chains of new draining with 347 chains of drain-cleaning, 9 chains of new roading, and the top-dressing of all permanent pastures. Ten houses have been erected since the inception, and it was intended to renovate and add to these present scheme dwellings, but owing to the shortage of skilled labour this was not possible. This difficulty has now been overcome and the work is proceeding. As evinced in the results obtained, the Tokaanu area is well suited for sheep, and the Native owners are appreciative of the benefits of the development policy.

Tokaanu : Ohuanga.

Situated on the southern side of the Tokaanu—National Park Road, one mile from the Tongariro Bridge, this area was gazetted in September, 1937, as part of the Tokaanu scheme, and comprises 1,232 acres of Native land and a block of 987 acres purchased from the Crown, making a total of 2,219 acres, all of which is suitable for development.

The land, which is all ploughable, consists of approximately 1,200 acres of good flat country, the balance being of an easy to undulating contour. The top-soil is of good black loam with a pumice subsoil, and lies well to the sun.

The development work has been carried out by members of the Ngapuhi tribe brought down from North Auckland to relieve unemployment in that district.

Since inception, thirty-seven of these Natives have been employed, and are accommodated in huts, thirty-one of which have been built to provide comfortable housing-quarters for the men and their sixty-four dependants.

The work undertaken during the past year comprised 376 acres of clearing and stumping, of which area 100 acres were sown down in grass ; 50 acres were sown in turnips ; 100 acres were ploughed and prepared ready for sowing ; 125 chains of roading were formed to provide access to the bush from which it is intended to split material for the fencing of the area ; and 230 chains of new fences were erected.

Tauranga : Taupo.

This scheme is located ten miles from Tokaanu, on the shores of Lake Taupo, and comprises 2,913 acres, all of which is suitable for development. The land, which is ploughable, is of varying soil types consisting of swamp, pumice hills, shingle fans, and areas of light sandy soils, probably representing old lake-beds. These light sands and shingle soils dry out in the summer and are more suitable for sheep than dairy farming. It is estimated that when fully developed this country should carry three sheep to the acre.

Work has been provided for forty-one men who support 152 dependants. When development was inaugurated in this area the housing conditions of the Natives were poor, and to relieve this position twenty-seven huts have been erected, and seven houses are in the course of construction. The details of the year's operations are as follows : 1,080 acres of clearing, stumping, and burning ; 480 acres of ploughing, disking, harrowing, and rolling ; 280 acres laid down in grass ; and 243 chains of new fencing, with 101 chains of fencing repairs. Some 400 acres are now in grass and 40 acres in turnips. Off an area of 30 acres, 20 tons of chaff were harvested and cut. Live-stock on the scheme as at the 31st March, 1938, comprised 108 run cattle and a small number of sheep.

One Native who was previously residing on this area has been established as a settler and provided with a new house, and on his section of 270 acres, 230 acres are now in grass, 20 acres are cleared ready for ploughing, and the balance is in gorse. The section is carrying 606 breeding-ewes, and during the year under review eight bales of wool were sold. This settler has had considerable experience in sheep-farming, and the condition of his flock and pastures are a real credit to his energy and perseverance.