

Flooding again caused trouble at Matakara and hindered work to a certain extent, but this danger is being met by the installation of a flood pump. The property is in an exposed position, but a start has been made with the provision of shelter-belts. The live-stock tally for the whole scheme was 256 cows and 229 other dairy stock.

The principal farming operations included the clearing of 513 acres, 618 chains of new fencing, 140 chains of new drains, and the other work detailed in the tables annexed.

Porangahau.

Gazetted in July, 1938, this scheme comprises 1,063 acres of good second-class land located one mile from Porangahau. It is all fairly easy country, and the flats will be suitable for dairying. A settler has been established on 205 acres, and the balance, being the Whawhakanga B Block, is being developed as a general scheme. Fencing has practically been completed (620 chains), but the flats can be improved by ploughing and grassing.

The owners desire this block developed to accumulate funds to finance a scheme of consolidation when a number of leases of Native land in the vicinity expire in the next few years. Such a scheme should enable many of them to occupy and farm economic holdings, whereas to-day their interests are small and scattered.

Rakautatahi.

Situated about four miles from Norsewood, the Rakautatahi scheme contains 1,945 acres of second-class land. The intention is to establish settlers on their respective holdings instead of developing the land as a whole, but development activities have been retarded to a certain extent as the present system of subdivision is unsuitable from a farming point of view. The area is traversed by two steep gorges impassable to stock, and a repartition of the block is an essential preliminary to economic development.

Seven settlers were nominated last December, and two of these have occupied areas which will be allotted after survey. One settler with a herd of twenty-three cows has commenced dairying, and the result, considering the rough state of this holding, was satisfactory. Two additional settlers will be in a position to start milking next season.

Shelter-belts have been provided, and fencing is nearing completion on known boundaries. Approximately 200 acres have been stumped, and a tractor which has been acquired will be utilized in the logging-up operations.

Tahoraiti.

This is a small "one-farm" scheme situated three miles from Dannevirke and containing 144 acres. The survey of the land was not completed until too late to commence dairying last year, but the farm has been stocked with sixty-one heifers from which a milking herd will be selected for next season. A house and cow-shed have been built for the settler, and all necessary fencing is nearing completion, 108 chains having been undertaken.

SOUTH ISLAND MAORI LAND DISTRICT.

Although this district includes the whole of the South Island, the Native population is small and scattered, and occupies comparatively little land suitable for development. The problem of settlement under proper supervision is therefore entirely different from conditions existing in the North Island, but the position has been met to a large extent by delegating powers of control to officers of the Lands Department. A pre-requisite to the development of further areas is consolidation of interests, but owing to the vast amount of work entailed this will have to wait a more opportune time. Assistance to unemployed Natives has been provided mainly on development schemes, although as a means of alleviating acute distress extensive work has been found on D'Urville Island and in neighbouring districts.

Kaiwhare.

Comprising an area of 514 acres, this scheme is situated on the main south road about ten miles north of Kaikoura. Development consisted mainly of the clearing of scrub and second growth, and during the year over 300 acres were cleared and sown down in grass. The block supports twenty-one persons.

This district usually suffers from excessive rainfall, but in the year under review drought conditions were experienced. A timely fall in March, however, has resulted in a good autumn growth. The live-stock at 31st March, 1939, totalled 107 run cattle, 253 breeding-ewes, and 135 dry sheep.