

The principal works undertaken in addition to the normal maintenance of pastures are fully described in the tables annexed and in the descriptive report on each scheme or farming project. In round figures the activities can briefly be summarized as follows: 456,650 acres of land have been proclaimed under the scheme, eight hundred and twenty settlers have been established on 120,000 acres, one thousand male adults have been given some measure of assistance in the working of these lands, one hundred and ten Native workmen have been employed under the supervision of the Public Works Department on Native housing and two hundred and fifty settlers whose lands have not yet been placed under the departmental control received subsidized labour assistance in the improvement of their holdings. Together with the workmen and settlers, there are estimated to be nearly ten thousand men, women, and children dependent on these activities.

Development Housing. One of the principal activities of the Department in North Auckland during this past eighteen months has been that of improving the living-conditions of the settlers. By co-operation with the Public Works Department a large number of houses, which conform in the main to the standard set by the Health Department, have been completed. Subsidies from the Employment Promotion Fund towards the labour costs have greatly assisted in this important work.

Details illustrating the extent of this work to date are as follows: An expenditure of £92,373 has been authorized to cover the erection or repair of houses, and of this programme the actual expenditure to 31st March, 1939, was £46,851. Altogether 235 cottages have been erected, 12 cottages repaired, and 56 others are in the course of erection.

These houses are being erected by the Natives themselves under expert supervision, and it is pleasing to note that the Maori is proving himself to be an apt pupil. His improved workmanship is much in evidence, and generally the scheme is progressing satisfactorily.

Some years ago, when the consolidation of Native land titles, whereby scattered interests of family groups are marshalled into adjoining areas, was commenced to facilitate the establishment of Native settlers on their land, the Tokerau district was subdivided into four areas the boundaries of which coincided with those of the counties from which they took their names—viz., Mangonui, Hokianga, Bay of Islands, and Kaipara.

For convenience of reference, settlers under the developmental policy are grouped under these comprehensive schemes, the details on the country and the localities embraced therein having been presented in previous G.-10 reports. The particulars of these areas for the year under review are given in the annexed statistical tables, but the following points are mentioned hereunder:—

Bay of Islands.—Of the gazetted area of 177,630 acres, there are 27,363 acres under development. The number of established settlers is 240, and they are milking 3,594 cows. Climatic conditions in this district have been particularly severe, a cold, wet winter having affected the condition of the stock, while in the early part of the season production was retarded.

Hokianga. The area gazetted in this scheme is 98,204 acres, of which 20,617 acres have been developed to date, while the established settlers number 269. They are milking 4,112 cows. A plentiful rainfall in all districts ensures good cropping and pasture growth, and larger herds are able to be carried in the flush of the season than in other parts as there are considerable areas of good puriri hill country which provide suitable shelter for the stock in the winter months. The past season has been a favourable one.

Kaipara.—An area of 6,746 acres has been developed out of the total of 26,137 acres. Sixty-eight settlers have been established and are milking 1,055 cows. Climatic conditions varied during the year, and with the advent of an exceptionally dry summer a noticeable decline in production has resulted.

Mangonui. There are 243 settlers within this scheme, which embraces an area of 127,256 acres, of which 46,333 acres have been developed. The tally of cows being milked was 3,156.

Te Kao (Mangonui).

This property of 5,359 acres, situated on the shores of Parengarenga Harbour, about forty-five miles to the north-west of Awanui, was formerly under the control of the Maori Land Board. The area has now been taken under the direct control of the Board of Native Affairs, negotiations for the transfer having been completed earlier in the year. There are fifty-two settlers established.

Progress has been made in the erection of dwellings for the Native occupiers, six houses having now been completed and a further eleven being under construction. Twenty dairy-sheds conforming to the requirements of the Department of Agriculture have been erected. At Tangoake a wharf and shed, to facilitate the handling of manure and other stores, have been erected by the Public Works Department, which Department has also completed eighteen miles of metalled road running nine miles north of Te Kao to nine miles south through the Wairahi deviation to Ngataki.

From the production aspect the season has not been a good one, growth having started late and the dry weather having set in much earlier than usual. Despite this fact it is anticipated that butterfat figures will compare favourably with former seasons. The quality of the cream supplied has been favourably commented on by the dairy company. Herd-testing was continued, and culling will be carried out in a systematic manner.

Application has been made by the settlers to become shareholders of the dairy company in order to obtain a voice in the administration of the company, which they have been supplying for a number of years. Steps are being taken to have bills of sale registered over all the stock and chattels taken over from the Tokerau District Maori Land Board. Figures relative to the work done, the people supported, and the stock carried are included in the Mangonui scheme statistics.