

water reticulation was proceeded with to enable a vigorous prosecution of development immediately this is possible.

During the year a military defaulters' camp was established by the National Service Department on the Strathmore portion of the Mihi Block, and a programme of work embracing clearing, fencing, draining, and roading was prepared for the employment of the men.

SUPERINTENDENT OF LAND DEVELOPMENT, TE KUITI.

The Superintendent, Te Kuiti, controls forty blocks containing a total area of approximately 68,700 acres, and during the year charges were fixed and leases issued to the tenants on Lee's and Metcalfe's Blocks.

Ragwort control, which is an ever-present problem in this district was good, but this has definitely been reflected in the weights of wethers sent to the works, which were much lighter than in the previous year. Cattle, on the other hand, which were placed on good feed following swedes have shown, on being killed, much better weights than previously.

In an endeavour to offset the curtailment of supplies of superphosphate which are so vital to the country being handled, an increased sowing of lime was arranged for early in the season, but the demands on transport, &c., have naturally delayed deliveries and it has not been possible to adhere to the original programme.

It was hoped during the current season to increase breeding-flocks and so further reduce the need to purchase wethers on the open market, but owing to the possible deterioration of the comparatively young pastures through the restricted supply of manure it was deemed advisable not to do so. This means that substantial purchase of wethers must continue if the ragwort and fern which constitute the chief agents of reversion in the district are to be kept under control, and every lamb bred on the blocks has to be retained to do its share in the work of rehabilitation.

The result of this is that no fat lambs are sold, as it would be well-nigh impossible to face the market and expect to replace them along with normal heavy purchases.

COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, NAPIER.

In the Hawke's Bay District the only area under development is the Ahuriri Lagoon, a shallow tidal area formerly known as the Inner Harbour at Napier, which was raised by the earthquake of 1931 from 5 ft. to 7 ft. The area is leased from the Napier Harbour Board, and a very extensive scheme of banking, main-drain construction, roading, and bridging, as well as a large system of lateral drains, was carried out by the Public Works Department.

Of the total area of 7,753 acres, approximately 5,600 acres are under development. The drainage system has proved very effective in desalting, and the spread of natural vegetation is now rapidly increasing, while the results from cropping and grassing are encouraging. A water-supply from artesian wells has been installed and every paddock is supplied.

It is not possible to state the stage of development—this will depend almost entirely on natural conditions, including rainfall and the elimination of salt. In regard to prospects, it can be said that in time a large part of the area will be very productive and should support a considerable farming population.

COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, NELSON.

Two blocks, Pakihi and Organ's, containing approximately 2,300 acres, are controlled by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Nelson. Both blocks are in the Westport district. Organ's Block, of approximately 700 acres of flat bush land, is of good quality. As with other blocks, development has been curtailed, but during the year 150 acres of bush were felled and a good strike of grass obtained.

With regard to development of the Pakihi Block, a close investigation of the results obtained to date was made during the year, as a result of which it was decided to discontinue further development of Pakihi lands. Experience has now shown that these lands will not stand up to stocking, and it is not possible to hold English grasses.

The sandy country along the foreshore of the block will be developed as opportunity occurs.

COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, CHRISTCHURCH.

In the Canterbury District development work is proceeding on four blocks containing approximately 12,500 acres.

Great difficulty was experienced in carrying through the rather extensive programme of cultivation owing to the increasing acute shortage of labour, and cultivation will require to be considerably curtailed during the coming year for this reason.

Some 250 acres are being prepared for autumn sowing of wheat, as against 30 acres grown last year.

COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, DUNEDIN.

The only block in the Otago District is Papanui. This block suffered a severe hailstorm in the middle of January which destroyed the turnip crops and beat down considerable areas of hay. Structural damage was done to houses, and stock were badly battered. The completion of the development of this area is dependent on the availability of labour, but if sufficient was obtainable two years' work would complete development.

COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, INVERCARGILL.

The Spurhead Block of 2,213 acres was purchased from the Public Trustee, and possession taken on the 31st March, 1941. It comprises easy undulating land fronting the Invercargill-Dunedin Main Highway, about twenty miles from Invercargill. All pastures consisted of inferior types of grasses, principally brown-top, sweet vernal, and fog, but it is anticipated that good pastures can be established following extensive drainage, cultivation, and heavy applications of lime. Fifty-two acres of linen flax were grown on this block, and a programme of up to 400 acres is being undertaken for 1942-43 at the express wish of the Department of Agriculture.

Early in the new year possession is being taken of the block at Dipton gifted by Sir Robert Anderson for soldier settlement.