

of the previous year. Most of the properties offered for rehabilitation purposes were found to be unsuitable, and the Committee, on the advice of the Lands Department and Native Department, was reluctantly compelled to decline these offers. It should be pointed out, however, that the Department has been active in the field of land-settlement and that during the year a number of men graded "A" by the Farming Sub-committees were established on properties which had been purchased and partially developed in previous years. Further, the Department, under the provisions of Part I of the Native Land Amendment Act, 1936, has settled 25 Maori ex-servicemen on its development schemes. These men, who, in the main, have taken over family lands, have been advanced a total of £22,000 for the purchase of stock and general development.

The Maori people are showing an increased interest in the housing situation generally and ex-servicemen have availed themselves of the concessions under the rehabilitation housing scheme. Eighty-eight applications for loans to erect new houses were approved during the year, at a total cost of £84,773. Most of these houses will be built by the Department's own building organization, which accords a 50 per cent. preference to ex-servicemen. Already a number of ex-servicemen trained in the carpentry schools under the rehabilitation trade training scheme have accepted employment with the Department and are now engaged on the construction of houses for the Maori people.

Despite the irregularity of supply of building-materials, 35 houses were completed during the year, whilst a further 37 are at present in the course of construction. Supplementary interest-free loans equalling the difference between the actual cost and the estimated 1939 costs have already been granted in 5 cases.

Loans for the purpose of establishing businesses have advanced in numbers during the past year from 1 to 10, whilst the total amount involved has increased from £1,300 to £7,822. Applications of this kind are scrutinized with care so as to avoid placing an applicant in a business which might very well be beyond his capabilities or which might prove to be an uneconomic proposition.

TOKERAU NATIVE LAND COURT DISTRICT

In this district returned servicemen are showing a keen appreciation of the various avenues of assistance offered under rehabilitation, and so far the Native Department has received over 200 applications for assistance of varying kinds which have been referred for attention by the Rehabilitation Department. An analysis of approved cases is :—

Farming (on own land, on properties purchased by the Department, or as units on development schemes)	..	..	30
Housing ..	..	..	24
Tools of trade ..	..	..	2
Businesses ..	..	..	6
Furniture ..	..	..	25

Farming.—During the year a further 5 properties have been purchased for settlement, and, in addition, portions of both the Oturu and Oturai Native Land Development Schemes have been made available to ex-servicemen.

Housing.—In spite of material shortages, rehabilitation housing has shown very favourable progress to date. So far, 9 houses have been completed (6 of these in the last twelve months), 11 are in progress, and 4 more will be commenced as soon as material becomes available.

Furniture and Tools of Trade.—There has been a keen demand for furniture loans, and to date 25 have been approved and the furniture has been supplied. The position of repayments of loans is very fair and in only two or three instances are repayments in arrears.