

(c) and (d) Developed Allotments disposed of.

Block.				Number of Allotments disposed of.	Area.	Tenure.	Rental Capital Value.	Annual Rent or Interest receivable.
					Acres.		£	£ s. d.
Wharekohe	..	..	..	17	996	R.L.	9,595	479 15 0
Te Kauwhata	..	..	..	12	1,735	{ R.L. D.P.	8,325	416 5 0
Onepu*	..	..	..	13	1,356		6,165	369 1 6
Koromatua	..	..	..	4	538	R.L.	12,285	614 5 0
Mangatutu	..	..	..	5	771	R.L.	2,900	145 0 0
Ngakuru	..	..	..	13	2,343	R.L.	4,680	234 0 0
Total				64	7,739	..	18,051	902 11 0
							62,001	3,160 17 6

* In addition, eleven sections selected under small-farms scheme.

(e) The Total Amount advanced to Crown Tenants for the Development of their Holdings, the Number of Advances, and the Purpose for which such Advances have been made.

Number of settlers assisted	..	..	..	..	..	..	491
Loans approved—							£
Improvements	..	..	..	..	..	..	209,162
Stock	..	..	..	..	..	..	7,034
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	£216,196
Amounts actually advanced—							£
Improvements	..	..	..	..	..	..	167,213
Stock	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,610
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	£170,823

SMALL-FARMS SCHEME.

Viewed in the light of the number of additional settlers established, and additional development works commenced, during the past year the small-farms scheme has not maintained the progress of the previous period.

The factors contributing to the slowing-up of the rate of new works were—

- (1) Increasing difficulty in obtaining lands suitable for the scheme from private sources :
- (2) Increasing cost of many commodities, particularly building-materials, which rendered it more difficult to establish and equip new holdings at a cost within the limit of £1,200 per man settled.
- (3) Inability, towards the end of the year, to obtain sufficient men to carry out the development-work. Camps were established on certain blocks in the King-country, and, owing to shortage of men, had to be dismantled. Some of the development workers also left their work to obtain other positions carrying higher rates of pay.

The National Works Committee set up by the late Government reviewed the work of the Board in reconditioning abandoned and deteriorated Crown leaseholds and mortgage securities in the King-country, and was of opinion that this work offered great scope for expansion ; and steps were taken to commence work on a large number of new areas. Unfortunately, however, the difficulties described under heading (3) above delayed the actual commencement of development.

As regards works already in hand, the progress made has been most gratifying in all districts. While development is proceeding, the various blocks are farmed on a large scale, and it is pleasing to record that in a good number of cases the farming returns have shown a good profit, after allowing for interest on purchase-price of land and stock, and on capital expenditure on buildings and development-work. Another good feature of the farming policy is the training which the men receive in all branches of the work and in the handling of stock, which should prove of great value to them when they take over the management of individual sections.

The lands being developed are in many cases “ marginal lands ”—i.e., they cannot be developed economically by ordinary modes of settlement—and I wish to stress again that in the deteriorated areas it is not possible to load on to the land any portion of the labour-costs incurred in their restoration to a productive state, particularly in the case of the utilizing of the manual labour of large gangs of unemployed. There are instances of camps accommodating upwards of one hundred men engaged on a large block in roading, clearing, fencing, draining, &c., perhaps on a two- or three-year programme. The wages bill in such a case would be over £100 per week, and it is doubtful if any land in New Zealand could stand up to the loading of even a small part of the wage-cost.

A new departure in land-development schemes has been undertaken in the Westport District in an attempt to bring in Pakihi lands. The Cawthron Institute has been experimenting for many years in this work, and has evolved a treatment which promises well. A block of 200 acres at Sergeants