

RETURN SHOWING CASH RECEIPTS FOR YEAR.

Scheme.	Wool.		Sales of Live-stock.	Department's Proportion of Cream Cheques.	Total Receipts.
	Number of Bales.	Proceeds.			
		£	£	£	£
Takatahu	..	..	31	769	800
Waiapu-Matakaoa	155	1,575	3,790	1,106	6,471
Poroporo	89	927	2,393	215	3,535
Tuparoa	156	1,834	2,617	399	4,850
Mohaka	42	443	726	1,752	2,921
Kahungunu	12	143	160	41	344
Waihua	156	1,900	7,347	..	9,247
	610	6,822	17,064	4,282	28,168

AOTEA MAORI LAND DISTRICT.

Development operations in this district have been confined to the Ranana and Ohinepuhiawe schemes, comprising lands beneficially owned by hapus of the Whanganui tribe. Although the Aotea district extends from the Rangitikei River to south of the Mokau River, there are, with the exception of Ranana area, no large blocks capable of development for dairying, but there are—

- (a) Many small areas scattered throughout the district which, if brought under development, would settle from one to two Natives; and
- (b) Small settled holdings on which financial aid is necessary to assist the Native occupier in becoming a self-supporting economic unit.

A few propositions under heading (a) have been under investigation for some time, and present indications are that formalities will be completed at an early date. The Maoris affected by both (a) and (b) have in the past held aloof from participating in the Department's schemes for developing and settling their lands, but the fact that there are now numerous eager inquiries regarding these schemes is evidence that they appear to be gradually coming to an understanding of the advantages to be gained from their operation. The indications are, also, that they are now beginning to realize that, given the necessary financial assistance, a higher standard of farming can be attained under skilled supervision and closer attention to stock-management and pasture-control.

The only scheme, as yet, in this district where the effects of the Native land development legisla- tion may be studied, is the Ranana scheme. Unquestionably there has been an uplift of the people in this area both as to their health and their outlook on life. Prior to the inception of the scheme the Natives were living in crude and unsanitary dwellings, and were left to their own resources regarding finance, with the result that the lands were deteriorating and the people losing hope.

The following information shows the result of development operations in this district during the year 1935-36 :—

Ranana.

Comprising a total area of 4,516 acres of good quality land, for the most part consisting of easy hills, the Ranana development scheme is located forty-four miles up the Wanganui River, and surrounds the Native villages of Hiruharama (Jerusalem) and Ranana on the eastern bank. The blocks included in the scheme were formerly vested in the Aotea District Maori Land Board, which some years ago had cleared and grassed portions of the allotments and released them to the beneficial owners free of all liabilities. With financial assistance from two dairy companies the Natives commenced dairying opera- tions, but were handicapped at the outset by high costs, insufficient equipment, and lack of experience and proper supervision, and it was not until their lands were brought under the development provisions of the Native Land Act, 1929, that any appreciable progress was made.

When the scheme was commenced in April, 1930, ragwort had become widespread and other noxious weeds, particularly gorse and blackberry, were a serious menace; the poor quality of the milking-herds was reflected in the returns; and the people were living in whares in unhealthy surroundings. Early expenditure, which was necessarily heavy, was principally incurred on such items as buildings and fencing materials, seed, manure, farm implements, and dairy equipment. The milking-herds improved, sheep were purchased to control the spread of ragwort, access roads were formed and metalled, provision was made for a good water-supply, and, with the industry and whole-hearted efforts of the settlers, much has been accomplished during the past six years. The actual area which is being actively developed is 2,670 acres.

A full account of the earlier stages of the development of Ranana is contained in previous G.—10 statements.