

1935-36. All the cow-sheds, with the exception of two erected by the settlers themselves, are of the "walk through" type. The standard size of shed has been a four-bail, but on large sections the settlers have added two extra bails at their own expense.

Ragwort is the only serious noxious weed with which settlers on this scheme have to contend. Its incidence, however, is so widespread that the control and prevention of spreading of the weed from the infested areas is a matter of major importance within the scheme. Approximately £200 has been expended on sodium chlorate and lime for use in ragwort control during this period.

The work carried out on the scheme during the year comprises the following:—

Fencing.—Boundary fences, new and renovation, 869 chains; Subdivision fences, 1,542 chains. A further 350 chains of fences have been battened.

Draining.—Approximately 120 chains of main drains have been opened up and a further 670 chains cleaned and deepened. In addition, 665 chains of feeding drains have been dug and 570 chains cleaned and deepened.

Clearing, Stumping, &c.—Clearing of 290 acres of fern and scrub-covered country for new grass has been carried out, besides approximately 20 acres of river-flat cleared of brier, &c. Stumping was necessary only on 50 acres of the area for new grass, the cover of the major portion of this area being fern and small scrub.

Ploughing, Cultivation, &c.—The ploughing and cultivation work done during the year and covering portions of both autumn grassing seasons amounts to 714 acres. In addition to this area, approximately 200 acres of other crops, chiefly maize and domestic crops of potatoes and kumaras, were also grown. Settlers in some cases require much persuasion to cultivate for regressing their plots of land after use for domestic crops and are inclined to leave these areas to volunteer grasses and weeds.

Roading, &c.—A considerable amount of work has been carried out, chiefly on the roads west of the Whakatane River.

This scheme is still in the process of expansion and should continue to increase its output both in quality and quantity for many years until such time as the whole of the population can be maintained by the return from their lands on the Ruatoki and Waiohau blocks without relief assistance. There is, however, one aspect of the development on this scheme which will require attention. It may be stated that in the case of some few of the small sections it will be uneconomic to provide full improvements, including buildings. On the other hand, for considerations of health improved housing is urgently needed in these cases. There are practical difficulties in the way of amalgamating small sections and in removing a settler from one section to another in which he may hold no interests, in order to allow him increased scope. However, it is felt that reasons of health are so imperative that estimates have been included to provide for housing, even though it may mean that the particular settler will require to be placed on a share-milking basis for several years to enable the section to be worked economically. The small section will not provide the occupier with a reasonable standard of living when development is complete. For this reason it is necessary to decide before buildings are erected on small sections, whether it will be possible to arrange transfers of landed interests to increase the size of the holdings, thereby enabling all sections to be operated on a definitely economic basis.

A marked improvement in the general tidiness of the sections has been observed during the past year, but some settlers still fail to make full use of their subdivisional fencing and are inclined to neglect closing gates, with a consequent wastage of feed. The advent of a water-supply will enable a definite advance to be made in this respect. A fair number of settlers are taking a keen interest in better pasture management, but few have a real understanding of their stock and require a good deal of instruction in order that they may obtain the best results. Insufficient attention to shed-hygiene is a matter calling for careful supervision, but some progress can be claimed, and this will be more marked when each shed is provided with an adequate supply of water.

The scheme foreman continues to give efficient service and is of assistance in creating an understanding between the settlers and the departmental officers. The scheme storeman is carrying out his duties quite satisfactorily.

Torere.

The Torere scheme, covering the lands of the Ngaitai tribe, is located near Opotiki. It comprises a total area of 3,508 acres, of which it is proposed to develop 3,000 acres suitable for dairy farming. There are now thirty-six settlers within the scheme, of whom thirty-one are milking and supplying the dairy factory. The number of persons dependant upon the settlers is 88 adults and 129 minors.

The area in permanent and temporary pastures is 2,012 acres, whilst the area sown down during the year is 132 acres. All permanent pastures on the table lands and most of those on the river-flats show further improvement during the past year.

Ragwort, brought down by floods, is still prevalent on portions of the river-flats, and certain of these areas, although carrying a fair quality permanent pasture, are badly infested. These areas and some additional run-out temporary pastures within the scheme will require reploughing, cropping, and sowing down in permanent pastures.

An excellent growing season resulted in an abundance of feed for stock being available, but, owing to adverse weather experienced at harvesting time, no great quantity of hay was saved.