

ten adults and thirty minors. The whole area has at one time been in grass, but a considerable amount of reploughing and sowing is necessary to regrass cropped areas. A large area has been ploughed and sown this autumn. Only two settlers are carrying stock at present, but the remainder will be milking next season.

With the completion of the approved programme of building, all the settlers will be comfortably housed and have good dairying facilities.

Ngatiawa.

This scheme comprises 5,315 acres and was gazetted in June, 1931, the area suitable for development being 4,300 acres. The proximity of the property to the Borough of Whakatane enables profitable work to be found for the unemployed Maoris in the district.

During the year the teamster was fully employed, and 100 acres were ploughed and cultivated and 40 acres sown. Other activities included the clearing of 319 acres, 605 chains of draining, 362 chains of reconditioning or erecting new fencing, and the splitting of 500 battens: the pastures were top-dressed, and a good crop of hay saved; a number of shelter-trees were planted, and constant attention given to the eradication of ragwort and other noxious weeds; a new cottage was erected for the manager, also a stable on the scheme, and a new cow-shed and yards for one of the dairy settlers on the block; and alterations and additions were made to the wool-shed, and a number of existing buildings and gates were painted.

It is proposed to transfer 143 acres of scenic bush land on this scheme adjoining Ohope Beach to the Lands Department to ensure its preservation. This bush land is on steep faces and has little value for farming purposes.

On 31st March, 1938, the following stock was on the scheme: 38 milking-cows, 6 dairy stock, 830 run cattle, 2,148 ewes, and 1,118 dry sheep, 639 lambs having been sold off the property just prior to that date.

This scheme found employment for sixteen men, and supported a total of forty-six adults and twenty-six minors.

Whakatohea.

Embracing an area of 2,446 acres, of which approximately 2,000 acres are suitable for development, the scheme is situated approximately eight miles from Ōpotiki, on the Ōpotiki - Cape Runaway Road. The country varies from good river-flats to steep hill faces. The river-flats cover an area of 450 acres, while there is a further area of lighter flats of 300 acres. Terraces and undulating country cover an area of 800 acres, and approximately 400 acres comprise ploughable hill country. The soil grades from good silty loam to light sandy loam on the hillsides.

There are forty settlers established, of whom thirty-four are milking and supplying the factory. Their dependants number 54 adults and 153 minors. The general health of the people throughout the year has been good.

There are 1,650 acres in permanent and 100 acres in temporary pasture and rough feed. The balance of the area for development is in manuka and light bush. The remainder of the gazetted area is too steep to be brought in. The pastures threw a great amount of feed during the year, and sufficient hay and ensilage have been saved for winter requirements.

The stock as at the 31st March comprised 46 bulls, 741 cows and heifers, 126 (i/c) heifers, 175 heifer calves, and 47 working-horses. The average number of cows milked during the flush months of the season was 583.

The housing conditions of the settlers in the scheme are improving, and with the completion of the present building programme most of them will have comfortable living-quarters and suitable dairying facilities. The settlers generally are becoming good farmers, and some of them have reached a sound financial position, and, other than maintenance-costs, will require little further assistance from the Department.

Opape Farm.

Situated some eight miles from Ōpotiki, this farm contains 1,072 acres and is held under a lease expiring in June, 1962, the leasehold interest having been acquired by the Department in 1931. It was established as a central base for the Bay of Plenty district for the breeding and supply of dairy stock to Native farmers in that district.

This year a further 110 acres were cleared and grassed, and there is now a total of 539 acres developed. Other work included the erection of 100 chains of new fencing, 90 chains of internal roading, repairs to existing fences, and drain cleaning. A good quantity of hay and ensilage has been harvested, and all the stock carried, particularly the lambs, has done well. The old ewes were sold off after Christmas, and were replaced with a line of hoggets.

The dairy stock was tended to and milked this year by a Maori share-milker, and the returns were reasonably good.

Some five workers were engaged on the farm, and in all ten adults and fourteen children received support. One house and one cow-shed were erected, and this will enable another milker to be established in the near future.

The stock carried on the scheme at 31st March was 103 cows, 91 other dairy stock, and 197 breeding-ewes.