

Makirikiri.

This is another new scheme inaugurated in April, 1937, and comprises 806 acres in the Wairarapa about four miles from Mangamahoe Railway-station and two miles from the settlement of Hastwells. The land varies in quality from good second-class flats and easy hills to rough hilly country of poor quality. The ploughable land consists of approximately 450 acres of flats and easy hills. Six settlers have been settled, but little progress with development has been made, as five of them have only recently taken up residence in new houses which have been provided. The settlers and additional labourers support twenty-three dependants, the health of all of whom is good. The scheme is not yet fully stocked, as fencing is incomplete, and only one settler has commenced milking with eight cows supplied late in August. In addition to the five houses, three cow-sheds and one hutment have been erected.

The live-stock carried at the end of year under review consisted of 8 cows, 46 other dairy stock, 4 horses, and 140 ewes.

Tahoraite.

Gazetted in January, 1938, this is a small one-settler scheme situated on the Weber Road about three miles from Dannevirke, consisting of 144 acres of rolling to hilly country of good quality suitable for sheep with a few cows. A new house is required, but little work has been done up to the close of the year owing to the fact that the block is not yet surveyed.

The total dependants on the area at the close of the year were eleven.

Mangaorapa.

Comprising 877 acres, this new scheme is situated about nine miles from Porangahau. The property has been abandoned for several years, during which time it has been grazed only at odd periods, with consequent deterioration, so that it has now almost reverted to its wild state, being covered with scrub and large patches of gorse. A fairly large expenditure will be required to make this land productive, but when developed it should prove good sheep-country. Arrangements have been made to let scrub-cutting contracts as a preliminary step, but operations had not commenced at the close of the year. The scheme was only gazetted for development in March, 1938.

SOUTH ISLAND MAORI LAND DISTRICT.

The whole of the South Island is included in this Maori Land District, which, although larger in area than the North Island, contains the small Native population of just over 3,000 persons, together with a certain number possessing some degree of Maori blood who are beneficially interested in Native land. These people comprise the remnants of the tribes of Ngai-Tahu, Ngati-Toa, Ngati-Koata, Ngati-Raraua, Ngati-Tawa, and Te Ati-Awa.

Development of Land.—This phase of the work in the South Island is restricted by reason of the fact that what little Native land is capable of development is scattered over a wide area, rendering the economic aspect of supervision difficult. The problem has been overcome in part by utilizing the services of officers of the Lands Department in the cases of the Wairau and Southland schemes, and the good offices of an adjoining settler in respect of Kaiwhare, which are the only schemes operating at present, although the possibilities of developing and settling a large tract of land in Southland are being investigated.

Employment Promotion.—Assistance in this district from the Employment Promotion Fund was extended to 115 men, over an area reaching from D'Urville Island to Invercargill, and the difficulty experienced in providing adequate supervision, already referred to, operated equally in the matter of administering employment-promotion works, which were almost entirely confined to labour on development schemes. The only other works of any importance were extensive operations on D'Urville Island and surrounding districts under the honorary supervision of a local Justice of the Peace, and the forming of a road at Waikawa under the control of the local body.

The total amount of wages paid in the South Island was £6,898, of which £4,781 was expended on development schemes while £2,117 was paid in respect of private contracts on Native lands.

Southland (Oraka and Kawhakaputaputa).

Comprising the Oraka and Kawhakaputaputa Blocks, this scheme is situated at Colac Bay, thirty miles from Invercargill, and contains an area of 2,500 acres, of which 1,900 acres are settled by farmers on holdings ranging from 40 acres to 192 acres in extent. Approximately 280 acres have been developed for dairying, but another rotation of crops will be required before the land will come into full production. The remainder of the settled area is in bush burn, some of which is rapidly reverting to second-growth. There is a total of eighteen settlers with eighty-six dependants, and the health of the people is good. There was a shortage of feed during the year, as bush fires were frequent during the spring months, when fully 500 acres were ravaged by fire, and although this area was resown the grass strike was not good.