

The live-stock at 31st March was as follows: 292 cows, 107 dry stock, 426 sheep, and 15 horses.

One house and two cow-byres were erected, and one house was destroyed by fire. The progress made by the settlers is not up to expectations. A sufficiency of labour for clearing, stumping, and laying down permanent pastures is not available, and many of the settlers lack the necessary tenacity of purpose to make progress under the conditions. Eighteen settlers are established, who, with 18 labourers and 86 dependants, make a total population of 122 persons supported by the scheme.

Wairau.

This scheme comprises an area of 828 acres of low-lying alluvial flats on the banks of the Wairau River about seven miles from Blenheim. During this past year the Department's activities were turned towards grassing down as large an area of the land under development as could be wisely and economically handled in one season, while restricting cropping to a minimum that would allow for a sufficient return to meet current outgoings such as pumping, cartage, interest costs, &c. The result was that only 44 acres were cropped, and this was sown in wheat, while 94 acres were cultivated and sown down in rye-grass and white clover. In addition to this area, approximately 30 acres carrying a volunteer crop of white clover are now being surface sown with rye-grass, while approximately 40 acres of the land which was sown in wheat are now being prepared for autumn sowing of rye-grass and red clover. To bring this grassing under control it has been necessary to erect a considerable amount of new fencing and to renovate old existing fences, and the work entailed is more particularly set out under the appropriate headings in the statistical table at the end of this section.

Approximately five hundred breeding-ewes will be carried through this winter. The ultimate object is to gradually bring the land set aside for occupation under grass and establish a number of settlers on dairy-farms of from 50 acres to 60 acres, which in this highly fertile country should support herds large enough to provide each farmer with a comfortable living. It should be mentioned that, although no settlers are as yet established, this scheme is supporting twenty-five unemployed Natives of Wairau Pa, together with their wives and families, numbering forty-five.

Kaiwhare.

Situated on the main south road about eighty miles from Blenheim and ten miles from Kaikoura, this scheme aims at bringing into production an area of scrub land which has in the past been used only for casual grazing. Of the total area of 514 acres, there are 25 acres of flats, 250 acres of easy hills, and the balance of a steeper character, and after fencing, bushfelling, clearing second-growth and manuka, all except 150 acres of the steeper faces are in a fairly advanced stage of development. The land generally has a good depth of black soil on a clay subsoil and carries a good sward of grass (cocksfoot, rye, and clover), especially on flats, but good grass is also showing growth on the fern country, which is being consolidated by cattle. The land is being top-dressed and is responding satisfactorily. During the year two manuka patches of approximately 55 acres were fired and made a good burn, on which the grass is now showing good growth. Owing to excessive rainfall in this locality, some difficulty is experienced in obtaining really satisfactory burns.

The ewes produced over 100 per cent. of lambs, which realized extremely good prices. Live-stock tallies are as follows: 121 ewes, 69 lambs, and 84 head of cattle. The scheme supported nine workers with ten dependants, and is supervised by a neighbouring farmer in an honorary capacity, to whom credit is due for his altruistic labours on behalf of the State.
