

financial facilities now available become more widely known. Already there are indications of an improved demand for the poorer classes of Crown lands since the inception of the scheme for advances.

The development has been commenced by the Crown of an area of wattle land at Te Kauwhata, in the Waikato, and also of a block of pumice land about fourteen miles from Rotorua. Experiments in the development of pakihi lands are also being undertaken on a block situated near Westport. All work is being carried out under the supervision of expert officers of the Department of Agriculture. Particulars of the work carried out as at the 31st March are given below. Other blocks are being inspected with a view to development work being carried out on areas suitable for the purpose.

With regard generally to undeveloped areas, and particularly those comprising pumice land, it is not proposed that all blocks suitable for settlement shall be either wholly or partially developed by the Crown prior to their being offered for selection. It is intended to throw open a large number of sections to meet the immediate demand, and to give applicants an opportunity of establishing an asset by their own labour.

The following summary of operations under Part I of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1929, is furnished in accordance with the provisions of section 10 of the Act:—

(a) The several areas of unoccupied Crown lands in respect of which development works have been undertaken,—

(1) The Ngakuru Block, of light pumice land, in the Rotorua district: This block, which is generally covered in dense tea-tree 4 ft. to 5 ft. high, has an area of 2,200 acres, and is known as Section 1, Block XV, Horohoro Survey District. It was originally a primary-education endowment, but was declared Crown land by section 6 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1929, in order that it might be developed for settlement. The block has been tentatively subdivided into ten sections, and it is proposed to sow about 100 acres of each section in permanent grass, plant 5 to 6 acres of shelter-trees, arrange water-supplies where necessary, and fence the sown grass and plantations on each section. At the 31st March some 400 acres had been cleared, 50 acres ploughed, a permanent camp erected, and tracks constructed to open up the whole block.

(2) The Te Kauwhata Block, in the Waikato, comprising approximately 1,500 acres, of which the greater portion had been planted in wattle. The wattle is being cleared, after which it is proposed to plough and sow down in grass before opening the land for selection. Up to the end of March a good deal of work had been done in cutting timber and preparing portion of the area for stumping and ploughing, and operations have since been proceeding vigorously.

(3) The Easterfield Block, near Westport: This is a small area of pakihi land, on which experiments in development are being undertaken. Burning-off and a certain amount of cultivation were carried out up to the 31st March, in preparation for sowing down various plots in grass. A great deal of interest is being taken in the work on this area, and settlers have visited the block from various parts of the West Coast.

(b) The total cost of development works carried out to the 31st March, 1930:—

|                               | £      | s. | d. |
|-------------------------------|--------|----|----|
| (1) Ngakuru Block .. .. .     | 1,927  | 8  | 10 |
| (2) Te Kauwhata Block .. .. . | 4,232  | 12 | 1  |
| (3) Easterfield Block .. .. . | 108    | 16 | 8  |
| Total .. .. .                 | £6,268 | 17 | 7  |

(c) and (d) The area or number of developed allotments disposed of, and the prices at which any such lands have been sold, and the rents receivable in respect of lands disposed of by way of lease or license: No developed allotments had been disposed of at the 31st March last.

(e) The total amount advanced to Crown tenants for the development of their sections, the number of advances, and the purposes for which such advances have been made: Some thirty-eight completed applications for assistance, amounting in all to £23,335, had been received by the 31st March; but no loans had actually been made at that date.

#### SPECIAL SETTLEMENT OF INFERIOR LANDS.

The following summary of the lands dealt with during the year is furnished in accordance with the provisions of section 223 (14) of the Land Act, 1924:—

(a) Aggregate area of land set apart: 246 acres.

(b) Number of allotments and aggregate area disposed of: 4 allotments, 1,060 acres.

The total number of allotments taken up and the area held as at the 31st March, 1930, was 22 allotments, 5,738 acres.

The area set apart during the year comprised two additional allotments in the Riverhead Block, near Kaukapakapa.