

Gore.—As in previous years, experimental and investigational work has been conducted on this property during the year. The number of farmers who have visited the area is evidence of the fact that the work conducted thereon is of special interest to them. A separate report on the year's operations at Gore will be submitted later.

SUBSIDIZED FARMS.

The four subsidized farms situated at Stratford, Manaia, Dargaville, and Winton respectively have continued, as in the past, to do much useful demonstration work in the districts in which they are situated. The same may be said of the much smaller demonstration area situated at Katere, near New Plymouth.

RUAKURA FARM OF INSTRUCTION.

Pastures on the Ruakura Farm of Instruction were fairly good in the spring, but consequent on a dry period in early summer they were short in December and January. However, good rains were experienced early in February and these brought about an abnormal autumn growth, and the farm is going into the winter with an abundance of feed. The rainfall for the year was only 38·66 in. against an average annual rainfall of 50·21 in. The farm, like all others, has felt the effect of low prices for produce and stock. This was particularly reflected in the last annual sale, when the bulls sold averaged 14·5 guineas, as against an average of 22 guineas for the previous year. Pigs also were down in price, and those sold averaged 4·32 guineas, against 7·74 guineas at the previous annual sale. The health and condition of the stock has been good, and practically all lambs were fattened on their mothers. The lambs were exported on consignment, and accounts sales for the two main drafts show a net average return of 14s. 6d. per lamb. Approximately 250 tons of hay and 200 tons of ensilage were saved.

Ruakura Farm Training College.—This school continues in popularity, and during the year the available space was fully occupied. The health of the students in residence has been generally excellent, and taking all in all the school continues to fill an important requirement in the teaching of practical agriculture to the youth of the Dominion.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' AGRICULTURAL CLUBS.

Unfortunately, owing to a reduction in the vote from which expenditure for boys' and girls' clubs is met, and the fact that many officers were unable to give much time at important periods of the year to this work owing to their being fully employed on Small Farm Plan operations, club work has not received the support of the Department which is desirable, seeing the effect of the work of the clubs is so far-reaching. During the 1932-33 season, although no moneys were available from the Department as hitherto for the purchase of seeds and manures and the payment of subsidies on moneys collected by the clubs, the work has continued. In most cases the seeds and manures have been donated by seed and produce merchants. It is satisfactory to be able to record such an interest by merchants and others in this club work as allowed of the work to be carried on. There is no doubt that the work performed by the clubs is of very great value from an agricultural instruction viewpoint, and it is suggested that, if at all possible, Government assistance be again rendered so that the work may at least maintain its previous standard. As intimated above, I view the results as very far-reaching in the agriculture of the Dominion and would like very much to see more assistance granted, even if the same amount as was granted prior to the 1932-33 season cannot be given.

LAND-DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.

This Division has continued to be actively interested during the year in several land-development schemes on behalf of the Government. In addition to Ngakuru Blocks 1 and 2, near Rotorua, work has been carried on by way of development on the Galatea Estate, Whangamarino Block, and the Easterfield Block.

Following satisfactory results obtained from the demonstration dairy-farm on Ngakuru in the 1931-32 season, a portion of Ngakuru was subdivided and share-milkers located thereon during 1932-33. The results have been good. On portion of the Ngakuru country further cottages and milking-sheds have been erected, and definite arrangements are being made for the selection of share-milkers to occupy these sections and commence dairying on a share basis for the 1933-34 season.

Development work on the Galatea Estate was commenced in 1932, and by the end of March, 1933, 1,930 acres had been sown in grass and 568 acres in annual crops. Shelter-planting, clearing, and other improvement work was also carried out. At the moment we are working in close touch with the Lands Department on the development of Galatea, and it is anticipated that considerable advancement in the development of this estate will be accomplished during the coming season.

So far as the Whangamarino Block is concerned, the area, with the exception of 40 acres, was sown out to grass during the autumn. The work which has been in hand in connection with a small area of pakihi land near Westport was advanced during the year to the point where a small cottage was erected and a man continually employed. In addition to ordinary work this man milked a few cows on the property, being paid a small wage and getting the proceeds of the cows. Arrangements are now contemplated for milking from twenty to twenty-five cows on the block next year.