

In the early months of 1933 the reorganized scheme was extended to the Thames and Coromandel districts, and the Provinces of Marlborough, Nelson, and Westland, a Mining Executive Committee being formed at the headquarters of each county, except at Thames. In the latter place the Thames School of Mines acts as employing body.

Three mining engineers have been detailed for duties at strategical points—one in the North Island, one in Nelson Province, and one on the west coast of the South Island. These officers assist the executives to select suitable areas on which to place additional men, and generally control the scheme from a technical and administrative aspect. Their services are wholly additional to the valuable help which is still made available by officers of the Mines Department and of the Public Works Department in connection with such matters as the testing of areas, surveying of and reporting on tracks, water-races, &c., and the construction or repair of these necessary adjuncts to the scheme.

Assistance has been rendered to the gold-mining industry by the purchase of alluvial drills complete with engines and other accessories. Pending the selection of likely areas for boring, prior to the placement of numbers of unemployed on more comprehensive mining projects, these drills are, on occasions, hired to private concerns, thus helping the industry and ultimately leading, it is hoped, to the absorption of labour in permanent employment.

At the end of September, 1932, there were some 1,400 men mining and prospecting for gold under the Board's subsidy schemes. The succeeding twelve months have seen this figure increased to 3,900, of which 3,400 are employed through the county-controlled scheme. Included in the latter figure are some seventy supervisors. The distribution of men throughout the various auriferous areas of New Zealand at 30th September, 1933, was approximately as follows:—

North Island (Thames, Coromandel, &c.)	..	..	..	..	480
Marlborough Province	..	..	..	..	160
Nelson Province	..	..	..	..	770
West Coast (including Buller County)	..	..	..	..	960
Central Otago	..	..	..	..	1,350
Rest of Otago	..	..	..	..	140
Southland	..	..	..	..	40
Total	..	..	..	..	3,900

The number of men mining and prospecting under subsidy from the Board in September, 1933, shows an increase of 2,500 over the corresponding figure for 1932, the percentage increase being 178·5. Owing to transfers from gold-prospecting back to other schemes, men absorbed in private work and so on, it is impossible to say how many individuals have taken part in the scheme. It is known, however, that some hundreds have had their names removed from the subsidy lists on account of their success in gold-winning, which, of course, is the ultimate object of the scheme. Most of these continue to prospect or mine without further assistance from the Unemployment Fund, while some have sought independence of varying degrees by selling out their interest to companies or syndicates. In the latter case the Board reserves the right to secure refund of assistance in excess of the usual 10 per cent. of the value of gold won during the subsidy period. Refund may be required up to the total assistance given by the Board, the actual amount being decided entirely on the merits of each case.

One of the best features of the scheme is that nearly a thousand men have been transferred from relief work in the four main centres of population, where relief work, in general, is not of such a nature that the men can take continued interest in it. Gold-production this year shows a substantial increase over last year's figures, while the relative value is much higher. A proportion of this value is continually being returned to the Unemployment Fund, the refunds to date reaching a substantial figure and effecting a corresponding reduction in the net cost of the scheme.

Under a subsidiary gold-mining scheme additional numbers of men have been transferred from relief work to subsidized full-time employment with mining companies and syndicates.

SMALL-FARM PLAN.

The Small-farm Plan represents an endeavour to remove men from a flooded employment market by placing them on small-farm allotments whereon they will eventually be in receipt of sufficient income, possibly supplemented by the receipts from casual work for neighbouring farmers, to enable them to live. The objects thus being effected are more intensive and extensive cultivation of farm lands, the creation of a larger number of small holdings, and the permanent settlement in country districts of a supply of casual labour which will meet the requirements of the larger farmers for seasonal works, without being thrown back on the labour-market during the slack season of farming operations.

Since the passing of the Small Farms (Relief of Unemployment) Act, 1932-33, the plan has been operated under a Small Farms Board. The executive officer of the Board is the Commissioner of Small Farms. Regional committees have been set up to make available local knowledge in the selection of areas and settlers. Sustenance allowances, amounting to not more than £1 per week in any case, are granted by the Unemployment Board upon the recommendation of the Small Farms Board, after due consideration has been given to the occupier's revenue from all sources. The maximum period of sustenance granted at any one time is thirteen weeks, after which the applicant's position is fully reviewed.