

In connection with the Lands Development Board's activities in the matter of granting loans to Crown tenants on undeveloped areas for improvements and live-stock, the number assisted as at the 31st March last was 455, and the loans involved totalled £188,000.

Much interest has been aroused in the Lands Development Board's operations in connection with the preparation of the Galatea Settlement for occupation. It had been intended to offer for selection during this year some twenty sections; but the uncertain situation in regard to the dairying industry has caused the offering of these sections to be postponed. In the meantime, arrangements have been made to utilize ten available sections for dairying on a share-milking basis. This action will defer the permanent settlement of the land pending more stable economic conditions, and enable the Board to exercise control over the management of the new pasture. The remainder of the settlement is being run as a sheep and cattle station. After meeting interest on the total capital invested in the block and in the live-stock thereon, a substantial profit resulted from the working of the station last year.

Native-land  
development.

During the year good progress was also made in the development of Native lands for subdivision and settlement by members of the Native race.

In addition, where Native lands are scattered in small areas, the work of development has been continued successfully under the system of supervision and assistance to units or family groups.

Up to the 31st March last the total amount expended on schemes and unit farms was approximately £715,000, but as receipts amounted to £136,000 and subsidies from the Unemployment Board to £73,000, the net expenditure was £506,000.

The number of adult Maoris living permanently on the lands developed or improved is 3,609, and the children dependent upon them 4,748.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT FUND.

Unemployment.

Despite the very heavy demands that have been made on the Unemployment Fund during the past year, it is gratifying to report that at the end of the year the unemployment finances are in a sound position. During the last year the number assisted from the fund reached the record figure of 75,000 men, and without the introduction of the Building Subsidy Scheme and other measures adopted by the Unemployment Board to stimulate employment in ordinary industry this figure would have been greatly exceeded.

Generally, the unemployment position is considerably better than it was at this time last year. The latest figures of those workers who, in one way or another, are a charge on the Unemployment Fund are 60,000, which represents a decrease of 9,000 over the figures at the corresponding date last year.

In previous years the number of unemployed commenced to rise in March with the cessation of seasonal employment. No such movement has taken place this year, and, as a matter of fact, the total figures are now lower than at any period since the end of March, 1932. This is satisfactory, and indicates a general improvement in industrial and economic conditions. The commencement of seasonal occupations in the summer should reflect a further reduction in the figures.

Reproductive  
works.

A satisfactory feature of the Board's work for the year was the progress made in finding useful and productive full-time employment for those in need of relief. As a result of the introduction of the gold-prospecting and building schemes, the placement of workers in camps with the Public Works and Forestry Departments, and various other measures adopted by the Board, the number employed on part-time work has been considerably reduced. Three years ago over 90 per cent. of the unemployed were in receipt of part-time relief under Scheme 5, whereas to-day under 60 per cent. are so employed, and every effort is being made to reduce the number still further.

Local-body  
schemes.

Numbers of local employing authorities are now making special efforts to put in hand new works, such as street-improvement, drainage, water-supply, &c., under normal working-conditions. Where local bodies are unable to finance the whole of the cost themselves the Unemployment Board, to enable the work to proceed, has come to their assistance by subsidizing the wages of relief workers on the understanding that they are employed for a full week at standard rates of pay.