

continued occupation of their holdings. It is gratifying to learn from my Ministers that the work of developing areas of unimproved Crown land is progressing satisfactorily, and that the subdivisions already selected give promise of successful occupation. It has been found necessary, however, largely to suspend the purchase of estates for the purpose of closer settlement; but every effort is being made to meet the demand for small dairy farms by rendering available for selection suitable areas of Crown land, and by applying the provisions of the legislation of last session under which substantial advances may be made to prospective settlers who are desirous of purchasing sections of freehold property.

The development of native lands is being pursued with energy, and with due regard to the requirements of the various Maori communities concerned. The number of schemes in operation at the end of last year was forty-one. On many of these subdivision has been carried out and farm units established, particular attention being directed to dairying. The provision of work on native lands for unemployed Maoris has been of material assistance in affording them much-needed relief and in reducing the expenditure of unemployment funds.

The assistance rendered under the Hawke's Bay Earthquake Act, 1931, to those who suffered loss as a result of the catastrophe of last year has been of great benefit to this area. The Rehabilitation Committee, which was set up to consider applications for relief, has completed its difficult task, and the progress already made in the restoration of the district affords ample proof that its work has been well done.

A Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to companies will be submitted for your consideration to bring the law of New Zealand into harmony with company law in England, but modified so as to meet local requirements. These amendments are deemed necessary in order to give effect to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee appointed for the purpose in 1930.

Bills will be laid before you relating to the rating of urban farm lands and to safety in building construction; for the amendment of the law concerning customs, banking, superannuation, native lands, hospitals and charitable institutions, remedies for live-stock diseases, the poultry industry, and weights and measures; and for the consolidation of the Municipal Corporations Act and its amendments.

I trust that, with God's blessing, your deliberations may promote the welfare and prosperity of the Dominion and its people.