

is pleasing to record that now the differences have been satisfactorily settled the settlers have shown a greater degree of co-operation and willingness to assist themselves.

The winner of the Ahuwhenua Trophy this year was Mr. J. Wharekura, a farmer at Horohoro, in the Ngati-Kahungunu portion of the settlement. Mr. and Mrs. Wharekura have truly earned this highly merited award, for during the absence of the husband (an ex-soldier of World War I) on home-service duties during the present world conflict Mrs. Wharekura attended to all the farming activities herself with some outside female help.

The Maori war effort liaison work has continued to be fostered in this district with the close co-operation of the Department. Pumpkins, onions, kumaras, and potatoes have been cropped, while every help was extended to the Maori tribal committees of Rotorua in the raising of their patriotic quota for the current year, when the record sum of £3,450 was paid over by the Maori people as their voluntary contribution to this year's patriotic appeal.

It has again been necessary to cull herds owing to the continued low fat production per cow and per acre, but it is anticipated that this course will ensure better results in future. Fifteen years of development have seen great strides made in the large-scale land-development activities, but it is recognized that in this district the personal element on many small unit holdings fails to reach the standard required through the principles of scientific farming not being properly applied or not yet understood. As the principles are mastered the fat production per cow per acre will be increased. One unit at Te Kaha produced 281 lb. fat per cow, and it is considered that this effort can well be expected from many more in future. The satisfaction of housing needs of the people has been retarded, due to shortage of labour and materials, but every effort is being made to push on this very essential part of our departmental operations as labour and materials become available, and there are now a number of carpentering gangs at work throughout the district.

Reinforcements for the Maori Battalion overseas have continued to make a heavy draw on the Maori man-power available, while the needs of essential industry such as the freezing-works have necessitated our scheme lands being short-manned from time to time throughout the year.

All county authorities in the district are satisfied with the annual rate compromises and payments made by Maori lands, although one outstanding problem which remains to be solved is the Matakaoa County claim, which covers rates outstanding over a period of more than eight years. It is regretted that again this year many areas of the district, particularly Cape Runaway, Whakatane, and Ruatahuna, have been seriously handicapped by heavy floods. Damage in the Ngatiawa flood was particularly heavy, while Ruatahuna was isolated for many months. Weather conditions on the average have been fair, though the coastal belt experienced ample rain and sunshine.

Close co-operation exists with the Rehabilitation Department, and men eligible for settlement have been graded, and steps are being taken to ensure their establishment on family or other farming areas acquired for the purpose.

The Maori Training School of Carpentering at Ohinemutu, controlled by the Rehabilitation Department, is demonstrating that the average Maori soldier, by keenness and ability, can rapidly become efficient in the trade. It will be of inestimable value to the Maori race to have this avenue for training its returned soldiers, as many of them do not desire farming for their future livelihood.

The two most serious problems met this year are shortage of sodium supplies and the lack of cobaltized manures. The high cost and shortage of sodium chlorate is making the control of ragwort an expensive proposition, necessitating heavy subsidies in such areas as Ruatoki, Horohoro, and Waiohau. Sheep have been used in an endeavour to control the weed, but the reduction in dairy herds upon the introduction of sheep to a farm gives rise to serious thought. In Rotorua Central area the lack of cobaltized manure is particularly felt, as it has resulted in a definite loss of revenue.

Tairāwhiti Maori Land Board District

Development operations throughout the district continued to show an improvement in spite of the many shortages caused by war conditions. An unusually dry spell which lasted from spring right through to the early autumn was experienced from one end of the district to the other. This had an adverse effect on the fattening of lambs for the freezing-works, with also a resultant shortage of winter feed for cattle. Dairying operations were not affected to the same extent, and an actual increase in the butterfat production was attained. A greater quantity of hay was saved, which should offset the winter shortage of feed.

Speaking generally, it can be said that approximately 60 per cent. of the units have reached the stage where they could be described as successful farmers, whereas a further 20 per cent. show hope of eventually coming up to the required standard. Of the remainder, there are a number who may require to be replaced, and it is hoped that with the return of the overseas Forces some of these farms will provide an avenue for rehabilitation of a number of the Maori soldiers. A greater measure of success has been achieved with the stations. Owing to the continued high prices for wool, meat, and stock, many are in a sound financial position, while the quality of stock carried has been improved considerably.

The farming operations of the Huramua Station, which was purchased for the training of returned Maori servicemen, and eventually for subdivision and settlement, has been carried on with the existing dairy herd, sheep, and cattle. There are at present five Grade B and one Grade C trainees receiving instruction and gaining experience. One additional trainee left of his own accord, and a further two are awaiting grading. All camp buildings have been completed and the provision of electricity for lighting and heating arranged. As it is desired that all branches of farming practice be embraced, the appointment of a further instructor to take over the dairying is being arranged.

Waiorongomai Station, under the control of the Maori Land Board, is now in a sound financial position, and the stock requirements have been built up both in cattle and sheep, and further purchases, with the exception of sires, will not be necessary. Although extensive fencing maintenance is still required, this will be completed as labour becomes available, and should not affect the objective of the payment of a substantial annual dividend to the owners. There is ample fencing timber available on the block,