

being farmed by the Board men are employed on contract work at standard rates of pay which enables the provision of a reasonable standard of living for workers on marginal land, particularly during the winter months.

Horticulture

The process of evolution of the Maori from his simple pre-pakeha days to his position in the complexities of modern conditions has, through its very abruptness, produced a state of confusion and uncertainty in the minds of many, with their inherited ideas conflicting with their immature desires. This hesitancy, due to lack of experience or insufficient knowledge, and often mistaken for lack of ambition or initiative, is not readily comprehended by the pakeha with his generations of steady improvement and progress behind him, but, nevertheless, is an obstacle that must be overcome, and the apparently haphazard and aimless activities that have retarded progress for so long must be supplanted by a more ordered way of life.

Many have overcome all the handicaps and achieved prominence in various professions or activities, but much remains to be done for the less advanced amongst the race.

Recognizing that the foundation of a race is in the home and that pride in home is reflected in the general national welfare, it is logical that emphasis should be placed on home conditions as a basis for moulding or introducing a wider conception of all that participation in modern life entails. The Board seeks to improve the standard of living by promoting a higher appreciation of home values—that is, the difference between a house in a bare paddock and a home in the full meaning of the word. This is particularly appropriate with new houses erected under the housing scheme, where the initial pride in possessing a new home may be extended to the general benefit.

Admittedly, the way will not be easy, but by making fruit-trees more readily available, advising on suitable subjects for garden decoration, assisting in the laying-out of gardens and the like, to stimulate the æsthetic sense which is so pronounced in some members of the race, much can be achieved. Activities in this direction cannot be shown by statistics, but, nevertheless, claim can be made to some progress. Coincident with home beautification, attention is being given to production of vegetables for home consumption and the utilization of small areas in commercial small-fruit culture and flower-growing.

A commencement has been made with planting the Maraenui Experimental Area. Further planting will be done during the coming season in tree tomatoes, passion-fruit, feijoas, Chinese gooseberries, citrus, and avocadas, and any other suitable types that become available.

The demonstration plot at Whirinaki suffered severely from the drought and results were disappointing. In this area fruit and shelter trees are being grown by the Whirinaki Young Farmers' Club for their own use, but have suffered a set-back, the dry season having retarded progress for twelve months. A strain of maize procured from Motiti succeeded well and should be valuable in replacing the poor strains being grown at present. The interest in this club is still at a high level and its educational value cannot be overestimated.

Increased quantities of fruit and shelter trees are being grown this year in the departmental nurseries. Much remains to be done in providing shelter and fencing timber on development schemes and unit properties, and as labour and material become available, efforts are being made to make up the leeway lost during the war years. Last year the demand for trees exceeded the supply, and for the coming planting season up to 2,000,000 hedge and shelter trees will be available for distribution. It is anticipated that they will all be utilized.