

estimated requirements for the purchase of store stock, some of which had not been realized upon when the financial year ended. Thus the expenditure was £1,603 in excess of that of the previous year, while the credits were £109 less. On the other hand, the live-stock on the farm at 31st March was valued at £1,741 more than that in hand on the same date in 1922, the same standards of values being adopted in both years. The Weraroa Farm is eminently adapted for dairying, but its area of 764 acres renders it too unwieldy to be operated as a dairy farm on the best-paying lines, which necessitate more intensive farming than can be carried out on so large an area under one management with hired labour. It is necessary that a new policy be decided upon for this farm.

At Moumahaki a great improvement from a financial standpoint has been brought about, and the place, moreover, has continued to be well farmed. As compared with the previous year the expenditure has been reduced by £1,009, while the credits have increased by £2,176. In addition the value of the live-stock on the farm on 31st March, 1923, was £707 in excess of that at the same date last year, the standards of valuation being the same in both years. This is an excellent showing for the present management. It is desirable that the future of this farm should be settled, and recommendations regarding this have been submitted.

The Te Kauwhata Farm is now much reduced in area, 655 acres having been taken over during the year by the Lands Department for settlement. Apart from the reduction in area and consequent lessened labour required, considerable economies have been effected, and the expenditure has decreased by £1,938, while the revenue has decreased by £338.

At the Waimaunga Farm, in the Grey Valley, further improvement work has been done, but the proposals for the complete establishment have had to be suspended consequent upon the retrenchment policy which has had to be carried out. The expenditure has exceeded the vote by £401, this being the result of the good growth of feed necessitating the purchase of extra stock for grazing purposes. As a result the value of the stock on the farm has increased from £290 at the 31st March, 1922, to £982 10s. at the same date this year; and though the actual credits for the financial year were only £294, these grazing operations are proving payable, quite apart from the fact that the farm is being steadily improved.

#### EXPERIMENTAL AREAS.

The localized experimental work carried out in special areas—on a co-operative basis as regards the smaller ones, and under direct departmental control on the larger—is directly associated with the Agricultural Instruction Service. Much useful information for farmers in the surrounding districts is obtained from the work done on these areas, and in addition valuable data is being accumulated which, when the results secured in different centres are co-ordinated, will be of great assistance in connection with the further development of rural industries throughout the Dominion. As regards the larger areas the following special points may be noted:—

Puwera (near Whangarei): This area is situated on some of the poorest gum land in the North, and the results so far attained must be looked upon as very satisfactory. The work has been based on an endeavour to ascertain the best method for bringing this type of land into payable use and the most suitable permanent pasture for it. During the year about 27 acres have been laid down, bringing the total area in grass up to approximately 60 acres. Taking all the facts into consideration, these pastures are doing well and showing good promise. The information secured from the work carried out indicates that it would cost £6 to £7 per acre to break in this class of land and lay it down in permanent pasture. When it is considered that in the beginning the land was looked upon as being practically worthless for any purpose, this work will be of great value if the promise shown of the pastures holding out is fulfilled. Both cattle and sheep are being grazed. In addition to pasture, the growing of crops suitable for feeding off, or ploughing under in order to increase the organic content of the soil, has been an important feature of the work for the past few years.

Albany (near Auckland): This area is also situated on gum land, though not of so poor a character as at Puwera. The object for which it was started has been largely attained; and, though the best use possible under the circumstances has been made of it, it is a question whether its continuation is warranted.

Marton: Wheat variety trials and feeding-tests with various forages formed the principal work at this area. Various experiments with lucerne were also carried out.

Ashburton: The Experimental Farm at Ashburton has continued to serve a good purpose, the farmers of the surrounding district realizing the fact that the farm is there for their benefit. Field trials of wheat, oats, barley, and rye have been continued, and it is hoped that many of the better varieties will be placed with reliable farmers in the ensuing season. Manurial tests on lucerne, pastures, rape, and turnips have been made, and many interesting and valuable results noted. Extensive grazing trials have been carried out on the lucerne-fields, indicating that the crop is admirably adapted to this purpose, when properly managed.

Galloway: This area, situated in Central Otago, is devoted specially to experimental and demonstration work in the best methods of applying irrigation for general farm purposes, and much has already been done to demonstrate the most efficacious methods of carrying this out, in addition to showing what are suitable and unsuitable crops for growing upon typical Central Otago land under the climatic conditions existing.

Gore: The work undertaken on this area embraces pasture-establishment, top-dressing experiments, ensilage-making, lucerne-culture, investigation of root-diseases, &c.

Winton: The work during the year was mainly a continuation of the experiments initiated during the previous year, and some interesting particulars have been recorded. The main features are pasture-establishment and maintenance, liming, and the raising and feeding of fodder crops.

#### REORGANIZATION.

A new Division of the Department has been authorized, and is now in process of organization. This will comprise the following services: Agricultural instruction, experimental areas, the laying-out of experimental work on State farms, advice regarding crops and pastures, biological work, hemp-