

Korohe.

The Korohe scheme, adjoining the Hautu Prison farm, is situated two miles from the Tongariro Bridge on the eastern side of the Taupo-Tokaanu Road. This block, which was favourably reported on by a Committee of inspection in May, 1935, was gazetted in August, 1937, and comprises 1,657 acres. Of this area, 700 acres consist for the most part of swampy flats varied with some patches of river sand and shingle, while the balance of the area, 900 acres, is undulating hill country covered with manuka and fern. The whole of this block is suitable for development and will ultimately be adaptable to either sheep or dairy farming.

During the year under review 585 acres have been cleared and stumped, and of this portion 504 acres have been grassed and an area of 10 acres sown down in turnips. The balance of the area is being ploughed and will be sown early in April, 1938. Further work undertaken embraced 203 chains of fencing, 34 chains of new draining with 64 chains of cleaning, and 142 acres of ploughing and cultivation. Five double huts and four single huts were erected on the scheme, and repairs to the existing houses are being effected. Useful and productive work was thus provided for twenty-three local Natives and ten Natives of the Ngapuhi tribe from North Auckland, these men supporting 112 dependants.

At the present time no stock is being carried on the main area, but on the sections of the two established settlers 345 ewes are being run. These two settlers are both men with practical experience in sheep-farming, and are making steady progress.

Putaruru.

This property, consisting of 38½ acres, is situated about four miles from Putaruru, and was gazetted in September, 1936. During the past year the settler has been assisted from the Employment Promotion Fund, and has cleared 14 acres, ploughed and grassed 6 acres, and erected 10 chains of fencing; a certain amount of draining was also carried out; and the section has been top-dressed, and some hay saved. The pastures are in good condition. The occupier milked nine cows, and his family consists of two adults and eight children.

Matakana Island.

Situated on Matakana Island, at the entrance of the Tauranga Harbour, this scheme comprises a gross area of 337 acres. The land is flat to rolling and is all ploughable. Ragwort and blackberry are a menace, and every effort is being made to eradicate these pests. Further Native land on the island is available for development, and the Maoris are beginning to realize the benefits accruing to settlers under the development policy. The opening-up of additional areas on the island would also have the effect of checking the drift of the young men to the mainland, by providing work for them on their own lands. Three settlers have been established, and the development of these sections has provided work for eighteen men who support forty-six dependants.

The work carried out during the year included 185 acres of clearing and stumping, this area being ploughed and sown in grass; 160 chains of fencing were erected; 60 chains of new drains were dug; and three new houses and one new cow-shed were erected. To provide a suitable water-supply for the settlers, two bores have been put down, and these are functioning satisfactorily in providing a good and plentiful supply of water for stock and for domestic purposes.

The settlers have been supplying the dairy factory since February, 1938. Maize-production is also being encouraged on the island, and from two settlers' properties 458 bags of maize were sold.

Tauranga.

The total area gazetted under this scheme is 1,711 acres, of which 264 acres are occupied by settlers. The Kaitimako Block, of 595 acres, is run as a station. The country is easy and rolling in contour, and is situated on the southern side of the Tauranga-Te Puke Road some five miles from Tauranga.

Kaitimako Section.—On the Kaitimako Block 540 acres are now in good pasture and 35 acres have been ploughed ready to sow down. With this area sown down the block will be fully developed and no further cultivation will be required. During the year 80 chains of fences have been erected. The lambs off this area were all sold off fat. The Department of Agriculture is at present undertaking an experiment on this block to ascertain the effect of top-dressing with cobaltized super on the general health and weight of stock produced. The result of this experiment, if successful, should be of invaluable assistance to the Department in the breaking-in and development of new "bush-sick" lands. On this area two of the existing houses have been added to, and a new wool-shed is in the course of construction. The stock on the Kaitimako Block as at the 31st March, 1938, comprised 1,626 ewes, 74 rams, 96 run cows, 117 bullocks, and 101 steers.

Settlers' Sections.—One settler who has been established with a dairy herd of twenty-three cows is supporting himself and his family, and his section is fully developed. The sections of the other two settlers are still in the developmental stage and will not be suitable for dairy-farming for some time. On one of these sections 700 wethers and 60 bullocks were wintered, and the wethers were sold off fat and averaged 70 lb. The other section carried 200 ewes, from which 100 per cent. lambs were obtained and sold off as fats. The stock on these sections as at the 31st March comprised 666 breeding-ewes and 103 bullocks. Blackberry and ragwort are at present a menace, and until the sections are cleared and consolidated with heavy stocking, dairying will not be practicable.

Mangatawa Section.—This new area, which was gazetted in June, 1937, as part of the Tauranga scheme, comprises some 623 acres, of which 480 acres are flat, the balance being undulating to hilly. The flats are all ploughable, but are covered in a prolific growth of heavy gorse and blackberry. When fully developed and the noxious weeds eradicated this country will be ideal for dairying.