

in furthering the material well-being of the Maori people in their absorption into the industry of the country. It should also be a connecting link between the Native Department and those voluntary organizations which are concerned with the welfare of the Maori—particularly Churches of all creeds, local bodies, Maori associations, and so on. Welfare Officers will require to investigate cases of distress and to explore avenues for improving the lot of individuals or families; to co-operate with Vocational Guidance Officers in advising Maori parents and assisting boys and girls leaving school in choosing careers; to act as the Department's representative on the District Maori Councils; and, generally, to seek means of improving social conditions and the implementation of the policy of the Government in measures taken for the improvement of the conditions of the Maori people.

Hostels.—The drift into cities is a national problem affecting Maori and pakeha alike. It is primarily an economic one, is more or less world-wide, and requires a more equitable distribution of the avenues of employment as between country and town. From places far removed from the towns many Maoris have come, over the last few years, to the main centres as students or to take part in the nation's wartime industries and attracted by high wages and the bewildering excitement of city life. Some are well steeped in European culture, while others come with their simple Native philosophy. In Auckland in particular examinations disclosed that many girls were in urgent need of accommodation less inimical to their well-being.

The Government and the organizations interested in the welfare of the Maori are fully alive to this very real problem, which has been made the more urgent by the exigencies of war. As a tangible contribution towards its solution, the Native Department is undertaking as an experiment the encouragement of and financial assistance to voluntary organizations for the express purpose of providing better accommodation in the form of hostels under a general supervision. In the management of the hostels, emphasis is laid on the "community element" in the lives of the girls, whose traditional mode of life contains that feature, and they are enabled to find a real home divorced from the impersonal atmosphere of a boardinghouse.

The assisted organizations which are conducting the hostels are the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the United Maori Mission Society (sponsored by a group of Christian businessmen), and the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. Other institutions are interested in the matter.

Proposals are in train for the establishment of a hostel in Wellington for Maori girls.

In addition to these accommodation hostels for Maori girls, there are hostels and rest-rooms provided by or through the Department for visiting Maoris at Auckland, Pukekohe, Tuakau, Tauranga, New Plymouth, Nelson, Bluff, and Hamilton.

Flood Relief.—To provide relief in the form of immediate food or clothing supplies and the temporary housing accommodation for Maoris who suffered loss through the flood at Te Whaiti, in the Rotorua district, a grant was authorized from Civil List, Native Purposes.

Maori Trust Boards.—The Department also supervises in a general way the administration of the three Maori Trust Boards created by statute; these bodies continue to function in disbursing the annual Government grants in the amelioration of the conditions of life and in promoting the general welfare and benefit of the members of the associated tribes or of any section of those tribes, and in particular in encouraging the community spirit.

Voluntary Organizations.—An essential and valuable contribution to the physical, social, industrial, moral, and spiritual welfare work is being undertaken by Maori societies and clubs, also by women's health leagues in various centres. The Government gratefully acknowledges these voluntary efforts, which fill the gaps a larger organization cannot always do, by weaving into the pattern of the national effort for the social and economic well-being of the Maori that necessary creative spirit having as its only moral justification the needs of the people.

Voluntary organizations should prove invaluable if they would adopt as part of their activities the training of their members in many of the crafts of the ancient Maori, such as the weaving of mats (whariki), cloaks (kahu), baskets (kete), the making of flax kilts (piupiu), and carvings (whakairo). This should have the effect of developing what might be termed a home industry which would contribute to the reviving of the ancient arts. Pre-eminent amongst such organizations is the Ngati-Poneke Maori Association, whose activities in and around the City of Wellington embrace five important centres of service of a high order—namely, the Maori Welfare Committee, the Maori Mission, the Patriotic Committee, the Reception Committee for Returned Servicemen, and the Young Maori Club. If any one activity can be singled out for special mention, it is perhaps that undertaken on behalf of all tribes of New Zealand in providing suitable receptions to the Maori servicemen returning from the war zones. Having carried out this function under adverse conditions through lack of a meeting-house in which to provide the true traditional setting to enhance such occasions it is pleasing to record that the Ngati-Poneke Maori Association, through the combined efforts of the Government, the Wellington Builders' Association, and kindred bodies, has been provided with a hall of its own on a central site.

Ceremonial Meetings

On the 6th October, 1943, a huge investiture ceremony was held at the Whakarua Park, Ruatoria, the attendance numbering many thousands. His Excellency the Governor-General, Sir Cyril Newall, accompanied by the Prime Minister and members