

Section 48B comprises easy clay hills of fair quality mostly in scrub and fern with some small grassed areas. The other sections consist of good-quality limestone hills carrying pasture which, with stocking and manuring, can be greatly improved. There is a considerable area of low-lying country on these sections which, although wet in winter, affords good summer grazing.

The limestone section of the farm is at present in two paddocks, and its subdivision is to be immediately undertaken in order to facilitate the control of ragwort and fern. It is proposed that an area of 80 acres on this part of the property will be logged-up and an area of 200 acres cleared and cultivated this season. There is ample work here for the local unemployed, and the extent of the programme will depend on the number of men available. There is, unfortunately, little good fencing left on the block.

Negotiations are at present under way with the Railways Department for the erection of a goods-shed on the station-yard at Motatau to serve this and the neighbouring properties.

The stock on hand at the 31st March, 1938, comprised 135 run cattle and 309 sheep.

Ounuwahao.

After extensive negotiations extending over a period of years this scheme was inaugurated in the winter of 1937. Comprising an area of 2,371 acres, the scheme is situated approximately three miles from Dargaville saleyards and dairy factory. Of the area, 1,561 acres consist of undulating to hilly country comprising approximately 100 acres of alluvial flats, the balance being second-class land in tea-tree and fern with small patches of bush. The remaining 810 acres is poor gum country. Water is somewhat deficient, and it is difficult, owing to the wet seasons experienced, to determine whether sufficient water will be assured to enable the area to be subdivided for dairying. A good supply of fallen timber has proved useful for the construction of cottages and workers' hutments. Approximately 50,000 ft. of kauri has been salvaged from the property to date, and it is considered that sufficient timber is available for fencing purposes.

The ultimate object is to subdivide the block into sheep-farms, with a limited number of dairy farms. At the 31st March, 1938, the stock on the block comprised 223 run cattle and 26 working-bullocks. The main purpose in undertaking the project was to provide reproductive employment for the unemployed Natives of the locality. Active work was commenced during August, 1937, and since that date up to the 31st March, 1938, the following work has been carried out: Clearing 300 acres of tea-tree, bush, and fern; two and a half miles of fencing were re-erected, with half a mile of new fencing; 30 chains of new drains were dug; the erection of an implement-shed and the construction of a house; while, in addition to sundry farming-work, 50,000 ft. of kauri timber were salvaged and sawn at a nearby mill.

There has been a gradual absorption of Native labour, and at the end of the year fifty men, upon whom were dependent approximately two hundred women and children, were engaged on active development work at standard rates of pay. There is an ample field here for Native labour, and work will proceed to the limit of the man-power available.

Panguru Farm.

This farm contains an area of 302 acres, part freehold and part leasehold. It was originally in thick bush, and was acquired for the purpose of a base for the grazing and distribution of live-stock for settlers on the northern shore of the Hokianga Harbour. It is still partly used for this purpose. During the year a part was added to one of the adjacent settler's holdings. It is intended to establish two farms on the balance of the area and to leave a portion for the purpose of a distributing and collecting centre for stock coming in and going out of the district. An overseer has been appointed to assist in the supervision of the area, and he is resident on the farm, a dwelling having been erected for him this season by the Public Works Department. The two settlers cannot be established until a satisfactory road access is provided, and this matter is now in hand. There is an abundance of feed on the property. Extensive damage to fences still persists owing to the creeping slips, so prevalent over large areas of this and similar country in the Hokianga district.

The stock on hand at 31st March, 1938, comprised 263 sheep and a few dairy cows.

Work for the ensuing year will include the forming of a road to give access to the subdivisions and the usual farm-maintenance works.

Pouto.

This property, which is gazetted as being under the Kaipara scheme, covers an extensive area in an isolated locality at the entrance to the Kaipara Harbour. It was undertaken as an unemployed-relief job for the local Natives. Access is provided by the steamer running between Helensville and Dargaville, but ultimately there will be a road connection with Dargaville. The total area under development is 9,000 acres, but work meantime is confined to an area of 2,300 acres which has been ring-fenced. Approximately 500 acres are now in good grass, and, in addition, there are some 500 acres to 1,000 acres in rough feed. There is also an area of first-class swamp of approximately 350 acres which has been drained and is now in the process of consolidation. A team of bullocks provides the main power, and this has proved invaluable on this isolated area. There were six houses, each containing three bedrooms, a bathroom, and a living-room, erected to replace sack and iron whares. A manure-shed has also been erected. In the ensuing year twelve hutments are to be built for workmen coming from other districts. General work included the cultivation and laying down of 60 acres in new grass; the clearing of 175 acres of scrub; the erection of 155 chains of new fences; the splitting of 400 posts, 3,200 battens, and 300 house blocks; forming 4 chains of new roads, and the maintenance of existing roads. In addition to the normal stock-work, the drains and pastures were efficiently maintained. Regular work has been found for fifteen men at standard rates of pay, and this provides for approximately sixty women and children. Existing