

The work during the year was confined to fence repairs, scrub-clearing, ragwort-eradication, and the usual top-dressing.

Stock at the 31st March comprised 1,215 wethers, 347 dairy stock, and 503 run cattle.

One shepherd is engaged on the property, and casual work was available for six others whose dependants numbered four adults and fourteen children. There are three sections in this district established as dairy-farms on a total area of 329 acres, and these farms support in all sixteen adults and children, all of whom are comfortably housed and enjoy good health. On two of these sections the contour of the country is undulating to fairly steep, and, having regard to this fact, the butterfat production can be classed as quite satisfactory. Approximately 120 acres of hay and ensilage were harvested, and roots grown included swedes, mangels, and carrots. The housing accommodation is quite satisfactory and no further buildings were erected during the year. Two milking-machines were installed, all three farms now being fully equipped with milking plants.

The live-stock on these farms totalled 93 milking-cows, 53 run cattle, and 7 working-horses.

Parekarangi Extension.

This property adjoins the Ngati-Tuara and Parekarangi schemes, and comprises some 700 acres of easy rolling country, all of which is ploughable and suitable for development.

An extensive programme of development was undertaken this year, and 250 acres were cleared, ploughed, and sown down in grass; 50 acres cleared and ploughed ready to sow down; and 90 chains of drains dug. A new store-shed was erected, and a new house built for the teamster. The pastures are all in good heart, and have been top-dressed, and at the 31st March, 1,040 wethers and 7 horses were on the scheme. Employment was given to seven men, and their total dependants are fourteen adults and eighteen children.

Peka.

This block, gazetted in 1931, has a total area of 1,364 acres, of which 1,200 acres are capable of development. It is situated just south of the Hemo Gorge, some four miles from Rotorua, at the junction of the Rotorua-Atiamuri and Rotorua-Taupo roads. The area in grass is 390 acres, and during the year no further development work was carried out. In the course of the coming winter a comprehensive programme will be undertaken on this area, and its proximity to Rotorua should enable it to absorb the majority of the available unemployed labour.

Owing to its convenient and central location, this block has proved invaluable for the receiving, assembling, and distributing of stock from the Horohoro schemes. A permanent stockman is living on the property.

Two settlers milking thirty-seven cows have been established on a share-milking basis, and one of them was supplied with a milking plant during the year. The stock as at the 31st March included 38 dairy cows, 33 other dairy stock, 36 run cattle, and 539 breeding-ewes. The area not occupied by settlers has been grazed with dry stock, and the pastures are all in good order.

Tihiotonga.

The Tihiotonga station was purchased in July, 1928, by the Waiariki District Maori Land Board on behalf of the Ngati-Whakaue sub-tribe of the Arawas. In 1934 the Department took control, and good progress on development has been maintained. It contains in all 5,212 acres and is in two portions—Tihiotonga proper, containing 2,462 acres, situated to the south-west and adjacent to Rotorua Town, while Wharenui (2,235 acres) and Puketawhero (515 acres) are some three miles to the east of Rotorua.

Tihiotonga proper is subject to cattle sickness, but the other two properties, which have a soil formation of healthy Rotomahana mud, are used as "change" areas for the stock, and no trouble has been experienced.

No new work has been done on Tihiotonga proper, but on Wharenui 604 acres have been cleared, burnt, and grassed, four miles and a half of new fencing erected and 42 chains of fencing repaired, while the five miles of internal roads have been maintained and in places culverted. The whole of the 3,600 acres of the grassed area was top-dressed and the store-shed on Tihiotonga was rebuilt and renovated. At the 31st March the stock comprised 2,282 breeding-ewes, 5,072 dry sheep, 68 cows, and 587 run cattle.

Two settlers are being established on Tihiotonga proper, and between them milked sixty-eight cows. Some twenty men have been employed on this station, and in all thirty-four adults and thirty-one children have been dependent on the work.

Rotorua Nursery.

The transfer of the tree nursery from Wharenui to the new location in the Peka scheme, as intimated in last year's report, has been well justified. The site is situated on the Taupo Road about three miles and a half from Rotorua, and consists of 30 acres, of which 11 acres are under cultivation for the raising of seedlings. One hundred and ninety-two pounds of seed were collected in and around Rotorua and sown in the nursery, and in addition 44 lb. were harvested and sent to Te Piki, Cape Runaway, for sowing in the nursery established there. Forty-one chains of fencing were erected during the year.