

so much depends upon individual inclination or effort, and the effort is regulated by financial return added income from successful cropping can supply the stimulus to home improvement and a higher standard of living. Greater efforts are being made to foster the "pride in home" spirit by encouraging the planting of shelter, fruit trees, and home gardens and providing the necessary advice and instruction. The background of inadequate returns from previous unregulated efforts is difficult to overcome, but the prospect is distinctly promising.

The steady depletion of natural timber supplies demands planned planting, more especially on land not suitable for grassing, of trees that will counteract erosion and be of economic value either as shelter material or for fencing and allied purposes. In view of this, a comprehensive plan of reforestation is envisaged. Much has been done in planting shelter on development schemes, and the constant requirements in this respect necessitate the maintenance of nurseries to produce the trees. The nurseries are staffed by Maoris and play no small part in furthering tree-mindedness among those whom it is desired to benefit; and the eventual propagation of fruit trees will assist in reducing the deficiency of fruit in the average Maori diet.

In addition to the personal instruction and assistance in cropping and marketing that is available, areas where up-to-date horticultural practice can be demonstrated are being established. The Whirinaki Maori Young Farmers' Club, under the guidance of a departmental officer, exemplifies the spirit and the thirst for knowledge among the young Maori people, and the expansion of this movement is anticipated.

Production of vegetables on a large scale for processing is envisaged in the near future, and arrangements that will benefit a large body of Maoris on small holdings are in hand.

Instruction in schools, home gardens, and settlements will be continued with the object of improving home conditions and dietetic standards by the industry and application of the people themselves.

Attention is being devoted to producing marketable crops and to marketing, and the Department's liaison between the growers and the marketing authorities or markets is proving of very great value and convenience to both parties.

Operations will be continued along these lines with the object of fitting people into fuller and more useful lives and developing the qualities necessary to good citizenship.

Rehabilitation

The Department continues to act as agent for the Rehabilitation Board in the rehabilitation of Maori ex-servicemen. The Under-Secretary of the Department is a statutory member of the Rehabilitation Board and Council and is Chairman of the Maori Rehabilitation Finance Committee, which is a sub-committee of both the Rehabilitation Board and the Board of Native Affairs.

During the year the Crown acquired, for the settlement of Maori ex-servicemen, a portion of Mr. A. T. Carroll's property at Wairoa known as Huramua Station. The area acquired, comprising 1,778 acres, while being further developed preparatory to subdivision, is being utilized as a training centre where Maori returned soldiers are receiving practical instruction in modern farming methods. Accommodation is available for up to ten trainees at one time. Negotiations to acquire other properties were begun during the year, and since its close two blocks were purchased for rehabilitation purposes.

Some progress has been made with rehabilitation, both in the way of providing houses and furniture and settlement on lands generally, during the past year, but it is hoped, and, indeed, it is already evident, that progress will be much accelerated during the forthcoming year.

Maoris applying for rehabilitation assistance are not entirely confined to the agency of the Native Department, and may, and do, in appropriate circumstances, obtain rehabilitation benefits through the State Advances Corporation and other agency Departments associated with the Rehabilitation Department.

Housing

The progress of housing and other constructional activities of the Department, as in the building industry generally has again been seriously handicapped by the shortage of materials and skilled labour. Operations are dependent on the availability of experienced and suitable Maori or European tradesmen to take charge of the various building teams as leading hands and job foremen, who, in addition to trade knowledge, must have the ability to understand and train the Maori workman. This dearth of skilled men not only keeps labour costs at a high rate, but also makes the task of supervising semi-skilled and unskilled workers a particularly heavy one, resulting in the need for limiting field operations within the capacity of the present supervisory staff to give adequate attention to works in progress. Maori trainees from the rehabilitation trade training centres are now being absorbed into employment on Maori housing operations as they become available. The products of these training schools should form a valuable contribution to man-power requirements as the trainees gain experience in the application of the knowledge they have gained under the rehabilitation training scheme. Taking a long-range view, Maori housing will considerably benefit in the future by the recruitment of trained labour from this source.

Early in the year considerable progress was made in completing arrangements for the appointment of supervisory staff in convenient localities throughout the North Island. While further appointments of overseers may be necessary to provide adequate coverage and control of future widespread activities, the staff now appointed will permit more concentrated attention being given to the improvement of Maori housing conditions in the coming financial year. There is, however, a growing need for further administrative staff to cope with the increased volume of work incurred by investigation of housing applications and other administrative duties necessary as a preliminary to field activities.

The co-operation received from the various supply authorities in arranging for material requirements when difficulties were experienced in this regard are appreciated. The problem of supply as related to the scattered nature of activity is a matter of concern, and as the pressure of housing