

Within two miles of Te Araroa and extending back to the Awatere River is the 3,796-acre station, Pohutu, which enjoys an easy contour and good fertile soil unusual in stations of this size in the district. Taken over in 1942 in derelict condition, it has been refenced, 2 houses and a wool-shed have been erected, and several hundred acres of new pasture have replaced scrub and rubbish. It is now fully stocked with good-quality sheep and cattle and the debt to the Native Trustee has been reduced by some £3,000.

Marangairoa, Opapa, Hurakia, and Mokonui are four small stations totalling a further 3,500 acres lying on or near the main road south of the Awatere River. The first two are producing well and the cash returns reflect in reduced mortgages. The latter two are small stations not in a good financial position, and since they were taken over the Department has required to exercise the greatest prevision so as to reinstate financial stability.

Two miles south of Ruatoria is the Kahuitara Station, of 792 acres, which was taken over in 1942. The 168 acres of flats are fairly well developed, but additional sub-divisional fencing on the hill is needed before reasonable farming practice is possible and before the farm can be put on a good financial basis.

Overlooking Waipiro Bay and extending back to the Main Road is Hakurenga Station, of 2,786 acres. This property reflects good management, and the 250 acres of English pastures, top-dressed to the limit available, contributed to the fattening of some 500 sheep. Dams made during the drought of the previous year enabled distribution of cattle to much better advantage when streams dried up during the rainless period of June, 1946, to January, 1947. This station shares with Waiorongomai the honour of receiving the highest price for wool in the district, this being for hogget fleece.

Tawhiti Station embraces 4,021 acres of mainly poor scrub hills of rugged and broken contour at the northern end of Tokomaru Bay. The good average season has permitted increased receipts, but even under good management it is doubtful if a financial success can be achieved with such a poor property.

Hereheretau Station, farmed on behalf of the East Coast Maori Soldiers' Fund, some twelve miles on the Gisborne side of Wairoa and six miles inland from the Main Road, embraces 3,873 acres of fairly easy hills interspersed by small flats. Steady returns from first-class stock have enabled the debt to the Native Trustee to be reduced further to approximately the present-day value of the stock. The old dwelling used as shepherds' quarters was destroyed by fire and is being replaced by a suitable new building. Further development on the flats and easy hills will be possible when essential road-formation is completed.

Tawanui Scheme.—This property, comprising 916 acres of Crown leasehold-in-perpetuity, was acquired by the Native Trustee in 1931. It is situated near Ngapaenga, approximately thirty miles from the Township of Te Kuiti. Fences are in good order and the position generally is very satisfactory, but it is found necessary to supply the stock with cobalt and salt, as this country is minerally deficient. Prior to the restrictions on manure, about 100 tons of cobaltized super. were used on this block, but now that the allocation is down to 20 tons the system has been to shift the stock through paddocks in rotation so that they obtain the benefit of the cobalt through the pasture in these paddocks.

PART IV.—MAORI HOUSING OPERATIONS

The erection and improvement of houses for Maoris has been maintained on a progressive basis over the past year, in spite of supply and labour difficulties. The year's operations showed a steady increase in completed works, while the works in progress at the 31st March, 1947, are a substantial increase over the number for the same period in 1946.