

the northern part of Manawatu County on the southern fringe of the Rangitikei region. Kairanga County, surrounding Palmerston North, is a strong dairying area which provides the city milk-supply. The southern end of Horowhenua, about Otaki, is also largely engaged in dairying, mainly for the Wellington City milk-supply. There is an area of fertile ploughable land stretching from the southern end of the Horowhenua County and including the bulk of that county together with the fertile river soils of the Kairanga, Oroua, and the bulk of the Manawatu County.

This block of country is bordered by a belt of sand country along the coast which extends from Otaki to the Rangitikei River, and varies from two up to ten miles in depth, penetrating deepest into the more fertile country between Foxton and Rangiotu and also north of Rongotea. While the coastal strip is loose, unconsolidated sand and as yet of little farming use, the older inland consolidated sands have in places been developed to high producing dairy and fat-lamb farms. An extensive intermediate belt is at present in course of development and can be expected to show more improvement in stock-carrying capacity than any other country in the area. On the inland side the western counties as well as the eastern counties run on to the main dividing range, where the outer fringe of steep greywacke country has generally been fairly well maintained by the use of cattle from the lowlands. The border land between State forest and other Crown reserves, however, has shown marked deterioration particularly in the southern part of both the Pahiatua and Horowhenua Counties. In the east, Woodville County is partly broken in terrain and partly good flat ploughable land. Pahiatua, on the south-east, again varies from good to first-class land. This region, therefore, is an "in between" region showing over-all increases, which should be remembered as—

- (1) Outstanding increases on the portion of first-class land.
- (2) Small increases on the second-class portions.
- (3) Reversion and regression in the poorer belts.

These belts are too intermingled to be identified as separate regions. Total sheep numbers have increased by 708,000 and breeding-ewes by 508,000. Cows in milk have increased from 107,000 to 128,000.

(l) *Castlepoint*

These are the "pastoral hills" of the south-east coast—the Counties of Castlepoint, Weber, and Akitio—although a belt of similar hill country extends down the coast as part of the Wairarapa region. The area is nearly all in surface-sown pastures, the steeper parts showing some signs of erosion. The sheep population has decreased by 55,000 and breeding-ewes have increased by 3,000, the latter being on the less steep hills and the ploughable flats. Carrying-capacity has therefore increased slightly. The area is almost completely one of Romney store sheep-production with extensive farming. Top-dressing has been out of the question on much of the area owing to the prohibitive cost of freight from the railway—up to £3 per ton. There is a belt of hard scrub through the region which is now just as it was in 1925, but the remainder of the region has been improved and well grassed.

(m) *Wairarapa*

This region, the Counties of Eketahuna, Mauriceville, Masterton, and Wairarapa South, divides into three belts. One is the line of coastal hills similar to the Castlepoint region. Another and almost insignificant belt is