

Now for the other end of Hawke's Bay. As you go north from Waipukurau the conditions change again. You approach the belt of low rainfall which runs across the North Island opposite Napier, and the area of porous pumice soils. Towards the northern end of the Ruahines all leatherwood scrub stops and the beech forest becomes patchy with stretches of tussock between. In the days of fern crushing this tussock was grazed by merinos, and Te Koau, the Blowhard and the Kawekas as they stand at the present day are the result of burning and grazing. The pumice topsoil has largely sloughed off and the tussock either been destroyed or replaced by manuka. On the Kawekas the effect has been devastating. Whole mountain sides have become bare faces of rock and shingle, feeding into the Ngaruroro, Tutaekuri and Mohaka Rivers, as we know, and shall have further reason to know. Manuka is the main safeguard here, and a blight that would really exterminate manuka is a grim thought.

As you come out from the ranges there was a discontinuous belt of rimu, matai and maire forest. The Puketitiri Bush once covered 10,000 acres, and those who were fortunate enough to have seen Ball's Clearing before civilization struck it will have an unforgettable picture of what this bush must have been like. It was hard to realize the scale, for the clearing dwarfed the trees and the trees dwarfed the clearing. The tall trunks standing close together formed a wall round it, supporting a close roof of foliage, perhaps 120 feet above the ground, with the pointed tops of kahikatea rising even higher.

Near Te Pohue there were other patches of heavy bush, and north of this you came to forests of the Urewera with their higher rainfall.

As you went down towards the Heretaunga Plain you came to fern country which stretched north as far as Tutira (where it had not long replaced forest). North of the Mohaka tawa forest came in to close the gap between the ranges and the coast.

The coastal forest, too, changed with the addition of nikau and kohekohe, with their tropical foliage.

I confess I do not know much about what may be called the "Panhandle" of Hawke's Bay—the narrow strip of coast from Wairoa to the Mahia, but along this northern boundary new trees begin to come in. Inland towards Maungataniwha, there is tanekaha and ixerba with its showy flowers, and puriri is reported at its southern limit, on the Mahia

THANKS TO PREVIOUS EDITOR

The Council of the Society wishes to express its sincere thanks to Miss L. B. Moore who has edited the Bulletin since its inception in 1941; also to Dr. G. B. Cone who has assisted, especially with the cover designs.