

As my time was limited, I obtained from Mr. Kavanagh the following particulars respecting certain settlements I was unable to inspect:—

*Herekino Settlement.*—Number of original selectors, 125; of this number only 94 were in actual occupation, and the position of this settlement is as follows: Number of original settlers, 94; now remaining, 25; taken up land on other conditions, 7; abandoned their holdings, 62. The reasons assigned why so large a number left this settlement are as follows: The locality for a special settlement was badly chosen, the district being quite isolated, and offering no employment to outside labour. A large proportion of the people who applied for land in this settlement were quite unsuitable for settlers, and thirty-one never occupied the land at all. From inquiries made, however, I gather that very few of the sixty-two settlers who abandoned their holdings returned to Auckland, a large number of them finding employment on the gumfields, which are about forty miles distant from the settlement. Of the twenty-five settlers now remaining, nearly the whole are likely to become permanent settlers; they have made substantial improvements to their holdings, and have formed a good opinion of the future prospects of the district, which will be realised as soon as the good land adjoining the settlement is opened up by roads.

*Takahue Settlement.*—Number of original selectors (who applied in Auckland for sections), 47; but of this number only twenty-one came to the district, and of these, twelve only are in occupation. The remaining nine are accounted for as under: One settler, a single man, went to England; one to an engagement near Wellington; one to employment at Auckland; three obtained work in the district; one resides with her father in the settlement, and relinquished her section; two went to Sydney. Ten out of the twelve settlers now in occupation are doing well, and are perfectly satisfied with their future prospects.

*Fern Flat Settlement.*—Number of original selectors, 15; number who actually went on the land, 11; now remaining, 9. Of the eleven settlers originally in occupation, one relinquished his section through ill-health; the other settler was accidentally drowned. The nine now remaining are likely to become permanent settlers, although the land is very broken, and not of first-class quality.

*Akatea and Firewood Creek Settlements.*—Number of original selectors, 27; number who actually went on the land, 18; now in occupation, 13. Of the eighteen settlers who took up sections, three did so in order that they might participate in the roadwork; they made very little improvements to their holdings, and no advance was made. Two others did certain improvements, for which advances were made to the amount of £17 10s.; but both these sections have been since taken up under the Act of 1887, and the money advanced more than recovered.

*Komakorau Settlement.*—Number of original selectors, 5; number who went on the land, 5; now in occupation, 4. Of the five who took up land in this settlement, four are in occupation, and the other has been called on to occupy his section or the land may be forfeited. I should add that this settler lost his wife; he was left with two children, and was obliged to seek employment elsewhere to pay for their maintenance. Under these circumstances, every facility will be granted to allow the settler to comply.

*Drury Settlement.*—Number of original selectors, 7; number who actually went on the land, 5; now in occupation, 4. Of the five who went on the land, four remain in actual occupation; the other section is improved; the selector lives in a Government cottage on the railway-line. The two unoccupied sections have been taken up by the present settlers, who are likely to remain there. The land is poor open fern, but the settlers find occasional employment in the district.

*Hukerenui Settlement.*—Number of original selectors who applied at the Land Office, Auckland, 82; but of this number only thirty-eight occupied sections, many of the others applied for land to give them the right to dig gum in Puhupuhi. Of the thirty-eight selectors, three surrendered their holdings, but have again acquired them under other conditions; no advances were made on these sections. One improved section was abandoned, but it will be taken up as soon as it is open for selection, and most of the money advanced will be recovered.

*Motatau Settlement.*—Number of original selectors, 11; number who went on the land, 7; now in occupation, 7. Of the original eleven selectors, three have acquired land in the district on other conditions. The seven now in occupation are likely to remain there and become permanent settlers.

*Whananaki Settlement.*—Number of original selectors, 39; but of this number only twenty-one came on the land, and eighteen now remain in occupation, and are likely to continue. Of the three forfeited sections, two have been acquired under other conditions by persons in the district; no advance was made on these sections. The amount advanced on the other is expected to be recovered as soon as the land is open for selection. The original selector has acquired a larger area of land in the district.

*Omaha Settlement.*—Number of original selectors, 38; number who went on the land, 32; now in occupation, 26. Of the thirty-two settlers who were in occupation, six have abandoned their holdings. Advances have been made on all the abandoned sections; four of these have been reselected under other conditions, and the greater part of the advance recovered. The settlers now in occupation are doing fairly well, although the land is very poor.

*Parua Bay and Patana Settlements.*—Number of original selectors, 23; number who went on the land, 16; now in occupation, 10. Of the six forfeited sections, three have been taken up and the advances recovered; there will be a loss on two of the others. The land in this district is very poor and broken; but the settlers now in occupation are likely to remain, as they can obtain gum-digging and other occasional employment.

The total number of sections occupied under village-homestead special-settlement conditions is 282, but this does not include certain sections about to be forfeited at Herekino, Takahue, and Fern Flat.

A very pleasing feature in connection with the settlements is the public schools established