

houses, bushfelling, &c., amount to £582 4s. 4d. The present value of improvements now on the ground amount to £602, and include 200 acres felled and 163 acres felled and grassed.

*Katui*.—Area, 875½ acres, in the same county; selected by nine selectors; has now upon the ground twenty adults, thirty-three children, twenty-six head of cattle, and five horses. The total advances for dwelling-houses, bushfelling, &c., amount to £594 17s. 3d. The present value of improvements now on the ground amount to £758, including 219 acres felled and 183 acres felled and grassed, and eleven horses.

*Rangatira*.—Area, 1,000 acres, also in the County of Hokianga; area allotted, 300 acres, 24 acres felled; total advances, £30 19s. 5d. Total value of improvements on the ground, £40, with three settlers. Another man, with wife and four children, has just gone to the ground.

These four settlements are situated beyond Opanake, eight to twelve miles from the Kaihu Railway-station; three of them are upon the main road now open throughout to Hokianga; and one (*Katui*) is near the Maunganui Bluff. The land ranges from very good to fair quality, and the settlements will make much better progress, after the land is dried, sweetened, and cultivated, by being cleared of forest and opened to the sun. Of course, it must be borne in mind that such progress very much depends upon work being provided for these settlers for at least three days in the week for the next two years. I am, however, very hopeful that the expansion of the timber industry, and the extension of the Kaihu Valley Railway for at least three miles beyond Opanake Railway-station, will enable a good many of the settlers to find employment. Some of them are hardly fit for heavy work of this kind, and for them somewhat lighter employment must be found.

The most recently established settlement is named "*Te Rau-a-Moa*." It is situated about fifteen miles from Pirongia (Alexandra) Township, on the main cart-road to Kawhia Harbour. Ten selectors have been allotted 1,380 acres, or an average of 138 acres for each selector. The total advances made for dwelling-houses, bushfelling, &c., to date amount to £174 17s. 4d.; and the total improvements now on the ground are valued at £300, consisting of 83 acres felled. The elevation of this settlement—some 1,000ft. above sea-level—will make it somewhat cold in the winter, more particularly, too, as it is within the influence of the West Coast winds and clouds; but, nevertheless, it should be fairly successful, provided suitable employment can be found for the settlers for a time.

G. MUELLER, Chief Surveyor.

#### HAWKE'S BAY.

THE only settlement in the district is that at Waikopiro, near Ormondville. The strength of the association when the land was allotted was fourteen, who were selected, in November, 1894, from the co-operative labourers who were then working in the locality. There was only sufficient time before the following burning season to get clearings made on seven of the sections, but this year these clearings have been increased, and a portion of the remaining sections felled, burnt, and grassed. The present position is this: 122 acres in last season's grass, and 325 acres felled this year and surface-sown—altogether 447 acres. Of the sixteen members originally belonging to the association, one has been dismissed by the Land Board, and the section reoffered under ordinary settlement conditions, and a second has surrendered, having found employment at his trade elsewhere. Eight are now resident with their families, and the remaining six are finishing the building of their houses. Only one has as yet fenced the land that was grassed the first year, but the majority have made sundry improvements in the vicinity of their houses, in the shape of fencing small enclosures, outhouses, &c.

The improvements on the sections are valued at £1,176, of which £857 has been found by the Government in paying for bushfelling, grassing, advances for houses, &c.

THOMAS HUMPHRIES, Chief Surveyor.

#### TARANAKI.

DURING the year all the unallotted sections in the five improved-farm settlements shown in last year's report were applied for, and, in addition to these, seven new settlements were set apart, the largest being Whangamomona, comprising 111 sections, averaging about 95 acres each, situate on the Ohura Road (both sides), and near the proposed line of railway from Ngairangi to Auckland. All the sections in these seven settlements, with the exception of seven in the most remote one—the Niho Niho Settlement—were taken up during the year. This latter settlement is close to the Ohura Road, and portion of the Rata-tomokia Block. Two more settlements, the Derwent and Okau, were laid off on the Tongaporutu River, one on the north side, opposite the Tongaporutu Settlement, and the other from seven miles and a half to thirteen miles from the mouth. The Huiroa Settlement is situate at the junction of the Makuri and Douglas Roads, about eighteen miles from Stratford. The Poti and Maata Settlements are portions of the Ngairangi Block, and comprise sections from 10 to 13 acres in extent. They were allotted to men at work on the Ngairangi drains. Complaints are now made that the sections are too small; but they were made so on account of their proximity to Eltham. At the request of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Auckland, I laid off nineteen sections, of about 22 acres each, at Awakino, portion of Section 1, Block VII., Awakino North Survey District, all of which were applied for. Owing to funds not being available until late in the last bushfelling season practically nothing has been done there yet in that respect.

My greatest fear in connection with this class of settlement is the planting of too many families close together, all of them in comparatively poor circumstances, and in the meantime wholly