

Awatuna.—Area, 1,000 acres; divided into ten sections, of which two are now occupied. Number of people residing, 12. Area under grass, 100 acres; increase of 35 acres. Number of cattle owned by settlers, 27. The total value of improvements amounts to £280.

Katwi.—Area, 1,000 acres. Number of selections, 10; number occupied, 5. Number of population, 17; decrease, 2. Number of cattle, 108. Area grassed, 201 acres; increase, 40 acres. The settlement may be reported as being if anything slightly improving, but the land is only medium, and settlers state their inability to make a living off the land alone. This country is stated to improve on cultivation, but the want of local market precludes profitable agriculture. Dairying and cattle-raising must be the outlook here.

General.—The same remarks are applicable with slight modification to any and all of these settlements, where a demand for their labour exists or a market for what they produce. Progress, though perhaps slow at first, is eventually certain.

Reports of Rangers.

Ranger Bayly reports:—

Supervision of the six estates, together with workmen's hamlets, and office duties have caused my inspection of other Crown lands to be this year less numerous than hitherto has been the case, and, with the exception of Rotorua County, part of Tauranga, with Opotiki and Whakatane, have been the only ordinary Crown lands visited by me during the year.

Rotorua County.—The demand for land and area occupied during the year were considerable, the improvements effected were extensive and are still in progress. The bush lands take grass freely, and apparently permanent pasture. The small areas in and near Rotorua Town are in demand and readily taken up, and the township sections at Mamaku, in Rotorua Forest, near railway, found ready sale at good value.

Tauranga County.—Not much to report for year. Selections visited limited in number. Improvements effected by selectors neither numerous nor extensive, but settlement where anything like good land offers still brisk. An area of 4,000 acres in the Kaituna Swamp was readily taken up, and far more applicants than land to supply demand.

Opotiki County.—Land taken up in this county from time to time during the last five years has, although broken, turned out well as grass country; this has directed attention to areas hitherto looked upon as too rough, broken, and out of the way to be remunerative. Land between the Otaru and Motu, in Waiawa Survey District, has given very good results. I saw grass land there myself far beyond the average, while in the same district on the Otaru equally good results are being obtained. On the Waioeka, too, satisfactory grassing of bush lands has been effected, and I am informed that further back the country is less broken, with land equally good. A large block is now being surveyed, and I am of opinion considerable settlement will take place here during next season.

Whakatane County.—Within the last three years the whole of the available land in this county between the Whakatane and Rangitaiki Rivers (all swamp land) has been taken up; a Drainage Board established for the Rangitaiki District; and very large and expensive works initiated. The results where land is sufficiently dry to grass have been exceedingly good, the clover and grass an object-lesson of what this land can produce, and with thousands of acres equally as good when drained. That these selections will have several set-backs through floods (prior to whole drainage system being completed) goes without saying; but the land is there, and it will stand a large expenditure before its actual value is exceeded.

Ranger Ewen reports:—

Raglan County.—Settlement in this county during past years has only been moderate, the greater part of arable land fit for occupation having already been acquired. On selections visited I can report good improvements effected and still progressing, with matters generally satisfactory. Land as a whole good, settlers apparently prosperous, cultivation of arable land increases annually, and the dairying industry is being extended.

Kawhia County.—During the last three years extensive occupation of Crown lands has occurred in several districts within this county. The value of improvements effected, area of land grassed, and introduction of stock extensive; every indication of *bona fide* and permanent settlement present. The roads, as a rule, are only yet bridle or sledge tracks, almost impassable in winter. With these improved, better houses and further improvements will follow, together with closer population. The land on the whole is good, above the average, rather broken, but eminently fitted for pastoral purposes, being either limestone or papa bush country. Every section offered has been taken up, and demand still unsatisfied. This country before many years have passed will support a considerable population, good roads being the present urgent need.

Waikato County.—Selections in this county still under supervision limited in number. Of those inspected all have been in occupation some time and have complied with conditions. Improve-