

1,383 acres grassed. The amount advanced for houses, bushfelling, &c., is £1,847 19s. 4d. The improvements effected are valued at £6,035, as against £3,060 3s. 1d. required by the regulations. The stock consists of 473 cattle, 20 horses, 543 sheep, and 23 pigs; total, 1,059. There is a creamery at Whetukura Village, to which the settlers on Waikopiro send their supplies, and which is of much assistance, as they will receive ready money monthly for their milk. I understand that at the present time the daily supply of milk to this creamery is 300 gallons. The number of persons residing at Waikopiro is 101, and the settlement is in a prosperous condition.

Land for Settlements.

Raureka Settlement.—This settlement, which was part of Frimley Estate, was placed in the market in May, 1896. The whole of the settlement is let to nineteen settlers, holding an area of 416 acres and 38 perches, and paying a rent of £543 2s. per annum. There are eighteen dwelling-houses, valued at £1,215, on the settlement, and ninety-two persons residing. The total improvements effected are £2,857 10s., as against £1,221 13s. required by the Act. An area of 89 acres 3 roods is under crop, principally barley and potatoes. One selector has an area of 6 acres planted in raspberries and small fruits, which at the ruling local prices return handsome profits. Dairying is one of the chief occupations of the settlers, who supply the Heretaunga Butter-factory and St. George's Creamery, which are both within easy distance of the settlement. The stock consists of 88 cattle, 58 horses, 1,032 sheep, and 61 pigs; total, 1,239. There are no arrears of rent on this settlement.

Elsthorpe Settlement.—The Elsthorpe Settlement is situated in the Oero district, and was opened for selection in June, 1896. The total area acquired was 9,740 acres, and the area now unlet is 1 acre 3 roods 16 perches. An area of 9,593 acres 2 roods 13 perches is held by forty-six tenants, who pay an annual rent of £2,313 19s.; and the remainder of the settlement is taken up by roads, reserves, &c. There are twenty-seven houses on the settlement, valued at £3,000, and 124 persons residing. An area of 192 acres 3 roods is under crop, principally oats, potatoes, and rape. Very little cropping has ever been done by the settlers, and their chief occupations are of a pastoral nature, as may be gathered by a glance at the area under crop and the number of stock owned. The improvements effected by the lessees, exclusive of those on the settlement at the time of selection, are valued at £11,112 18s., as against £5,962 1s. required by the Act. The stock consists of 24,050 sheep, 590 cattle, 108 horses, and 19 pigs; total, 24,767. This settlement still holds the position of being one of the most thriving in the district. There are no arrears of rent.

Waimarie Settlement.—This settlement, which is situated in the Poverty Bay portion of the district, was placed in the market in September, 1896. The area acquired was 430 acres 2 roods 10 perches. An area of 425 acres 3 roods 34 perches is held by eighteen tenants, who pay an annual rent of £463, and the balance of the area is occupied by roads, &c. There are sixteen houses on the settlement, valued at £1,090, and fifty-eight persons are residing. Communication has now been established by rail from Gisborne to Ormond, which should be of great advantage to the settlers. The total improvements effected are valued at £2,201, as against £611 8s. required by the Act. An area of 217 acres is under crop, principally maize, oats, and barley. The dairying industry, which is the chief source of revenue to the settlers, is on the increase. The stock consists of 43 cattle, 45 horses, and 36 pigs; total, 124. One settler, with an area of 21 acres and 31 perches, is in arrear to the extent of £12 11s.

Pouparae Settlement.—This settlement is situated in Poverty Bay, near Gisborne, and was opened for selection in April, 1897. The total area acquired was 337 acres 3 roods 4 perches. An area of 336 acres 1 rood 12 perches is held by nine tenants, who pay an annual rent of £405 8s.; and the balance of 1 acre 1 rood 32 perches is occupied by roads, &c. There are nine buildings on the settlement, valued at £892, and forty-two persons residing, which is an increase of twelve in the population since last year. The improvements effected are valued at £2,212 11s., as against £405 8s. required by the Act. An area of 62 acres 2 roods is under crop, principally potatoes and maize. With one exception (that of market-gardening) the chief occupation of the settlers is dairying. The co-operative butter-factory at Matawhero and the creamery at Waerengahika receive the milk from this settlement. The stock consists of 100 sheep, 166 cattle, 37 horses, and 40 pigs; total, 343. There are no arrears of rent on this settlement.

Tomoana Settlement.—This settlement, which is part of Frimley Estate, near Hastings, was placed in the market in March, 1898. The total area acquired was 111 acres 3 roods 38 perches. An area of 110 acres and 3 perches is held by thirteen tenants, who pay an annual rent of £135 2s.; and the remainder of the estate, 1 acre 3 roods 35 perches, is occupied by roads, &c. There are twelve houses on the settlement, valued at £1,645, and fifty-five persons residing. The improvements effected are valued at £2,385 15s., as against £133 2s. required by the Act. An area of 14 acres is under orchard, garden, and crop, the latter being principally mangolds and potatoes. There are two very fine orchards on the settlement, one settler making nearly the whole of his income from fruit. The stock consists of 56 cattle, 29 horses, and 24 pigs; total, 109. Dairying is the chief industry, and the Heretaunga Co-operative Butter-factory is within easy distance of the settlement. There are no arrears of rent.

Mahora Settlement.—This settlement was also part of Frimley, and is situated near Hastings. It was opened for application in March, 1899. An area of 1,094 acres 3 roods 17 perches is held by thirty-two tenants, who pay an annual rent of £1,606 11s. 2d., and one section, containing 17 acres 2 roods 18 perches, is still unlet. It is proposed to lease this vacant section to the Stock Department, but up to the time of writing final arrangements have not been arrived at. There are twenty-five houses on the settlement, valued at £2,401, and ninety-three persons residing. The improvements effected are valued at £5,390 19s., as against £1,605 1s. 2d. required by the Act. An area of 166 acres 2 roods is under crop, principally barley, mangolds, and potatoes. Yields of 20 tons of potatoes or 100 bushels of barley to the acre are not uncommon in this settlement. The