

crops of all kinds have been good. Some of the settlers formerly found employment outside the settlement, but since they have begun to supply milk to the local creamery a few of them work at home, while others leave the dairy-work to their family and they themselves go and find labouring-work in the district. Complaints have been made with regard to some very bad patches of Canadian thistle on Sections 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17. Otherwise the settlers seem to be getting on fairly well."

*Tahawai*.—This small settlement remains occupied by eight selectors; area, 68 acres 2 roods 14 perches; annual rent, £35 14s. 4d.; receipts for year, £35 8s. 7d.; total receipts from beginning, £263 1s. 11d.; rebate granted to the eight tenants, £2 2s.; houses, 8; persons resident, 42; value of improvements, £1,087 10s. Ranger's report: "This little settlement continues in a most flourishing condition. As I have pointed out for some years, the success or failure of the settlement depends almost entirely on its water-supply. It appears that in 1896 William Mulvena, a freeholder who adjoins Tahawai, was granted a right by the Warden to lift two heads of water from Kurow River. He does not use all the water, so for an annual payment of 2s. 6d. per settler he allows about half a head of water to go for the use of the settlement. This runs down a small race in a north-westerly direction, the estate also sloping in that way. The settlers then take what they require for domestic purposes, and irrigate their land in turn. I would like to point out here that with a water-supply Tahawai has always been and will be a great success; without the water nothing can save it from failure. The arrangement arrived at by the people for the use of the water in turn for irrigation purposes does not work out quite so satisfactorily as could be wished, owing to some of the settlers damming the water at their own boundary and monopolising it for a longer time than they have a right to, to the disadvantage of those further down. There was very little crop of any kind on Tahawai this year. Most of the settlers irrigate, and obtain large supplies of the finest clover-hay for the stock during winter. With plenty of grass in summer most of the settlers supply milk to the Kurow Creamery. The settlers mostly find employment outside while the families look after the holding."

*Maerewhenua*.—The occupied area in this estate is the same as last year—viz., 10,929 acres 2 roods 12 perches by seventy-two selectors at an annual rental of £3,553 2s., including three temporary licenses over 22 acres 3 roods 36 perches at £3 2s. 6d. per annum, the unlet area of 6 acres 3 roods 12 perches being of a yearly value of 19s. 8d. The rent received during the year amounted to £3,694 7s. 4d., bringing the total receipts to date to £24,941 6s. 10d. Rebate of rent was granted to forty-four tenants to the extent of £116 1s. 4d. Houses on the estate, 58; persons resident, 245; value of improvements effected, £18,448 15s. 9d. Ranger Atkinson reports on this settlement as follows: "The settlers generally on this estate are in a very sound position. This is owing greatly, I think, to the fact that most of the sections are held in fairly large areas, which enables the holders to carry on mixed farming by growing wool, fat lambs, dairying, &c. A creamery has been established near Georgetown, which takes the milk-supply of those at the southern end of the estate, while the creamery at Duntroon is of great assistance to the settlers at the northern end. The crops on the estate this year have not been equalled for many years. The yield of wheat will, I believe, average fully 40 bushels per acre, while the oats will yield, I should think, 55 bushels per acre. The root-crops, especially turnips, have never been better. The season generally has been a backward one, and somewhat wet, but, notwithstanding, the crops have been harvested in fine condition. There is an abundance of feed which, with the turnips, ought to carry the stock in good condition well through the winter. The settlement conditions are being well carried out. The buildings and other necessary improvements are of a very substantial character, and there is no doubt that the settlers on this estate are flourishing and well contented with their position."

*Puketapu*.—Area occupied, 496 acres and 36 perches; eleven selectors; annual rent, £189 0s. 10d.; receipts for year, £187 10s. 7d.; total receipts to date, £1,264 13s. 9d.; rebate granted to nine tenants, £7 6s. 2d.; houses, 9; persons resident, 23; value of improvements, £1,160 8s. 7d. In his report on this settlement the Crown Lands Ranger states: "This small settlement continues to make fair progress. Most of the settlers supply milk to the Palmerston Creamery, and with the exception of two, who work in the district, all of them are employed on their holdings. The crops, both grain and root, are much better than last year, and grass is plentiful."

*Ardgowan*.—The prosperity of this estate continues unabated, its locality and environment, coupled with the character of the soil and fairly moderate rentals, insuring success. No change in the occupation has taken place since last report, there being sixty-five selectors, occupying 4,165 acres 2 roods 34 perches, at a rental of £1,893 19s. 4d. per annum, including one temporary license over 2 acres 3 roods 30 perches at 16s. 8d. yearly. The rent received during the year amounted to £1,753 0s. 7d., the total from inception now being £12,780 11s. 7d. The sum of £103 9s. 1d. was granted in rebates to forty-seven tenants. Number of houses now on the settlement, 29; persons resident, 116; value of improvements, £12,267 4s. 1d. Ranger Atkinson reports: "The settlers on this estate continue in a flourishing condition. The crops have been well above the average, and, although the season has been somewhat broken, the grain-crops have been harvested in good condition. The root-crops are also very much better than in past years, which, with the large quantity of hay saved this year, should carry stock comfortably through the winter. The dairy factory on the estate continues to be of great assistance. The majority of the settlers are supplying milk, which enables them to benefit by the ready-money at the end of every month. With the exception of one or two settlers, all find quite enough to do on their farms without looking for employment outside. The position of the settlers is improving every year, and the settlement conditions are being very well complied with."

*Makareao and Makareao Extension*.—The occupation of these settlements also remains the same as before, there being twenty-seven holdings under lease in perpetuity, three small grazing-