

colony than that of aiding them to procure the services of a resident medical man. It is well known that the dread of having no medical man near often acts as a deterrent to settlers when making up their minds to live in out-of-the-way districts. An amount of £550 was voted during the past year by way of subsidy for this most necessary help, but of this only £169 was claimed under the conditions specified—viz., that the district requiring such help should form a committee, who will guarantee to raise the additional amount for which a doctor will undertake to reside and practice in the district. After such committee, or local body acting as the committee, has certified to the amount so guaranteed, the Government subsidy is paid over.

The following are the subsidies either granted or available for a resident medical officer: Whangaroa, £25 (of which £12 10s. was paid during the year); Kaitaia, £50 (all paid); Waimarino, £75 (£56 5s. paid); Tinui, £50 (£50 paid); Wanaka, £100 (not claimed); Catlin's, £150 (not claimed); Cromarty, £50 (not claimed); and Kawhia, £50 (not claimed).

CHEVIOT ESTATE.

As will be seen by the following extract from the account-books of the Department, this splendid settlement continues to improve its financial position:—

<i>Dr.</i>	£	s.	d.
Original cost of the estate, including roads, surveys, landing service, &c., in 1893...	324,908	19	7
Interest to the 31st March, 1904 ...	96,124	6	11
	421,033	6	6
<i>Cr.</i>			
Land sold ...	38,754	18	10
Rents, interest, royalties, and other charges ...	152,414	7	0
Cost of estate at the 31st March, 1904 ...	229,364	0	8
	£421,033	6	6

For a full conception of the progress made and the present position of the selectors, attention is directed to the report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands for Canterbury, Mr. Thomas Humphries, when it will be seen that, notwithstanding an unfavourable season for lambing, the settlers received some compensation in the high prices obtained for stock; while the harvest returns were fair, enabling them to effect considerable improvements, especially by erecting a better class of buildings, fences, and in extending and improving their orchards, plantations, &c. The settlers have been induced to give more attention to sheep-farming and less to dairying. As an indication of the prosperity of the settlement, it is noticed that several of the settlers so improved their circumstances that they found themselves in a position to sell out, with the intention of securing larger holdings elsewhere. There has been keen competition when opportunities offered for buying out the original tenants' interests. Another proof of progress is to be seen in the Mackenzie Township, where several new places of business have been opened.

The total value of improvements on the leasehold areas is £91,817, more than double the requirements under the leases. The population, exclusive of the town and freehold settlers, is 757, whilst the number of souls on the settlement is 1,030.

Nearly 8,000 acres are under cultivation; the tenants possess about 86,000 sheep, and 2,000 cattle, horses, &c. The settlers are reported as being prosperous, in a good position, and with every expectation of a bright and successful future. With the completion of the railway from Waipara, now so well advanced, it is reasonable to anticipate that this magnificent settlement will exhibit even a greater expansion in the output of stock and produce. Experts have reported that the capabilities of the central area for dairying are excellent.

The landing service at Port Robinson has been maintained. The expenditure in connection with working the slip, goods-shed, machinery, repairs, &c., amounted to £1,008 13s. 8d., whilst the revenue upon inward and outward cargo totalled £1,051 5s. 4d.

The trade of the port is represented by the landing of 1,282 tons of general merchandise, 586 tons of coal, 365,587 superficial feet of timber, 2,213 posts, 339 parcels, &c., and nearly 13,000 bricks. The export comprised 2,926 bales of wool, 63 bales of skins, 295 parcels, &c., and 1,638 sacks of corn. As compared with the preceding year, there was a general falling-off, due, no doubt, to the diversion of the traffic to the roads and railway.

LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS.

The Chairman of the Board of Land Purchase Commissioners transferred to this Department the following eight estates: Bickerstaffe, on the Otamatea River, near Maungaturoto (Auckland District), containing 12,480 acres; Wigan, inland from Tolaga Bay, north of Gisborne (Hawke's Bay District), with an area of 10,072 acres; Clandon, near Toko (Taranaki District), 881 acres; Normandale, adjoining the Lower Hutt (Wellington District), 1,623 acres; Rainford, north of Kaikoura (Marlborough District), 246 acres; Annan, north-east of Waiau, 32,858 acres, and Rose-