

eleven tenants residing fully, one partly residing, and two residing on adjoining land with near relations; total, 14. The number of persons residing is now forty-six. The number of sheep is 5,040; cattle, 11; horses, 49; and about 15 to 20 pigs. There were 510 acres of white crops and 315 acres of green and root crops grown during the last season. The yield was generally less than former years, owing to the drought, which was felt very much on this settlement, especially on the sea-coast and near Lake Grassmere. Notwithstanding this, and the trouble of keeping down rabbits, the settlement appears to have done fairly well.

*Omaka Settlement.*—Situated on the east bank of the River Omaka, about eight miles south-west from Blenheim. Area purchased in 1896 was 3,898 acres, now held by thirteen selectors, nine of whom are residing upon the land and four upon adjoining lands. The land is mostly good pastoral land. One new house has been erected during the year. Forty-four persons are residing. The settlers appear to have fair prospects for the coming year, and seem generally contented with their land. The number of sheep is 3,160; cattle, 42; horses, 51. 592 acres of white crops and 66 acres of green crops have been planted during the past year, with a slightly diminished yield from the standard of former years.

*Puhipuhi Settlement.*—Situated on the upper Puhipuhi River, Kaikoura. Purchased in 1897. Area, 320 acres, held by two selectors. This can scarcely be designated a settlement. It was two small blocks of freehold in the midst of a large block of Crown land, and was purchased so as to work in with the block and form homesteads for two larger holdings. The residence in these cases has not been strictly continuous, but otherwise they have complied with the Act. Improvements effected, £243. Stock held cannot be determined, owing to the holdings being merged into the other part of the sections to which they are attached.

*Starborough Settlement.*—Area, 35,906 acres. Opened for selection in 1899. This settlement is situated on the right bank of the Awatere River and along portion of the coast of Cook Strait. The general character is good agricultural and pastoral country. Including the Township of Seddon, there are 191 selectors on this estate, although there are only 183 holders, 126 of whom are in the township, leaving fifty-seven as holding on the rest of the settlement. Out of these only one is non-resident. There are fifty dwellings in the township and forty-seven on the outer lands; total number of persons residing on the estate, 398. The total improvements effected are valued at over £48,000. The sheep number 34,785; cattle, 123; horses, 289; and about 100 pigs. Area in white crop, 2,555 acres; root and green crop, 1,677 acres; cultivated grass, 8,723 acres. The yield from these cropping-areas was below the average, but fairly good, considering the dryness of the spring and summer. The average return of grain is probably, for wheat, about 27 to 30 bushels; barley, 20 to 27 bushels; oats, 25 to 35 bushels; chaff, probably  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tons per acre. The pastoral part of the estate has done well to fairly well; for, although the drought caused a forced sale of sheep at a time when the freezing-works were stopped by labour troubles, the good price of wool went a long way towards compensating for this loss. If the lesson taught by the late dry spell is properly learnt, and it induces the settlers to conserve all the water possible and thus mitigate the evil of droughts in future, this dry spell may be a blessing in disguise. The autumnal rain has done a lot of good, and feed now appears plentiful for the winter.

*Richmond Brook Settlement.*—Area, 5,854 acres, situated on the right bank of the Awatere River, about six miles above the railway-crossing. This block was settled in 1899. It is chiefly good pastoral land, but there was 735 acres in corn, 398 acres in root and green crops, and 3,353 acres has been laid down in grass. There are 7,630 sheep, 29 cattle, and 77 horses on the estate. Twelve good-sized holdings. Only one selector, who resides on adjoining land, is not complying with the residential clauses. This is a prosperous little settlement, and I think the settlers have many reasons to be satisfied with the conditions and prospects.

*Waipapa Settlement.*—Situated on the right bank of the Clarence River, a few miles above the sea. The area acquired is 3,755 acres. Opened in 1901. Selected by five settlers, four of whom are residing on their holdings, and the other resides with his neighbour for the present. Five houses are built, one of which is men's quarters, near the wool-shed, at some distance from the homestead to which it belongs. About 25 acres of oats for home consumption and 35 to 40 acres of green crops has been the extent of cropping. As this land has been worked in conjunction with a large area of rough, high country behind it, it is not possible to give the exact stock carried. The prospects are good for this settlement while wool remains high, for it is essentially a wool-growing country. The settlers have much to contend with in the rabbit pest, but appear to be doing well.

*North Bank Estate.*—Situate on the left bank of the Wairau River, about twenty-five miles above Blenheim. Area, 12,895 acres. Settled in 1903. Held by seven settlers; these settlers have much to contend with in the shape of noxious weeds and poor, mostly broken land. One settler is not fully complying with the residential conditions. The settlement supports thirty-seven persons. The sheep carried is only 3,100; cattle, 62; horses, 30. During the year 100 acres of land have been under crop. This is the poorest settlement we have, and were it not for the fact that the settlers obtain a good deal from the flax growing on the estate and in the vicinity they would, I fear, find it a hard struggle to obtain a living. The improvements effected have been valued at £1,642.

*Rainford Settlement.*—Situated within four or five miles of Kaikoura Township. This is all flat, first-class soil, suitable for dairy-farming, and as a cheese-factory is situated within a mile of the settlement it should do well. The area is only 246 acres, held by eleven selectors, eight of whom permanently reside in nine houses, which contain thirty-four persons. The estimated value of the improvements besides the original value is £1,332. There was last season 20 acres in white crop and 14 acres in green crop, the remainder being in good permanent pasture. The prospects of this settlement are good, and, though the holdings are small, they form good homes for industrious settlers.

*Flaxbourne Settlement.*—Area, 46,598 acres. Opened for selection in 1905. This estate is situated on the east coast, between the Ure River and Lake Grassmere. The general characteristics of this block are grass- and fern-covered downs and hills bearing from good to fair soil. The land is now