

the 1st January last. There were altogether seven reallootments of sections in these settlements during the year.

*Tongaporutu*.—There were originally sixteen sections, comprising an area of 2,500 acres, of which eight selectors are now holding and resident on the land, there being altogether thirty-eight persons. They own 152 cattle, eighty-two sheep, and nine horses between them. The other selectors have either abandoned their holdings or they have been forfeited for non-compliance, and four of these sections are being opened under the optional system of "The Land Act, 1892." The 268 acres felled last year have been grassed, making a total area of 282 acres in grass; 25 acres were felled in 1897 and ready for grassing. The value of improvements done at selectors' own cost amounts to £329. Only two settlers have as yet paid rent. A school has been built in the settlement, and is now open.

*Mangaere*.—Originally thirteen sections, comprising 482 acres 2 roods 13 perches, situate on the Ohura Main Road, Stratford to Auckland. One section forfeited is being opened for selection under the optional system, and there are now ten settlers holding. The total number of persons on the land is fifty-four. 374 acres felled and grassed to date; 25 acres felled by one selector during year and ready for grassing. Three settlers were assisted in the erection of and additions to houses. The settlers have 138 cattle, eighteen sheep, and twenty-three horses with them on the land. This settlement is now well established, being surrounded by settled country; all the holders are resident, and fairly independent of Government aid. A school has been built, and arrangements are being made to start a dairy factory. The value of improvements done at the selectors' own cost is £550. Most of them have paid their rent to date.

*Uruti*.—There were originally seven sections, comprising 697 acres. One forfeited section has been selected under the optional system, and four at present hold their sections, the other two settlers having forfeited and surrendered. There are twenty-two persons on the land, and they have with them 143 cattle, twenty-six sheep, and four horses. The four selectors now resident are fairly well settled, and obtain sufficient work from the local body and neighbouring settlers on large holdings to enable them to dispense with the necessity for further Government assistance. They have effected improvements at their own cost to the value of £183. 502 acres of the whole settlement have been felled and grassed at Government cost. The settlers have a post-office, a school will shortly be erected, and steps are being taken to establish a dairy factory in conjunction with the other settlers in the locality. Only two of the settlers have paid rent.

*Taumatatahi*.—This settlement comprises four sections, with a total area of 430 acres, all of which have been allotted. The 20 acres felled last year have been grassed, making a total of 86 acres in grass; 73 acres have been felled this year and are ready for grassing. One new house has been erected, the settler receiving assistance in the cost of building. All of the four settlers are now resident and in beneficial occupation of their farms, there being twenty-four persons in all on the land, and they own between them fifty-two cattle, forty sheep, and six horses. This settlement is now permanently established, the available grass is fully stocked, and I do not anticipate that the settlers will require any further Government help, the ordinary local work being sufficient to employ them in their spare time. The improvements at their own cost are valued at £312, and rent has been fully paid up.

*Whangamomona*.—There are 111 sections in this settlement, with an area of 10,543 acres, of which only sixty-seven are now held, most of the settlers being resident. The total number of persons on the land is 187, and there are also 639 cattle, 195 sheep, and fifty-three horses. The 1,254 acres felled last year have been grassed, making a total area of 2,202 acres under grass, and 850 acres were felled this year, 221½ acres being put down by selectors at their own expense. Eleven new houses have been erected, and improvements made in fencing, gardens, &c., the total value done at selectors' own expense being £2,319. The settlement may now be said to be permanently established; a large school has been erected and opened, a dairy factory is in contemplation, and most of those settlers who now hold land will, in all probability, remain and become good settlers. A rearrangement of areas will, however, be necessary, to enable a man who has fairly good land to keep a sufficient number of cows, or one who has rough land the necessary number of sheep, to make more than a living. 100 acres of Whangamomona land will not suffice for this, and if a man has less than a sufficient area he cannot become independent of Government or private work. Only two or three persons have as yet paid their rent which became due on 1st January last.

*Huiroa*.—There were originally nine sections here, comprising an area of 668 acres 1 rood 21 perches. One forfeited section is to be opened for selection under the optional system, and there are at present seven settlers holding. The remaining section has in part been utilised for a school-site, to meet the demands of settlement. The total number of persons on the land is thirty-four, and they have ninety cattle and six horses. The 201 acres felled last year have been sown in grass, making a total area of 354 acres in grass. Only four acres were felled during the year, the settlers on this block having in previous years, with but few exceptions, felled up to the areas allowed to be paid for by the Government. They have put on improvements at their own expense to the value of £357, and nearly all have paid the rent which became due on the 1st January last. As this block is in the midst of settled lands, being but fifteen or sixteen miles from Stratford Railway-station, it ought now to hold its own without further Government assistance.

*Okau*.—This contains nineteen sections, with a total area of 1,889½ acres. Only six selectors are now holding, and four of these are defaulters in regard to personal residence; one of them has, however, been allowed time to build. The remaining thirteen sections have either been forfeited or surrendered, and the settlement is practically a failure—principally, I think, through the majority of the selectors being single men, who placed more value on getting temporary work in bushfelling or roadmaking than in making future homes for themselves. Of the 600 acres felled and grassed at Government cost, only 75 acres are used by the stock of the two resident settlers, one of them