

APPENDIX No. 5.—IMPROVED-FARM SETTLEMENTS.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS OF CROWN LANDS AND OTHERS ON THE IMPROVED-FARM SETTLEMENTS FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 31st MARCH, 1899.

AUCKLAND NORTH.

Rangatira.—This settlement has still the three original settlers reported as resident last year, the total number of souls being eight. Forest to the extent of 87 acres has been felled, and 76 acres of it has been grassed. Several chains of fencing has been erected, and the settlement has $3\frac{3}{4}$ acres of garden-ground dug up. It has ten head of cattle, two horses, eight sheep, besides pigs and poultry. The total advances to date, less repayments, amount to £145 3s. 4d., whilst the total value of improvements amount to £409 10s.

Awatuna.—The four settlers previously reported are still resident, holding 405 acres. The total area of bush felled amounts to 365 acres, whilst 351 acres have been burnt and grassed. Fencing to the length of 150 chains has been erected, and $9\frac{1}{2}$ acres of garden-ground dug up. The settlement possesses twenty-five head of cattle, seven horses, nine pigs, and eighty head of poultry, so that practically there is no advance of any kind since last year. The advances still outstanding amount to £818, whilst the improvements are valued at £1,293. The total number of souls is twenty.

Mangatu.—Its ten original settlers are still resident, and with families number seventy-three souls. They hold 991 acres, and have felled 663 acres of forest, have burnt and grassed 517 acres. They have erected 360 chains of fencing, and have 14 acres of garden-ground. They possess eighty-one head of cattle, twenty-three horses, twenty-one pigs, and 145 head of poultry, whilst houses and outhouses are valued at £363. The total outstanding advances amount to £1,433, and the improvements are valued at £2,623. This settlement is holding its own, and shows signs of advance.

Katui Settlement has this year only eight selectors, holding 775 acres, who with their families numbering fifty-five souls reside on the land. Some 408 acres of forest has been felled, and 347 acres grassed. The settlers have erected 710 chains of fencing, and have 21 acres of garden under cultivation. They own 137 head of cattle, eighteen horses, twenty-three sheep, sixteen pigs, and 340 head of poultry. The houses and outbuildings are valued at £323. The outstanding advances amount to £763, whilst the improvements are valued at £2,279, showing an equal if not superior advance to Mangatu.

GERHARD MUELLER, Commissioner of Crown Lands.

AUCKLAND CENTRAL.

Te Rauamoa.—This settlement is all bush land; it was founded towards the end of 1895. During the past year no roadwork in connection with the settlement has been undertaken. However, the settlers have been employed a large part of their time on roadworks in the vicinity of their homes. Since last annual report an area of 132 acres of bush has been felled, and paid for under the regulations, which makes the total felled 683 acres. Of this an area of 545 acres is now in grass, 240 acres of which has been twice sown, as the first sowing was destroyed by fire and caterpillars in the summer of 1897-98. There now remains to be sown last season's felling, amounting to 132 acres, which, when completed, will bring the area under grass up to 677 acres. The remainder of the felling is occupied by gardens, orchards, crops, &c. The following are the total estimated values of improvements to date: Felling, burning, and grassing, £1,266; cottage dwellings, £157; other buildings, £26; gardens, orchards, &c., £50; fencing, £160: total, £1,659, an increase for the year of £423. The total amount authorised as advances for building and fencing is £300, and the total amount of advances made £206 11s. 10d. The settlers have thirty horses, thirty milking-cows, sixty-nine head of other horned cattle, one sheep, seventeen pigs, and seventy-two poultry. The population consists of nineteen adults and thirty-one children, which is a decrease of six adults and five children during the year, caused principally by two families having given up and left their holdings, only one of which has been reallocated, that to a single man who was previously a resident at the settlement in his father's family. I wish to call attention to the fact that the grassed land is not, and has never been, sufficiently stocked with cattle, and to point out that understocking is bad for the future of the pasture, as second growth and weeds soon spring up and smother the grass.

Paemako (Karutewhenua).—The section so long vacant in this settlement has been allotted, making the present total number of settlers twelve. Several of them have not yet taken their wives and families to live on the land, but have made applications to be excused from doing so