

under ordinary conditions, and one section was cut up for the village. The area felled and grassed is 421 acres out of 444 acres. There are forty persons on the land. Live-stock: 179 cattle, 41 sheep, and 27 horses. The improvements effected at selectors' own cost are valued at £1,178. The settlement has a school, store, dairy factory, post-office, and smithy.

Whangamomona.—10,543 acres, in 111 sections, eighty-four of them being held by fifty-four settlers, twenty-three are held under ordinary conditions, and four sections are vacant. The area felled and grassed is 4,125 acres out of 7,463 acres. 170 persons are on the land. Live-stock: 1,584 cattle, 824 sheep, and 102 horses. Improvements at selectors' own cost are valued at £6,407 8s., including a vineyard valued at £100. One selector was assisted to the extent of £30 towards the erection of his house. The settlement has a dairy factory, two schools, and three post-offices.

Taumatahahi.—430 acres 2 roods, in four sections, each occupied by different families. The area felled and grassed is 238 acres out of 430 acres. There are thirty-two persons on the land. Live-stock: 70 cattle and 10 horses. Improvements at selectors' own cost are valued at £554. There is a post-office and a half-time school here.

Nihoniho.—1,406 acres in fifteen sections, of which three are occupied, there being fifteen persons on the land. Live-stock: 160 cattle and 18 horses. The total area held (213 acres) has been felled and grassed. The improvements effected at selectors' own cost are valued at £304. The settlement is situate about twenty-three miles from Ongarue, and about eighty-nine miles from the Stratford Railway-station, near the Ohura Road. The remaining sections will probably be taken up as an extension of the settlement.

Land for Settlements.

The first and only settlement acquired in this district and offered to the public during the year was the Tokaora Settlement, near Hawera, comprising 1,505 acres 2 roods 8 perches. It was acquired from James Livingstone, Esq., and was opened for application on the 20th November, 1901, in fourteen dairy farms under lease in perpetuity, the areas varying from 50 to 166 acres, and the rentals from 15s. 2d. to £1 6s. 7d. per acre per annum. Fourteen persons lodged applications, but only seven sections were disposed of at the first ballot. Two of the applicants were allowed to withdraw their applications, and one exchanged his holding for another section. One section has been disposed of since the ballot. One selector has already built a house and is resident with his family; the remainder are about to build. The grazing from the vacant sections was let and the fruit from the orchard was sold, realising in all £164 16s. 9d.

There has been considerable inquiry for the remaining sections, and it is hoped that with the approach of the dairying season they will be disposed of. It is, however, so far satisfactory to note that excellent selectors have been obtained, and that up to now, on account of the temporary grazing, fruit sold, &c., no loss to the Crown has taken place through a portion of the settlement not being taken up.

Office-work.

Correspondence inwards and outwards, 8,228; notices of rent due, 1,926; applications for land, 81; reports to Advances to Settlers Office, 67; cheques drawn for salaries, wages, of survey parties, &c., 1,016; vouchers dealt with, 644; transfers recorded, 104; receipts for rent and refunds, 3,908; provisional titles prepared, 231; cards furnished to Auditor, 91; local bodies' proposals dealt with, covering an expenditure of £4,051 16s. 6d., 27: total, 16,323.

All the indoor officers have been kept fully employed, and I anticipate a busy year for the field and office staff, both of which may require to be augmented by additional assistance.

JAMES MACKENZIE,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

WELLINGTON.

Lands opened for Sale and disposed of.—The area placed on the market during the year amounted to 21,839 acres, making with the Crown lands already open on the 1st April, 1901, a total of 50,015 acres. The lands offered comprised for the most part forfeited and other sections of an area of 7,287 acres offered on optional systems, and about 8,100 acres of Crown land and State forest in the Waimarino Block offered as a temporary grazing-lease. The following townships and villages were offered for cash by public auction: Mangaweka North, 58 lots; Levin, 16 lots; Hunterville, 9 lots; Pongaroa, 118 lots; Makuri, 72 lots; Umutoi Village, 14 lots; Pakihikura Village, 5 lots; and Torere Village, 16 lots. Most of the lots in Levin, Hunterville, and Torere were disposed of.

The following estates acquired under the Land for Settlements Act were offered: Mangawhata, 1,226½ acres, subdivided into seven sections, offered on the 14th May, 1901; Epuni Hamlet, 94 acres and 28 perches, subdivided into forty-three lots, offered on the 25th June, 1901; and Maungaraki, 267 acres 1 rood 22 perches, subdivided into twenty lots, offered on the 20th December, 1901. The number of applications for sections in these three settlements was very limited, but all the sections offered in Mangawhata and Epuni Settlements have been taken up. Six sections still remain open in the Maungaraki Settlement, but it is expected that they will be disposed of shortly. An area of about 19 acres of forfeited lands in the Pipiriki and Tokaanu Native Townships was reoffered. Steps are now being taken to place the Ohutu and Hokio Native Townships in the market. The former is situated in the Ohutu Block, Wanganui County, and the latter is on the sea-coast west of Levin. During the year an area of 9,733 acres 1 rood in the Wanganui River Trust Endowment Block, subdivided into four small grazing-runs, was offered on behalf of the River Trust, but up to the present there has been no inquiry for them. The rentals of the two small grazing-runs in the Victoria College Endowment Block, area 3,980 acres, were reduced from 9d. to 6d. per acre, but these runs have not yet been quitted.