

Mangaone district, one near Waverley, the others in Sandou, Kairanga, Tiffin, Belmont, &c. They range in area from 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 421 acres; most of them are suitable for dairy farms. These allotments have been made within recent dates, but already the indications point to most of the settlers thereon being successful. The stock on these farms at present comprise about 212 head of cattle (including 200 dairy cows), 8 horses, 13 sheep, and 18 pigs.

Taking the settlements as a whole, the position as disclosed in the following summary can be regarded as eminently satisfactory, and success seems to be already assured for the majority of the settlers:—

About 238 soldiers have been settled on an area of 61,475 acres. Bush has been felled on 4,757 acres; area grassed, 5,125 acres; area in crop, 454 acres. Stock comprise 5,775 head of cattle (including 2,658 dairy cows), 29,440 sheep, 265 horses, and 279 pigs; but these figures do not include the natural increase for this year. Total population on settlements, 324. Total amount of advances made on settlements referred to above, about £55,015.

ACQUISITION OF TOWN AND RURAL PROPERTIES BY MEANS OF ADVANCES GRANTED UNDER SECTION 2 OF THE DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT AMENDMENT ACT, 1917.

Advances to the amount of £18,685 10s. have been made to thirty discharged soldiers, enabling them to purchase thirty town dwellings, and an amount of £12,050 has been similarly advanced to six of them for the acquisition of dairy farms, making a total under this heading of £30,735 10s.

MARLBOROUGH.

Wither Settlement, containing 522 acres, is suburban to Blenheim, and consists of thirteen sections, twelve of which are small areas—from 8 to 16 acres of agricultural land suitable for intense farming or workmen's homes. The quality of the land is good. So far only four sections have been selected. The class of tenant is not very satisfactory. However, providing the right class of tenant is secured for these sections, there is no doubt as to the ultimate success of the settlement. Three settlers have erected cottages and are residing; the fourth is making arrangements to build. 113 chains of fencing have been erected, and the sections are all under cultivation. The stock consists of 5 cows and 2 horses. Approximate total value of improvements, £750.

Erina Settlement is about twenty miles from Blenheim, in the Wairau Valley. It consists of 6,968 acres of flat, undulating, and hilly pastoral country. It is subdivided into thirteen holdings ranging from 297 to 759 acres. Eleven of the sections have been selected, one has been abandoned, and the others are making fair progress, though somewhat hampered by want of sufficient capital. The homesteads erected number six, and two more are about to be erected. 600 chains fencing has been erected, also two wool-sheds and yards. Stock consists of approximately 3,000 sheep, 10 horses, and 8 cattle. Approximate total value of improvements, £2,506.

Three areas of Crown land, comprising 1,192 acres, have been acquired in the *Rai district*. These are bush lands, and are being prepared and used for dairy-farming. They offer a bright future to the industrious settler. This latter appears to be somewhat difficult to find. Each settler has erected a home, as well as milking-sheds, &c. 200 acres bush felled, and 100 chains fencing erected. Stock on the land consists of about 80 head dairy cattle and 4 horses. Approximate value of improvements, £1,000.

WESTLAND.

The *Bell Hill Block*, near Lake Brunner, containing 5,582 acres, was set apart for settlement by discharged soldiers, subdivided into eleven sections, and offered for selection. Three sections were taken up on the 21st November, 1917, but the selectors have not yet entered into possession of the land. Another section was selected on the 20th March, 1918, the lessee immediately commencing work on his holding. At the end of July he had effected improvements valued at £75, consisting of 30 acres bushfelling and an unfinished whare. There is good reason to believe that he will prove a good settler. A fifth section in the block was taken up on the 21st August last, and the selector has expressed the intention of entering into occupation without delay. Total area selected, 2,118 acres.

An isolated section of 148 acres in Block I, Waiwhero Survey District, was selected under deferred-payment license on the 21st March, 1917. At the end of June last improvements valued at £212 had been effected. The selector is residing on the land and making further improvements, and his success is assured.

CANTERBURY.

Lees Valley Settlement.—27,282 acres in ten subdivisions, all taken up. Eight houses have been built. All pastoral country. Twenty-three miles of fencing erected. Just prior to the snowstorms of July last the number of stock on this settlement amounted to 10,044 sheep, 292 cattle, and 26 horses. The prospects of the settlers at that time were decidedly promising. No reliable estimate of the stock-loss is at present available, but I am afraid it will be heavier than at first estimated—*v.e.*, 10 to 15 per cent. It was the second fall of snow, towards the end of July, which caused the more serious loss to stock and damage to fences. A report just received gives the estimated cost of repairing and renewing the fences over the settlement at £322.

The settlement's pressing needs are proper road access and the drainage of the swamp ground over the flats. Both of these were in hand, but everything was brought to a standstill by the snowstorms, and it was with difficulty that the contractors saved their teams from destruction. After this experience there may be difficulty in obtaining contractors or workmen to take on these jobs again.