

acres were purchased by two selectors; and of 3,334 acres on deferred payments, 1,880 acres were taken up by twenty-two selectors.

The Mangaone Block, being more hilly than the Pahiata, the County Council has, by request, begun the opening-up of the northern portion of Pahiata, where the land is either level or on an easy slope, and the formation limestone. A portion of it near the Mangatainoko is also intersected by the main interior road, and there are inquiries regarding it by intending settlers.

As soon as a surveyor can be detached, it would be well to lay off a village settlement on the east bank of the Mangatainoko. Six hundred acres were reserved from the rural section survey for that or a township. The rural sections will be offered as soon as we have a few miles of cross-roads opened up. A contract is now in progress.

Kiwitea Block, 7,000 acres, about ten miles from Feilding, is having its road-lines cleared and partially formed under the direction of the Manawatu County Council. This block is sectionally surveyed, and can be offered for application as soon as works are finished.

Otamakapua, a large Native block, over 100,000 acres, the purchase of which is nearly completed, is being approached by the extension of a road-line running from Feilding. Manawatu County Council is in charge of this work, and is bearing the major part of the expense.

Kairanga Block, about two miles from Palmerston.—This is a level block of 8,582 acres, part of which is liable to be flooded in winter by the overflow of creeks. After a careful levelling and much consideration, an outfall-drain has been cut lengthwise through the block five miles, and then conducted through a Native block to a natural channel running into the Oroua. Several side-drains are projected, and the main road-lines have been felled one chain wide, and stumped and cleared one half-chain. There have been many inquiries about the opening of this land. The Land Board intend offering it for application as the works approach completion. The works are under the District Engineer, Public Works Department.

Wellington Country District.—This is 10,000 acres of hilly bush-country. It lies on the ridge west of Hutt Valley, between Hayward's and Upper Hutt Railway-stations, and slopes down to Pahautanui small-farm settlements.

Under the direction of the Hutt County Council a bridle-track on Beere's line has been formed through from Hayward's Railway-station to the district road, Porirua, and the bush has been felled half a chain wide. Other lines have been run by the County Engineer on measured grades, and are now under formation.

This is rather a rough piece of country, but, being in the heart of a settled district, and opened up by these roads, it is likely to be well taken up when offered for application. There are several sections suitable for homesteads, and the more rough sections will afford the adjacent settlers an opportunity of adding to their properties.

Nelson.—The Aorere Valley, Collingwood, has been partially opened up by road-works, directed by the District Engineer of the Public Works Department. The land in this valley can only be sold on immediate payment. As yet no sales have been made. The Commissioner in his report states that it would very likely be taken up if offered under the 10-per-cent. clause of that district.

Reefton to Matakītiki.—This is a line of sixty miles of road projected through a series of back-lying bush-valleys to open up the Crown lands. The course is up the Inangahua Valley to Walker's Station, where there is about 20,000 acres open country; thence through that open country and on to Hampden, at the junction of the Matakītiki with the Buller. The Inangahua County Council contracted for this work, and had a track cleared out and partially formed to Walker's, which is a great convenience to cattle-driving. It is, however, to be regretted that this line was not graded before the expenditure was incurred, as some of the track may have to be abandoned when a road is formed.

Ahaura to Kopara.—This is an instalment of a road leading into some very fair flat open and bush country lying to the north-east of Lake Brunner. The road will ultimately continue on through the Kopara flats past Lake Poerua to Bruce's Paddock, Teremakau. The part that has been made was under direction of the District Engineer.

Westland.—Mahitahi to Haast.—This is thirty-five miles of a projected road-line which runs on through the dense forest country at the base of the Southern Alps. It keeps inland of the coast about six miles, and has been carefully selected and graded as part of the future through-line from Hokitika to Otago and Jackson's Bay. It runs entirely through Crown lands, and opens up several blocks that naturally are suitable for settlement; but, as settlement in Westland is entirely subordinate and dependent on the local market created by the mining population, the immediate importance of this line lies in the facility it gives to prospectors to examine the country. Without such a track the difficulties of penetrating this country and keeping up supplies are so great as to preclude any careful examination of it. Many reports concur in indicating it as a region rich in gold and other metals, the latest being the discoveries reported of Kinnaird and Tain. A contract has been let for several miles of bridle-track, and the line throughout will be cleared of bush half a chain wide.

On the main road-line, Hokitika to Okarito, there are several flats and valleys very well adapted for settlement. A few miles of road have been run in from the main road, penetrating these localities and opening them out. One of these lines goes up to Lake Mapourika. It is very desirable to extend it on to the Waihou River in the interests of prospectors. Very heavy gold has been reported from the upper gorges of the Waihou at different times. The difficulties of access are extremely great. The formation of this track would considerably diminish them.

There is a large area in Westland suitable for cattle and dairy-farming; but, as the market for these products must be local, the sale and settlement of the Crown lands mainly, if not entirely, hinges on the yield of gold.

The works in Westland are under the direction of the Chief Surveyor.

Canterbury.—A road-line twenty-eight miles long has been graded by Messrs. Dobson for the Ashley Road Board from the foot of the hills near Wilson's Quarries, Macfarlane's Station, over the Kuku Pass, and on through the valleys of the Upper Waipara, Kuku, and Duck Creek to Upper Ashley. The line is through a well-grassed country the whole way, with considerable flats suitable for homesteads. The country could support a number of settlers if laid off in areas of one, two, or three