

Special attention is drawn to the timber question in connection with this settlement. The bush consists of rimu, black-pine, and totara, and is by far the most valuable bush in the district. Mr. Young reports that there is nothing to equal it from Otara to Catlin's. The cutting down of the undergrowth and smaller trees, and the burning of the same, will, in the course of a year or two, destroy all this valuable timber, unless some means can be adopted to utilise it. If a sawmill were erected there would still be the question of how the timber could be best got away. The matter is one of great importance, and should be taken into consideration without delay.

Many of the Haldane settlers have for some months been working the sandhills for gold, with fair success. Probably profitable employment could be found for a number of men on the beaches for years if a permanent supply of water were obtainable.

*Papatotara.*—The position of this settlement (which has been in existence for nineteen months) is not encouraging, and the want of success is due to the disadvantages the settlers labour under owing to the heavily-timbered sections. Here again is the question to which attention has been just called in connection with the Haldane Settlement. There is good milling-timber on the Papatotara sections, and this will be destroyed unless speedy action is taken. If a sawmill were started, what at present handicaps the settlers might be turned to their advantage.

Another cause for the want of success in this settlement may probably be traced to the fact that most of the settlers are single men. There are in all sixteen settlers, on fifteen allotments, and only six are married men. In almost all cases the single men show little energy, and they seldom prove to be the sort of men that are wanted on these farms.

The position of the settlement, so far from any township, has increased the difficulties with which the settlers have had to contend. The new outlet to Orepuki, which is contemplated, should be an improvement in this respect.

*Motu-rimu.*—This settlement (being part of Block VIII., Campbelltown Hundred) is situated seven miles from Invercargill, from which place there is a good road to Woodend, within a mile of the settlement, and thence there is a tramway running right through the settlement. The tramway is the property of the New Zealand Pine Company, who give the settlers free use of it, and of trollies, &c. The land in the settlement is fairly good; there are a few moss-banks, and the ground is swampy in parts, so that drainage will effect a great improvement. The ground is flat and level, and when the stumps are out will nearly all be ploughable. There are sixteen sections in the settlement, and eight have been allotted. There are three resident settlers.

Operations were begun on this settlement in August, 1895, so that there has not been time for much progress. 44½ acres of bush has been felled on the sections, and 34½ acres sown in grass. Most of the settlers have begun to improve their sections, three houses have been built, some clearing, in addition to that paid for by the Government, has been done, and a little fencing.

No roadwork has yet been done, but it is intended during the coming winter to fell the bush for the full width of the road, and to drain the road with ditches on both sides.

It will be seen that, though rents are assigned to each section, no rents have been paid, as they will not be actually due in terms of the regulations until the 1st January next.

G. W. WILLIAMS, Chief Surveyor.