

The North Auckland Committee inspected various blocks throughout the district, and recommended the opening of the land in the usual manner, but did not advise that any special development work be carried out prior to selection.

The following areas were inspected, and arrangements made to have them made available for selection :—

Block.	Area. Acres.
Tangowahine Gorge .. .. .	612
Taipa .. .. .	900
Pakiri .. .. .	562
Omahuta .. .. .	3,650
Te Kuri .. .. .	9,792
Kaukapakapa .. .. .	570
Otaika .. .. .	1,306
Waipu .. .. .	2,291
Mangakahia Valley .. .. .	570
Totara Kauri-gum Reserve .. .. .	3,660
Parapara Kauri-gum Reserve .. .. .	2,000
Wainui .. .. .	1,530
Purua Kauri-gum Reserve .. .. .	2,500
Scattered areas .. .. .	2,375
Total .. .. .	32,318

The South Auckland Committees carried out an extensive programme of inspections, amongst which may be mentioned the following :—

- (a) Inspection of a group of unimproved Crown sections in Maungatautari and Wharepapa Survey Districts. In this case it was recommended that some 2,730 acres be developed by the Crown prior to offering for selection, and that a further area of 1,600 acres be resubdivided into smaller areas, and opened for selection in its present state.
- (b) Inspection of extensive areas of vacant Crown lands and provisional State forest areas lying between Waihi and Whangamata.
- (c) Inspection of an area of approximately 35,000 acres of unoccupied Crown land along the middle and upper reaches of the Kauaeranga River and its tributaries, Thames district.
- (d) Inspection of some 18,885 acres of unoccupied Crown lands and education reserves situated north of Lake Rotoma.
- (e) Inspection of about 2,000 acres of high land situated within the Whangamarino Swamp area near Mercer. In this case the subdivision of the area into 100 acre sections was recommended, together with the provision of road access from the main highway a few miles south of Mercer. The land in question is all easily ploughable, and with the application of manures should become highly productive.

In cases (b), (c), and (d) the committees were unable to recommend that the lands inspected be developed by the Crown or opened for selection, though in the case of the Rotoma lands it was recommended that an area of some 400 acres be retained for future consideration in conjunction with some unoccupied Crown land in the locality.

Inspections in hand at the end of the year included a considerable area of pumice land to the east and south of the Guthrie Settlement, a number of blocks of Crown land, totalling about 17,000 acres, in the King-country, and large areas of unoccupied Crown land in the Tauranga district. Arrangements will be made to carry out inspections of further areas from time to time.

At the close of the year arrangements were in hand for the appointment of a third committee to operate in South Auckland, and also committees for the Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Wellington, Nelson, Marlborough, Westland, Otago, and Southland Districts. These committees will be engaged in a thorough investigation of the possibilities of increasing settlement throughout the Dominion.

The Department was at the 31st March in a position to deal with applications by settlers for advances for development purposes. Settlers taking up unimproved sections will be assisted by means of advances up to £1,250 each, as improvements are effected, and will also have the benefit of the advice and instruction of capable field officers. The benefits of the new system of advances will not be confined entirely to settlers taking up new areas, as Crown tenants in occupation of land coming under the designation of undeveloped are also eligible to apply for development advances up to £1,250 each. The rate of interest has been fixed at 6 per cent., and no advances will be made for the purchase of stock, operations being confined solely to advances for development purposes. At the 31st March some thirty-eight applications for advances, totalling £23,335, had been received; but none had been finally dealt with at that date. It is anticipated that the number of applications will increase very considerably as undeveloped sections are taken up from time to time and the benefits of the