

there is flat country ; and from the watershed between the Hautapu and Moawhango there are long valleys running between flat ridges into the Hautapu.

After reaching the open country there is a quantity of flat and undulating land, extending past Turangare and back towards the Moawhanga, which would be suitable for small farms.

*Soil.*—The soil differs in places, and it would be difficult to particularize, but as a rule it is very good. The river flats are generally rather stony, but with very good soil. The ridgy country will, when cleared, carry grass well.

*Timber.*—The timber on the flats is principally tawa, with rimu, kahikitea, &c. ; on the ridges it is as a rule rimu and rata, with maire, hinau, &c. I have seen no totara of any extent, except on the ridges between Hautapu and Moawhanga.

The country, except where described as level, would not be suitable for small sections. Generally, I think, the size should not be less than from 200 to 500 acres. The most broken part is the Otairi Range, and the most difficult part to give road access to is on the east side of the Rangitikei River.

I have, &c.,

A. DUNDAS,

District Surveyor.

Mr. J. W. A. Marchant, Chief Surveyor.

EXTRACT from a LETTER from Mr. D. H. MUNRO to Mr. J. W. A. MARCHANT.

Wanganui, 14th July, 1875.

The Kirikau Block is mostly covered with rough, hilly bush, with fern flats here and there in the bends of the Wanganui River. The Kokakonui and Kokakoriki gullies are partly open ; the latter, together with the hills rising on each side of it, covered for the most part with light second growth and fern ("hunua"), the original bush having been destroyed by fire. Both these gullies afford tolerable access to the back of the block. The portion added to the block at Te Rauwhare contains a few hundred acres of undulating fern land, rising gradually as it recedes from the Wanganui River. The portion added to the block at Te Iringa-a-Te Whui, and extending down the Ohuha Stream to the Kawautahi, is all bush and mostly hilly. Good sawing timber, including totara, rimu, and matai, is to be found in most of the bush gullies. The soil is of good character in all parts of the block.

Mr. J. ANNABELL to Mr. J. W. A. MARCHANT.

Mr. J. W. A. Marchant, Chief Surveyor.

Wanganui, 16th September, 1884.

IN reply to your telegram, I consider Otairi fair grazing bush-country, with good flats for homesteads on Rangitikei River ; Ngaurukehu, Te Kapua, and Te Ruanui, fair pastoral land ; Maungakaretu, rough, but good soil. Rangataua and lands from Murimotu towards Wanganui River seem low-lying undulating hills, and good deal of level, particularly about Manganui-a-te-ao River, with, I believe, much totara bush and deep rich soil ; and towards west of Ruapehu large open flats show from Kirikau Trig. Stations ; beyond, towards the north, seems mostly open land.

JOHN ANNABELL,

Assistant Surveyor.

Mr. H. A. FIELD to Mr. J. W. A. MARCHANT.

SIR,—

Waikanae, 2nd September, 1879.

I have the honour to forward you a short report on Otairi Block, as required.

The block is all rough bush country, except three patches of fern on the Rangitikei, and another bit of rough fern ground on the Mangapapa Stream about Pumaro. There is also a little flat ground in valley of the Pourewa, at Te Kieke, and along the course of the Rangitikei, all of which, with the exception of fern above mentioned, is very heavily timbered with kahikatea, matai, rimu, and totara, and might at a future time be valuable for the timber on it. The soil on the Turakina appears to be hard and cold, and covered with scrubby bush, resembling very much the adjoining Paraekaretu Block. All the country above the long ridge at Te Namu, and all east of the Pourewa Stream, is heavily timbered, and covered with a rich loamy soil, that can hardly be excelled.

There is already a road laid off up through the block. It follows up the valley of the Pourewa, and, winding along the eastern side of it towards its head, rises over the ridge ; thence along the eastern face of Tauporae, and crossing a hollow in the ridge between Tauporae and Te Kumu, and thence along the western side of ridge to Te Kumu, crossing ridge again a little east of Te Kumu, and following down the eastern side of a small branch ridge to the Mangaone Stream ; thence it is laid off through to the plains at Te Kapua. A road to get at the western side of the block will have to be taken up from the Paraekaretu, but that will be different, owing to the precipitous nature of the streams. A very good road could easily be got up the Rangitikei, starting from a little above the north-east corner of Paraekaretu ; thence across to Manganoho ; then following along just outside the boundary of Otairi to Te Kieke, crossing the Makohina Stream near its mouth, and thence by way of Pauerawera, Ohingaiti, and Powakarua to the upper boundary. I believe this would be the best way to take the main road from Marton, instead of the way of Te Kumu, as laid off. So far as I have seen, a railway could be taken this way easily ; most of the way would be on level ground.

I have, &c.,

HENRY A. FIELD,

Assistant Surveyor.

Mr. J. W. A. Marchant.

Chief Surveyor, Wellington.