

GRAND TOTAL of LANDS commencing at Ten Miles from Marton, that will give Traffic to the Railway within Ten Miles of the Proposed Line.

<i>Crown or Private.</i>							
Arable	...	...	...	...	...	...	64,000
Pastoral	...	...	...	...	...	...	113,000
<i>Native.</i>							
Arable	...	...	...	...	...	...	766,000
Pastoral	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,024,000
Grand total							1,967,000

Of this quantity I should estimate a million and a half as good land fit for settlement; the balance will be fair pastoral land.

FRIDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1884.

Mr. J. Rochfort attended and submitted the following statement:—

SIR,—I have the honour to make the following statement *re* land along the central route railway, commencing at the south-west boundary of the Parikarito Block, nine miles north-east of Marton. The Rangatira Block lies on the east side of the line, and in the Porewa contains about twenty-two thousand acres of bush country, with good marketable timber; about two-thirds are good agricultural and the rest good pastoral land.

On the west of the line is the Parikarito Block, extending to about twenty-two mile, or three miles beyond the Township of Hunterville. About half this block, to about four miles from the line, would feed into the railway. It contains 23,000 acres. This block is all sold, and occupied in many places, and roaded throughout, practicable for horses. On the flats of the Porewa and valleys the timber is heavy and the land good, the low hills are more lightly timbered; about one-third is arable and the rest good pastoral land.

North of the Parikarito lies the middle Turakina Valley. It contains about fifty thousand acres, and would feed into the railway. The nearest point is seven miles from the 20-mile peg. A fairly-good road is in progress. There are good flats along the Turakina and Mangapapa Valleys, the bulk being hilly bush and scrub lands, all well adapted for pastoral purposes.

From 22 miles to the north-east boundary of the Otairi Block, at 33½ miles, there are 35,000 acres which would be served by the line. A horse-road, well graded, runs through half of the block and falls into the railway-line. At 33½ miles the Crown lands end. The land is mostly covered with heavy bush, of marketable quality; about one-fourth is arable and the rest good pastoral land. The Crown holds about three thousand acres. Along the river, from 26 miles to 30 miles, there are two considerable open flats covered with fern and flax; the largest is called Ohingaiti; it is about a mile and a half long. This is on the high terrace where the line is surveyed. Below it, towards the River Rangitikei, there is another extensive open flat, much longer, on which there are several Native kaingas and cultivations. One at 29 miles is called Otara. Opposite there is a favourable place for crossing the Rangitikei with a road-bridge to connect the country on the east side, known as the Otamakapua Block. It is the best place for connecting the north end of this block with the railway-line.

From 33½ to 45 miles, at an average width of four miles, there would be 13,000 acres on the west side of the line. Along this portion the Otairi Range approaches the Rangitikei River, and there are several long spurs ending in high bluffs on the river. Some of these spurs unite and form high table-land, along which the line would run, and greatly reduce the work of formation. The slopes are generally gentle, and the land of good quality and well suited for pastoral purposes. It might be settled in 300-acre or 400-acre blocks, and each block would have flats in it. The timber is taua, matai, maire, rimu, and some totara, of good marketable quality. In some of the creeks there is gravel, but the main rock throughout is marl, in places hard, and containing shells.

The Otamakapua Block, on the east side of the Rangitikei, contains 140,000 acres, one-third of which, at the north end, would probably be served by the line. The character of the country is generally flats, near the Rangitikei, on high table-land, through which the side streams run with deep banks; at the back the country is rough and much broken by low hills, well suitable for pastoral purposes; the timber is smaller than that across the river. Many of the hills are covered with scrub and koromiko, &c. There are three blocks of land within the block which are still Native, but under lease to Europeans; the three together contain 9,000 acres; they are used for cattle runs. The Kawatau River is the boundary of the Otamakapua Block as well as of the Crown lands. Beyond this boundary I have not been more than two or three miles. A large area will be surveyed by the railway.

From 45 miles to the first open country, 58 miles, the Hautapu has high marl banks within five miles of the end, when they decrease quickly until the banks are low. Extensive flats run along the river, but there are three spurs, which run out and form high bluffs. One of these can be got round by cutting, but the other two must be graded over. I estimate that, taking both sides of the river at nine miles back, there are sixty thousand acres of land of excellent quality which would be served by the railway; one-fourth would be arable and the rest good pastoral land. The timber is matai, kahikatea, maire, &c., of marketable quality; some of the totara are of great size; the undergrowth is rangiora scrub.

From 58 to 72 miles, on the west side of the line to 72 miles (south boundary of Murimotu Block) the country is part bush and open; there is a good deal of totara on both sides of the river. On the west side of the line there are 75,000 thousand acres within ten miles of the line, one-third would be arable and the remainder very good pastoral land. On the east side there would be