

this source was 5,086 cubic yards. The cost of this gravel has been considerably less than the shingle supplied by the scows, and basing the cost of this shingle at 8s. 6d., as was the price on the former contract, then the greater part of the cost of the punts built for this work has been repaid.

In addition to this supply, a contract was entered into with the Auckland Shingle Company for a regular supply of their shingle. The supply from this source was 3,065 cubic yards.

At the end of March, 1914, the Pipiroa-Waitakaruru Road was being metalled, and since then this road has been metalled for a further distance of 100 chains, the total distance being three miles and a quarter. After this the plant was shifted to Kopuarahi, where the Kopuarahi-Turua Road and the Kopu Road were metalled. With the former road metalled there is now a metalled road to Turua, and also to the Wharepoa Ferry on the Waihou River. The Kopu Road has been metalled as far as the eastern boundary of the Hauraki Plains, and will later on be continued to the Kopu Ferry site, on the Waihou River.

These two roads, which measured 180 and 148 chains respectively, were completed in March, 1915, when the plant was shifted to Kerepehi, where the Kerepehi-Turoa Road is being metalled. This latter work will, however, be shown in the next report.

The proposals for metalling for 1915-16 are as follows:—

- (1.) Kerepehi-Turua Road.
- (2.) Approaches to Hopai and Rawerawe wharves.
- (3.) Waitakaruru-Pipiroa Road (between canal and stream).
- (4.) Kerepehi-Kopuarahi Road (portion of).
- (5.) Orchard Road (portion of).
- (6.) Ngarua Road (portion of).

With the Department's own plant the scheme has been pushed on very satisfactorily, and especially is this the case with the tram-line and trucks, which has simplified the haulage of the metal. This plant is all in good order, and will be serviceable for many years to come.

The three punts for conveying the metal are generally in fair order—one, a second-hand one, however, is in bad repair, and a complete overhaul will be required at an early date.

Owing to the extra towing whilst metalling at Kerepehi, it will be necessary to arrange for either the construction or hire of another punt.

The expenditure was all out of special grants, and the total for the year was £4,229 6s. 5d. Details of this expenditure are as follows: Day-labour, £2,262 6s. 2d.; contract (co-operative), £329 3s. 6d.; contract (special), £1,266 11s. 11d.; material, £371 4s. 10d. As the roads are completed supplies of metal are left at frequent intervals so as to enable repairs to be made cheaply and quickly.

SURVEYS.

During the year 6,444 acres was subdivided into sections for settlement purposes as well as township allotments. This latter area comprised 130 acres in the vicinity of Kerepehi, Pate-tonga, and Ngarua, and was subdivided into 216 sections, ranging from $\frac{1}{4}$ acre to 6 acres.

The balance of 6,314 acres was subdivided into sixty-seven sections, ranging from 10 to 234 acres.

In addition numerous surveys were made for various purposes, Native land road deviation, and engineering.

VALUATION.

The area that was subdivided and opened for selection during the year was 6,444 acres, valued at £65,601, which gives a total of 38,994 acres that has been opened for selection to date. The value of this total area at the time of opening for selection was £243,851. These totals are independent of lands that have been utilized as drain and road reserves.

WORKS EXPENDITURE DURING THE YEAR.

Piecework contract absorbed the sum of £6,054 17s. 3d. from the Hauraki Plains Settlement Account, whilst day-labour absorbed the sum of £8,369 9s. 10d. from the same fund. All the above were paid from local imprest.

PRINCIPAL WORKS PROPOSED.

The principal works proposed to be carried out during the next financial year are as follows:—

- (1.) Completion of Ngarua Canal.
- (2.) Continuance of Awaitei Canal and reclamation of adjoining lands.
- (3.) Dredging of Lower Waitoa River.
- (4.) Continuance of cart-road development at Waikaka.
- (5.) General drainage development, mainly at Waikaka.
- (6.) Metalling of main roads.
- (7.) Maintenance of existing works.
- (8.) Formation of access roads to Hauraki Plains, particularly the Pokeno-Waitakaruru Road.

LAND PROPOSED TO BE OPENED.

All the area mentioned in my last year's report as being likely to be opened for selection was balloted for. Owing to the construction of the necessary access roads becoming heavier, it is scarcely likely that areas of any size can be opened this year. A small block at Torehape is, however, likely to be sufficiently advanced for settlement purposes. Further areas, however, at Ngarua and Mangawhero, will not be ready till the following year. This same remark applies to the block between the Awaitei Stream and the Piako River, which is, in my opinion, the best land that the Crown still possesses.