

FLAX AREAS.

During the year £65 4s. 10d. was received for flax-cutting rights. An area of flax in Blocks V, VI, IX, and X, Waihou Survey District, was disposed of by tender during the year for £805.

At present there are four mills on the plains, situated at Patetonga, Waitakaruru, Ngarua, and Waitoa. The future revenue from this source should be very appreciable.

SURVEYS.

Owing to lack of sufficiently drained land suitable for settlement, no areas were surveyed during the past year. Engineering-works only, for the prosecution of the drainage-works of the plains, were undertaken.

WORKS EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR.

The total works expenditure for the year, including supplies, repairs, &c., amounts to £13,803 7s. 11d. Piecework contracts amounting to £3,251 11s. 5d., and day-labour works amounting to £6,312 19s. 11d., were paid from local imprest out of the Hauraki Plains Settlement Account. The totals given may not agree with Head Office figures, as in some cases the expenditure may not have been brought to charge.

VALUATION.

The total area of land subdivided and thrown open for selection to date is 38,994 acres, which was valued at £243,851. The next few years will see a considerable addition to these figures.

METALLING ROADS.

The total distance of roads metalled or shelled, commencing from year 1913, is now 22 miles 5 chains. Of this, 4 miles 33 chains of metal and 52 chains of shelled road were completed during the year. The supply from the Kauaeranga River was again kept going. This was obtained, as previously, by means of the Department's steamer, punts, &c., and is the best grade of metal received on the plains. In addition, Messrs. McCallum Bros. supplied metal by scow, but owing to labour troubles their supply has been very scanty.

Owing to shortage of punts the supply of Kauaeranga metal was limited, and also further shortened owing to many freshes in the river stopping the towing-work. The timber for one new punt for metal-carrying purposes is on the ground, and a start is being made immediately in building same. This will mean a considerable saving by increasing the Kauaeranga supply, this being the cheapest source of metal-supply.

Owing to shortage of trucks it has been practicable to metal in only one place at a time. Fifteen new wooden trucks have just been built on the works, and these will be put into use immediately. All metalling done during this year has been put down 13 ft. wide instead of 9 ft., as previously done.

The following is a schedule showing the roads metalled or shelled during the year:—

	M.	ch.
Kerepeehi-Kopuarahi	1	46
Orchard East	0	40
Te Hopai	1	40
Patetonga access road	0	61
Orchard Wharf approach	0	6
Pipiroa-Waitakaruru	0	47
Access to wharf, Waitakaruru	0	5
Distance covered	5	5

The total quantity of metal received on the plains was 5,820 cubic yards; of this McCallum Bros. supplied 2,892 yards, and Kauaeranga River 2,928 yards.

All road-metalling has been done out of special grants, as shown in branch report.

PRINCIPAL WORKS PROPOSED.

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

- (1.) Metalling Pipiroa-Waitakaruru Road (uncompleted portion).
- (2.) Metalling Orchard-Waitakaruru Road.
- (3.) Metalling Awaiti Road.
- (4.) Metalling Kerepeehi-Kopuarahi Road (uncompleted portion).
- (5.) Metalling Hopai Road.
- (6.) Continuation Waitoa Canal.
- (7.) New dredge canal, Waitakaruru Stream.
- (8.) Concrete outlets and tide-gates at Kopuarahi, Shelly Beach, Duck Creek, &c.
- (9.) Supply ferro-concrete pipes for culverts, &c.
- (10.) Maintenance of existing works, &c.
- (11.) General development-work.

LANDS PROPOSED TO BE OPENED.

As already referred to, it was not possible to place any land on the market during the year under review. The exceptionally wet year and lack of labour to develop drainage-works