

taining about 23,000 acres of open land, and now leased to Mr. Walker. From the plain we pursued a return course for about ten miles, when we crossed the Matakītaki River, continuing our journey down the banks of that river past Hunter or May's Store back to Rowe's at Hampden. Leaving Rowe's we again crossed the Matakītaki, proceeding down the south side of the Buller to Ribbie's, passing the homesteads of Mr. Handyside and other freehold and leasehold settlers. Crossed the Buller at Ribbie's, along to Oxnan's; thence still along the river bank, fording the Newton River, eventually reaching the Lyell Township. Crossed the Buller here for the last time, and on to Christy's Ferry near the junction of the Inangahua and Buller Rivers. From thence our course lay for above four miles alongside the Inangahua to the landing, where we crossed the river continuing our journey to Reefton. Starting from Reefton we passed Square Town; on through the valley of the Little Grey; through McHardy's run to the junction of the Little and Main Grey Rivers; over some open land known as "Totara Flat," through the main Grey Valley, the Ahaura Plain, to the town of Ahaura. From thence the route lay across and down the Ahaura River, Nelson Creek, and on to the Arnold (the river dividing the Province of Nelson from Westland). From this point, for convenience of travelling, the road was followed to Greymouth.

It must be understood that in thus describing the route taken I have done so in the shortest manner possible to be intelligible, and that the description does not include the various deviations made by me (wherever practicable) to thoroughly examine the nature of the soil and timber. By the courtesy of His Honor the Superintendent of Nelson, I am enabled to forward with this report a very excellent map prepared by Mr. Wrigg, which will be of great service in showing the line of country traversed; the amount of forest land; the rivers; and the open land.

I now propose to give the opinion I have formed as to the area of the level forest and open land in the many valleys and terraces I passed through and over, between the two watersheds; in so doing, however, I hope it may be understood that in traversing a heavily timbered country it is most difficult to get a thoroughly correct estimate of the areas in the numerous small valleys. I have given the question full consideration, and, kindly assisted, as I was, by Mr. Woolley and other gentlemen connected with the Nelson Government Survey Staff, I believe my figures may, in the aggregate, be confidently relied on.

I understand that the land (through the route taken) from Foxhill to Newport's, a distance of eighteen miles, for a considerable distance on both sides of the proposed line, has been sold. I thus start from that point, namely eighteen miles from Foxhill, and take the forest land first:—

	Acres.
From Newport's to Dillon's	5,000
„ Dillon's to Government Clearing	5,000
„ Rowe's to McGregor's	500
„ McGregor's to Moonlights	4,000
„ Junction of the Marina, and Warwick to the Buller	4,000
„ May's Store, Matakītaki, to Rowe's	2,500
„ Rowe's to Ribbie's	1,500
„ Ribbie's to Newton River, and up Matiri	5,000
„ Newton to Christy's	2,500
„ Christy's to Watershed of Little Grey	60,000
„ Reefton Saddle to junction of Main and Little Grey	18,000
„ Junction of Greys to Alexander River	15,000
„ „ „ to the Arnold	14,000
„ Junction of Arnold to Lake Brunner	5,000
„ „ „ to Point Elizabeth	5,000
On the Ahaura	9,000
	156,000
The open land I estimate as follows:—	Acres.
McGregor's, Tiraumea Plain	3,000
O'Laughlan's Flat	500
Hunter's	3,000
Horse Terrace	50
Frog Flat	200
Marina Plain	23,000
Upper Matiri	6,000
Little Grey	10,000
Grey to Alexander	6,000
Ahaura Plains (including Kopara)	6,000
	57,750

A gross total of 213,750 acres, of comparatively level forest and open land, is thus arrived at, out of which (as I learn from information supplied at my request from the office of the Superintendent of Nelson) 6,000 acres of the very best of this land has been sold in small quantities, and 5,409 acres are held under agricultural lease, subject to the power by the lessee to purchase the fee-simple thereof at 20s. per acre, any time within the first three years of his term. Making these deductions from my totals, we have a net total of 202,341 acres, of river flat, low terrace, forest, and open lands, within the watersheds.

Mr. Wrigg, in his report of 31st March, 1868, addressed to the Provincial Secretary of Nelson Province, states that the total flat land which would probably come within the land proposed to be given to the company constructing the line, would be 152,000 acres.