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A RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY OF PUMICE SOILS.

ROTORUA COUNTY.

(Continued.)

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THERE is no land in New Zealand which is so neglected in settlement as that of the pumice type. Any knowledge that can be gained which will lead to an increased utilization of pumice lands as a whole will, owing to the vast areas which are available, the low price of these, and the ease with which they may be cleared and roaded, contribute largely to the prosperity of the Dominion. But there is pumice and pumice. To the optimist, and one possibly without practical experience of the difficulties in farming the worst kinds, all pumice lands are latent with wealth and only await railways, roads, and harbours to realize a golden harvest, while to the practical pessimist who has failed on one of the difficult pumice types all kinds are anathema. Each commentator may be in a measure right, but errs in arguing generally from different premises.

It is the aim of this series of articles to classify the different types of pumice soils so that any may be recognized, and that none may suffer unjustly from evil reputation of a neighbour or prosper inequitably from a false comparison. It is not claimed that such initial investigation will resolve all difficulties; but classification is the first step to a clear understanding—that when the facts are known reason may exercise its judgment.