the end of his term of years, nor to the value of his improvements. It has also been alleged that persons in authority have assured the tenants that such rights would be secured to them by legislation, and that they could with safety expend labour and money in improvements. No such legislation has taken place. Many of the leases will soon expire.

In all these cases, and in others of a cognate nature, the Native Land Board should have full power to act as owners of the land, due regard being had both to the welfare and reasonable wishes of the Natives.

Notwithstanding these and other deficiencies and imperfections, the condition of things in relation to titles in Taranaki and the north-western portion of Wellington contrasts most favourably with that of nearly every other district where Native lands exist to any large extent. While Native titles in all other parts of the North Island are a source of endless litigation and extreme danger, those in the reserves of the confiscated territory are secure. The reason is obvious. The title is given by an officer acting under statutory authority, and not by the individual Natives to whom the land belongs. Other advantages also exist. The heavy expense and trouble attendant upon the execution and examination of Maori deeds are avoided. The delay invariably happening in the completion of a Maori title does not harass the intending settler.

As Mr. Thomas Mackay, one of our number, is Commissioner of the West Coast, it would ill become us to speak of the management of these lands.

Subsequent Legislation: Restriction Act of 1884; Committee Act of 1883.

In 1883 and 1884 Parliament seemed doubtful of the individual and free-trade policy. By "The Native Committees Act, 1883," Maori Committees were formed which could make inquiries as to owners, successors to owners, and boundaries of lands, and report; but the report was not binding. By "The Native Land Laws Amendment Act, 1883," counsel, solicitors, and all agents were banished from the Court; and by "The Native Land Alienation Restriction Act, 1884," the centre of the North Island—the so-called King-country—was absolutely shut up from purchase or lease save by or on behalf of the Crown. Fine and imprisonment were the penalties for the infringement of the provisions of this Act.

The Native Committees Act is a hollow shell, the object of which it is difficult to see. It mocked and still mocks the Natives with a semblance of authority. They wish it to be turned into a living Act, giving them power to do something for themselves.

Native Land Acts to 1890.

While the amendments of the Act of 1873, and the numerous Acts carrying out the same principle, were in full operation, and lessees and purchasers were attempting to complete their titles, the Act of 1886 put a stop to all further proceedings, and brought everything except some particular cases to a standstill.

"The Native Land Administration Act, 1886," is the one effort made by the Legislature to stay the individual dealing with Native lands. That Act was misunderstood because no action was taken to clearly explain its object to the Natives, so as to counteract other influences that militated against its favourable reception by them. No lands were brought under its jurisdiction. In consequence of this, after two years of quiescence, it was repealed.

The Native Land Administration Act of 1886 was inoperative owing to two reasons, the first of these being that the total control of their lands was taken away from the Maoris and placed in the hands of persons not in any way responsible to them; the second, that the Act was made optional and not imperative. The Natives objected to being totally deprived of all authority and management of their ancestral lands, and therefore they refused to bring those lands under the Administration Act.

The Native Land Act of 1888, section 4, repealed "The Administration Act, 1886," and revived free trade in individual interests in Native lands.

"The Native Land Court Amendment Act, 1888," section 16, professed to render transferable land or shares in land, and to validate former transfers; but this did not apply to land restricted, or recommended to be restricted, or thereafter to be restricted. On this came the case Poaka *v.* Ward. As Mr. Justice Richmond said, section 16 "had created a new puzzle for the Courts." Two Judges were on each side. The profession was also much divided in opinion. This state of things under the present system is unavoidable, although intolerable. The case is typical of the normal condition of Native-land legislation since 1873. Parliament