

class land, but the greater portion of it is third- or fourth-class land. If the lands were in the South Island, no pastoralist would consider a run of such country of a less area than 15,000 acres suitable for pastoral purposes, and, indeed, country of a similar character in the South Island set aside for pastoral runs would be generally in areas of 20,000 to 40,000 acres. The land is wholly unploughable, and could only be got into grass-bearing by burning the bush and scrub and sowing grass. The only grass that seems suitable is the *Danthonia*, and in places a new grass that is coming into much favour in the North of Auckland called *Paspalum dilatatum*. Even when in grass the hill country cannot be expected to support on an average more than one sheep to the acre all the year round.

There are according to the last census 743 Maoris in the county, and as the land is generally unsuitable for cultivation by the plough, it will be seen that there are only about 30,000 acres of inferior land for this large number of Maoris, an average of about 40 acres each. This is really too small an area for the Maoris to be expected to make a living off the land by ordinary farming.

There are 65,242 acres in the county owned by Europeans (inclusive of Crown lands) and at the last census there were 801 Europeans in the county. Assuming that they were all engaged in farming, this would give an area of 81 acres each, but a great number of Europeans are engaged in sawmilling, bush-felling, storekeeping, shipbuilding, &c. It will be seen from this statement that the area used by the European farmers is far larger per head than the area left to the Maoris per head for farming purposes, and if the Maoris had to look to farming there is too small an area of their own land fit for pastoral purposes. A considerable number of them, and, indeed, of Europeans, have been maintained by digging for kauri-gum, but the gumfields are gradually becoming exhausted, and the kauri forests in the county are nearly at an end. There will be therefore a lack of employment both for Maoris and Europeans unless the land now lying waste and uncultivated is turned to some profitable use.

Farming in the northern region of New Zealand has followed too much the lines of farming in the more temperate parts of New Zealand. The north of Auckland is subtropical, and it should be able to carry a large population if there were introduced into the district the kind of cultivation that is customary in subtropical countries. We were informed that experts have said that Whangaroa would be very fine fruit-growing country, and that olives would succeed well in many parts of the district. Fruit-growing, however, to be successful would require either some means of putting the fruit quickly on the market or canneries to be established, and to obtain these both capital and enterprise are requisite, neither of which is forthcoming at present in the Whangaroa County. It cannot be expected that the Maoris can take up fruit-culture at present. They would require to be educated as orchardists, and they would also require considerable capital to start such an enterprise, and they are, we regret to say, destitute of any accumulated funds. The sale of part of their lands, and of the timber on the lands they still hold, has not enriched them. They have spent their money in various unproductive ways, from which the consumption of alcohol has not been absent. We mention these facts to show that at present we cannot say the Maoris have surplus lands unnecessary for their own sustenance, and therefore that, strictly speaking, none of their lands can be brought under sections 4 and 11 of the 1907 Act. At the same time they are anxious that some of their lands should be leased. This may enable them to pay the rates on the land they retain, and assist them in living whilst they are engaged in bringing their land into cultivation suitable for sheep-pasturage.

They are willing to dispose of an area of 10,798 acres. This would leave them 13,148 acres for their own immediate occupation, and leave 1,857 acres yet to be considered and 5,688 acres papatupu land. The need of having the land leased by public auction so that every person in the community may have an equal chance of obtaining land for settlement, and the need also of the Maoris being protected so that the best price may be obtained for the land they lease, and the need of a lease being speedily agreed to, point to the Maori Land Board as the