

Mr. Maxwell has exercised a general oversight over the northern forests, and has also collected the fees for digging gum upon Crown land where practicable.

The *Waerenga Wattle-plantation*, under the charge of Mr. Norreys Kensington, has been kept in order, trees thinned, and tea-tree and fern kept down; also, additional ground has been cleared and got ready for ploughing, and sowing further wattle-seed, in the spring. This officer's time is also taken up with Crown Ranger's duties in the Counties of Waikato and Raglan, in which very large areas have recently been taken up under perpetual lease. The total revenue received from State forests during the past year has been £806 16s. 1d.

In conclusion, I may state that I anticipate a large demand for all tenures of land during the coming year, which will keep the staff fully employed. I am glad to state that the complete amalgamation of the Lands and Survey Departments has materially tended to the efficient working of the office and the convenience of the public.

GERHARD MUELLER,  
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

### TARANAKI.

*Table A.*—The area open for selection on the 1st April, 1891, was 31,745 acres, which, added to the area which was opened during the year—viz., 25,698—made a total of 57,443 acres. Of this area, 55,132 acres have been disposed of, leaving open at the end of the year only 2,311 acres. The area taken up was 15,955 acres more than that taken up during any previous year as far back as 1885–86.

*Table B.*—As was remarked last year, it will be noticed that perpetual lease is far and away the most popular system, the number of selectors during the year having been more than three times the number of those under deferred payments.

*Table C.*—The unusually large area and high price of town land is attributable to the great demand for Stratford town lots at the first sale, which induced the Land Board to increase the prices, with the result that at the two last sales only a few sections were sold. Below is given a comparison of the increase in the value of town land:—

|                             |     |             | A. | R. | P. | £  | s. | d. |           |
|-----------------------------|-----|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----------|
| Sales of town land, 1884–85 | ... | 7 purchases | 2  | 2  | 0  | 32 | 0  | 0  | per acre. |
| " 1885–86                   | ... | 1 "         | 0  | 3  | 0  | 40 | 0  | 0  | "         |
| " 1886–87                   | ... | 2 "         | 1  | 1  | 0  | 46 | 0  | 0  | "         |
| " 1887–88                   | ... | 1 "         | 0  | 3  | 0  | 33 | 6  | 8  | "         |
| " 1888–89                   | ... | 3 "         | 1  | 0  | 35 | 42 | 13 | 4  | "         |
| " 1889–90                   | ... | 16 "        | 5  | 3  | 12 | 52 | 7  | 4  | "         |
| " 1890–91                   | ... | 15 "        | 5  | 0  | 34 | 49 | 6  | 8  | "         |
| " 1891–92                   | ... | 40 "        | 18 | 3  | 17 | 73 | 5  | 9  | "         |

*Tables D and E.*—The area of deferred-payment land selected is greater than last year by 501 acres, but the number of selectors (thirty-five) is six less than last year. There have been three deferred-payment selections during the year of areas exceeding 640 acres—viz., 830 acres, 1,210 acres, and 1,357 acres.

This was the best year which we have had for perpetual leases, the area taken up (38,337 acres) being more than double that selected last year. The area of current perpetual-lease transactions (105,455 acres) now for the first time exceeds that of deferred payment (91,046 acres). This is owing in a great measure to the rapid rate at which deferred-payment lands are being made freehold.

|            |     |     |                                 |   |              |
|------------|-----|-----|---------------------------------|---|--------------|
| In 1886–87 | ... | ... | 67 selectors completed purchase | = | 5,653 acres. |
| " 1887–88  | ... | ... | 71 "                            | = | 7,666 "      |
| " 1888–89  | ... | ... | 55 "                            | = | 5,390 "      |
| " 1889–90  | ... | ... | 38 "                            | = | 4,064 "      |
| " 1890–91  | ... | ... | 74 "                            | = | 8,280 "      |
| " 1891–92  | ... | ... | 112 "                           | = | 13,349 "     |

During the year two deferred-payment holders have changed their holdings to perpetual lease (340 acres), and one perpetual-lease holder has changed to deferred payment (105 acres). Altogether fifteen deferred-payment holders—of 1,217 acres—have converted to perpetual lease, and seventeen perpetual-lease holders—of 2,422 acres—changed to deferred payment.

*Table F.*—There are not any agricultural leases in this district.

*Table G.*—Of the six village allotments sold for cash, five were at Pungarehu and one at Tarata.

*Table H.*—It is now some years since we offered any small-farm lots on deferred payment. Those which have been selected in previous years are gradually being made freehold. We have now only thirteen outstanding transactions—387 acres.

*Table I.*—We have not any village-settlement lots under perpetual-lease system.

*Table J.*—The only village homestead special settlement section disposed of in this district has been forfeited for failure to comply with the conditions, and non-payment of rent. It is proposed to offer the section (50, Block X., Kaupokonui) for selection as ordinary rural land.

*Table K.*—The special settlements selected this year are twelve. Of these there are now being surveyed:—

|                                                      | Members. | Applied for.   |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Milsom Small-farm Association                        | ...      | Area.<br>6,700 |
| Tanner Small-farm Association                        | ...      | 5,200          |
| Oxford Small-farm Association                        | ...      | 4,000          |
| Terrace End Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Small-farm Associations | 145      | 29,000         |

The total area applied for is 83,000 acres.