

There is another consideration which shows where the ballot system always fails, and it is this: In a great many cases it frequently happens that a piece of land is so situated that the acquisition of it will enhance the value of an adjoining piece of land, and the two pieces will be capable of being worked as one holding to much better advantage than either piece separately. For instance, there is a very common case in Marlborough, where a man holding a small freehold facing a bay or a road would improve its value greatly if he could acquire the rough hilly land at the back; while if another applicant got it a road would have to be purchased through the freehold, which would be deteriorated in value thereby, and the hilly land could not be worked to advantage without the homestead-site in front; therefore it would be worth more to the holder of the freehold than to any one else, and if he were allowed to acquire it the State would get a better price for it, and the land would yield a better return than if otherwise disposed of. What we want is to get the best farming talent we have in the community settled on the land, and we shall never do this under the ballot system, where a capable farmer's son, strong, willing, with brains and capital, is often defeated at the ballot by a man who has always lived in a town, and who has not a single qualification requisite to make a good farmer; or, what is still more absurd, by a young girl who has never done anything but housework all her life. What should we think of a farmer who decided by tossing up a coin which field should be sown with wheat and which with oats? We should conclude that he ought to be consigned to a lunatic asylum as soon as possible.

To conclude, under the present ballot system, if there are a hundred applicants for ten sections, then, in any case, ninety out of the hundred are rejected. Now, is it not more likely that a judicious weeding-out of these ninety by the Land Board will secure a better class of settlers than by leaving it to blind chance? Is it not also a more just system? A good farmer has a just cause of complaint if he is rejected by a throw of the dice, as it were, and by no fault of his own. But if an incapable man is rejected because he is incapable, then he has no right to complain. The ballot system does not succeed in putting one single farmer extra on the land, but it results in placing a very inferior set of settlers in possession, as compared with those that an auction system would secure.

Finally, if we wish to make the land system of New Zealand a success, we should see to it that we put the most capable men that we have on the land, and not continue the present hazardous system any longer.

The Surveyor-General, Wellington.

C. W. ADAMS,

Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Department of Lands and Survey,
District Office, Blenheim, 17th July, 1903.

Circular re the Ballot System.

In reference to my letter *re* the ballot system, of yesterday's date, I herewith forward you copy of suggestions sent to me over two years ago by Mr. W. G. Runcie, now Auditor of Land Revenue. It was really his method that was suggested by me in yesterday's communication for simplifying the ballot system, and I think that Mr. Runcie's suggestions would go as far as possible towards simplifying the methods of taking a ballot.

My own objections are not so much as regards the method of conducting a ballot as to the principle of the ballot itself.

C. W. ADAMS,

The Surveyor-General, Wellington.

Commissioner of Crown Lands.

SUGGESTED ALTERATIONS TO THIS REGULATION BY W. G. RUNCIE, AUDITOR OF LAND REVENUE.
REGULATIONS FOR A SYSTEM OF BALLOT UNDER "THE LAND ACT, 1892."

GLASGOW, GOVERNOR.

IN pursuance and exercise of the powers and authorities conferred by "The Land Act, 1892," His Excellency the Governor of the Colony of New Zealand doth hereby revoke the regulations for a system of ballot under the said Act, published in the *New Zealand Gazette* of the tenth November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three, and doth hereby make the following regulations for a system of ballot with respect to lands purchased, leased, or otherwise disposed of under the provisions of the said Act, that is to say:—

1. On the day appointed for receiving applications for land each application as it is received shall be numbered in consecutive order; and in addition with a rotation number having reference only to the application made for the particular section applied for.

2. A list shall be prepared for each section in the following form, of the applicants of each grade, on which will be entered the rotation number for the land applied for, and the consecutive number of the application of that grade.

Survey District.			
Section	, Block	ac.	r. p.
Rotation Number.	Application Number.	Name of Applicant.	
		Remarks.	