

communities formed. For under this system labour is paid at the current rates, and the holder of what may be called the "stock" or "capital" gets the profits; but, as the holders of the "stock" are also the workers, they reap directly not only the reward, but the profit of their labour. Further, the settlers would not live apart on separate farms, but their houses would be close to each other, and thus there would be a better social life than in many country districts. There would be closer social communication. The drawback to country life is often the want of a village or town life, the absence of social intercourse, and the lack of art, music, and literature that are common to most towns. How is country life to be made popular? How are country settlers to have all the privileges and pleasures of town life whilst they enjoy the great benefits of an open-air country life? This is one of the many social problems of to-day. There have been many communities started in country districts in other countries to enable their members to reap the advantages of such a life. Most of them have been based on a community of goods as well as of life, and there has been less scope for individual effort or exertion than is open in individualistic communities, and even where such communities have had a strong religious sanction, few of them have existed for any great length of time. The communistic societies that have been started in the United States of America under various conditions have almost all been failures. One community, the Oneida Creek, lately abolished its communal system, and created its members into a co-operative or joint-stock company. Its members work and are paid for their labour. They have stores, &c., that supply their wants, and dividends are paid to the stockholders. Since this system has been inaugurated we understand the community has been fairly successful.

All over the civilised world a search is being made for some new social system. Who knows but that the goal of a higher social life may not be reached through some such system as the Maoris in this district are trying? It is not for us to predict what the end of the experiment may be. It may be a step towards a more intelligent system of individualisation, not on the basis of the tribal, or hapu, or family subdivisions according to Native custom, but on the basis of the most fit receiving a title to occupy portions of the communal land and farming thereon independently of communal restraint. It is significant that the younger generation on the new lands now being occupied favour leasing where the conditions do not admit of individualisation, whilst at the same time the village or kainga life is preserved. It is enough to say that in our opinion the system now in vogue should receive a full and fair trial, and that the Maoris should be helped to realise their aim—namely, to have the best industrial methods and an educated people, whilst that communal life which allows close social intercourse should not be wholly destroyed.

That the tendency towards progress is not limited to farming the land is shown by the evident anxiety of the people to have their children properly educated. For example, in one kainga they asked for a school, which was refused. They then offered the Government to contribute £200 towards the school buildings. The offer was accepted; the school has commenced. Recently they have thought of raising funds for the erection of small hostels or nursing-homes, where competent nurses could be stationed to assist the medical man in charge of the district. We have a further evidence of their self-reliance in the fact that at their own cost and under their own management they have erected about two hundred miles of telephone-wire, with the result that all their main settlements are now connected by telephone, which is proving indispensable in the organization of the many schemes for the tribal welfare.

We have taken all these facts into consideration in judging of the land question in the district. It is due to the European settlers of this progressive district to say that they have assisted to the best of their ability the farming operations and the schemes of social advancement of their Maori neighbours. The local storekeepers, the settlers—notably the family of Williams, that occupies the Tuparoa and Wai-piro Runs—have made Maori farming possible by rendering financial assistance, in most cases on insufficient security. They have put the Maoris on the way towards improved methods of farming, and educated them in proper business methods of managing their stock and disposing of their produce to the best advantage. The County Council have always been on the best terms with the Maoris, who are rapidly