

property the licensees may at a later date be seriously hampered by its withdrawal. It is essential that permanent and practicable legal access should be provided, and to that end action should be taken by the Crown to legalize these private rights of way in all cases where suitable access through Crown land is not available. With a view to overcoming this difficulty in the case of areas granted in the future, we would suggest that a general scheme of roading and subdivision be devised and adopted as a basis. Funds for the formation of these roads might in part be provided by the constitution of special roading districts under the provisions of Part II of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1913. The right should be reserved to the public to use existing pack-tracks during the pleasure of the Land Board, pending the formation of the necessary roads.

(d.) *Survey*.—Delay in completing the survey of areas granted under license is a very common cause of complaint. By the provisions of section 7 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1913, rent is payable from the date of the granting of the license, and, as in the case of unsurveyed land the licensee can make little or no use of the land until the boundaries have been defined, he is naturally anxious that the survey should be completed without delay. Prior to the passing of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1913, no rent was claimed for the period between the date of the license and the date of the completion of the survey, and we are of opinion that this system should be revived. In the case of licenses granted prior to February, 1911, no survey was made, but before the licensee can take advantage of the right of exchange or of acquisition of freehold a survey is essential for the purposes of the Land Transfer Act. The Department has now put in hand the survey of the whole of these areas, and we are advised that the work is being carried out with the utmost despatch.

(e.) *Timber*.—By the provisions of the regulations licensees are debarred from felling any trees more than 2 ft. in diameter. The effect of this provision is not, however, to preserve these trees, as when the smaller trees are felled and burned those left standing are destroyed. We are of opinion that land carrying sufficient timber of commercial value for sawmilling purposes, and in accessible positions, should be withheld from lease until the timber has been removed, and that all timber standing upon land leased in the future should become the property of the lessee.

(f.) *Land not immediately productive*.—Reference has been made by several witnesses to land that, on account of its being infested with blackberry or for other reasons, cannot be made reproductive for some years. Provision is made by section 194 of the Land Act, 1908, for dealing with such lands under renewable lease, subject to exemption from rent for any period not exceeding ten years. Our recommendations provide for extension of this privilege to other tenures, including pastoral licenses in the Hauraki Mining District.

(g.) *Advertisement of Applications*.—The form of advertisement that has heretofore been inserted in the local newspapers notifying for public information the lodging of an application does not provide sufficient particulars to enable persons interested to locate the land affected. It is desirable that the advertisement should approximately locate the land, and also that the date upon which the application will be dealt with by the Land Board should be stated. It would greatly assist persons interested if a copy of the application, with sketch-plan attached, were forwarded by the Commissioner of Crown Lands to the Warden's Court nearest the land applied for, and a notification to that effect included in the advertisement.

(h.) *Reference of Applications to Warden*.—The present system of administration necessitates the inspection by the Mining Inspector of all areas applied for, with the object of ascertaining whether the land affected carries timber suitable for mining or other purposes. We consider that the Mining Inspector should be relieved of this duty, and a copy of the Crown Lands Ranger's report supplied to the Warden; this will furnish all necessary information as to the timber.

(i.) *Gum-diggers' Rights*.—Serious inconvenience and loss has in some cases been caused to settlers by persons engaged in digging for kauri-gum entering upon land that has been cleared and cultivated. We consider that the rights of the holders of licenses to dig for kauri-gum should be exercisable in respect of unimproved lands only.