

*“Further Improvements.”*—Generally speaking, there is not much room for further improvements. The country is probably subdivided as much as is practical and necessary. However, I think something might be done with Section 32, of 4,507 acres, if the owner felt so disposed. On this section there is a large block of flat and easy country, where the benefit of shelter would probably pay interest on outlay. *Pinus insignis* grows splendidly and, when once established, very quickly. The land is cheap, but the cost of carting firewood and fencing-material very heavy. A few wide belts of plantation, with trees suitable for these purposes, would be very useful for shelter, and would prove of enormous value to the estate in the future. Probably ploughing might also be profitable, but I would not like to say so with confidence, owing to the heavy expenditure in getting manure to the estate (I understand it costs £5 per ton cartage), also the present difficulty in procuring suitable labour. It would probably be waste of time to plough without the use of manure; consequently, with these expenses, the chances are that the turnip-crop would cost you more than its actual feeding-value. On the other hand, if by having a good crop of turnips each year you are able to rear big strong hoggets, and so improve the general condition of your flock and increase the weight of the wool all round by only 1 lb. per sheep, it would pay more than actual grazing-value.

*“Building Improvements.”*—To work this estate by itself money would have to be spent on buildings. A woolshed and probably a couple of cottages and a stable would be required. At present it is being worked from Mr. Donnelly's homestead.

*“Water.”*—There is plenty of good permanent water in all the main paddocks.

*“Rain.”*—Generally get all that is required, but October this year has been dry.

*“Fences.”*—The fences generally are in good order.

*“Stock.”*—This estate winters about 7,500 sheep, but as the conditions are harder than on land which is not so cold, one cannot expect such good returns. There will also be a greater percentage of deaths. It also winters 100 head of cattle.

*“Description of Sections.”*—Square top, Section 23, 1,457 acres: Winters 1,300 hoggets. About 400 acres of good danthonia; balance poor, parts wind-blown. Altitude, 3,000–3,500 ft. Ngatiki (Section 22, 2,091 acres 2 roods 24 perches): Winters 600 hoggets. About 100 acres in small patches of danthonia; balance very poor and wind-blown. Altitude, above 3,500 ft. Subject to snowfall. The Hermitage (Section 21, 4,201 acres 3 roods 32 perches): Winters 1,000 dry two-tooth ewes. No danthonia; very poor and nearly all wind-blown. Altitude, 3,500–4,000 ft. Subject to heavy snowfall. Hogget Block (Section 24, 2,773 acres 2 roods 24 perches): Winters 1,465 breeding-ewes. 500 acres good danthonia; balance poor and more or less wind-blown. Altitude, about 2,500–3,000 ft. Part subject to snow. Mangaohane Block (Section No. 32; 4,507 acres 1 rood 16 perches): Winters 2,500 breeding-ewes. Altitude, 2,500–3,000 ft.; one-quarter being flat, undulating, and ploughable. Homestead Block (Sections Nos. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31; 1,004 acres 1 rood 24 perches): Subdivided into nine paddocks. 255 acres ploughed and in grass. Further 100 acres ploughable. Winters 700 breeding-ewes. There is also an old six-roomed house in fair condition—worth, say, £400. Sheep-yards and woolwashing outfit worth, say, £75. Altitude, 2,000–3,000 ft. There are some nice plantations round the homestead and several paddocks in English grass, which are previously referred to.

*Re Rabbits.*—Hardly any rabbits, but still they require attention.

“I value the sections as follows: Homestead Block (Sections 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31; 1,004 acres 1 rood 24 perches), at £6 per acre, £6,026 8s.; Mangaohane Block (Section 32; 4,507 acres 1 rood 16 perches), at £3 5s. per acre, £14,648 17s. 6d.; Hogget Block (Section 24; 2,737 acres 2 roods 24 perches), at £2 per acre, £5,475 6s.; Square Top Block (Section 23; 1,457 acres), at £1 15s. per acre, £2,549 15s.; Ngakiti Block (Section 22; 2,091 acres 2 roods 24 perches), at 11s. per acre, £1,150 8s.; the Hermitage (Section 21; 4,021 acres 3 roods 32 perches), at 9s. per acre, £1,890 18s.: total value, £31,741 12s. 6d.

*“Acreage.”*—Homestead Block, 1,004 acres 1 rood 24 perches; Mangaohane Block, 4,507 acres 1 rood 16 perches; Hogget Block, 2,737 acres 2 roods 24 perches; Square Top Block, 1,457 acres; Ngakiti Block, 2,091 acres 2 roods 24 perches; the Hermitage, 4,201 acres 3 roods 32 perches: total, 16,000 acres.”

There is one item I altogether overlooked, but which I think should be taken into consideration. I have not taken into sufficient consideration the cartage of wool. As I go on I will show you the takings and expenditure. I had in my mind that the team on the station would be able to cart the wool, but that is too much to expect, and I have allowed something for that and capitalized it. Cartage will cost £5 a ton. I do not wish to charge the estate with the full cost, because they have a team to assist, but I charge £3 a ton, which on 23½ tons comes to about £70, and capitalizing that at 5 per cent. it comes to £1,400, which I wish to deduct from my capital valuation.

9. And your valuation, after deducting £1,400, represents the true value of the property?—Yes. I now proceed with my written statement in regard to the estate:—

“In support of my valuation I will now give particulars of the amount of stock this property should carry if worked absolutely by itself: 3,800 breeding-ewes, 2,730 lambs or hoggets, 1,300 two-tooth ewes to carry over for following season—making a total of 7,830 sheep. You will notice I have only allowed 2,730 lambs for the 3,800 ewes, which works out at an average of over 70 per cent., which is probably near the average for the last five years, or, if anything, up to 5 per cent. too low an estimate, as they may have averaged out nearly 75 per cent. The property also winters easily 100 head of cattle. You will also notice that the number of sheep on the credit side amounts to only 2,300, as against an increase of 2,730: it leaves a margin for deaths of 430, which works out at between 5 per cent. and 6 per cent. On the whole flock I think this a fair average when you take a hard winter into consideration,