

required to be done, £1,117; value actually done, £2,330. In Otamatea County thirty holdings were inspected; found resident, 28; total area, 2,673 acres; value required, £1,263; value of work done, £3,057. Tauranga County: Inspected, 28; found resident, 20; area inspected, 3,154 acres; value required, £552; value of work actually found done, £4,272. Waikato and Kawhia Counties gave equally satisfactory results. In Whangarei County Mr. A. J. McKay inspected 110 sections, with a total area of 23,868 acres. The improvements required to be done amounted to £4,725, the amount actually done being £9,987. Ranger D. H. Lusk's time has been completely taken up with the estimation of kauri and other timber, both in the Hauraki mining district and also in Hobson County.

*Forests.*—No addition has been made to the State forest reservation, and the moist summer has prevented fires. The timber disposed of, principally scorched and dead kauri, amounted during the year to nearly 42,000,000 superficial feet; the amount of revenue received during the year from such being £16,325. It is not intended to place in the market more kauri timber than is enough to keep the saw-mills supplied. The 98,000,000 ft. of white-pine timber disposed of in the Tokatoka Swamp is still intact, the purchasers not having as yet erected a mill for cutting it. An approximate estimate of the amount of white-pine (kahikatea) remaining in this district has lately been made, giving about 650,000,000 superficial feet.

*Kauri Timber Industry.*—The approximate quantity of kauri timber now standing on Crown lands (which includes State forest reserves) is 715,000,000 superficial feet, and the approximate quantity on land held under Native tenure, and either still retained or leased by them, is 540,000,000 superficial feet. The Crown disposed of nearly 38,000,000 superficial feet during the past year, and the kauri timber still held by the principal companies (purchased from the Crown and as yet uncut) will approximately be as follows:—

	Superficial feet.
Kauri Timber Company ... ..	48,000,000
Mitchelson Timber Company ... ..	30,000,000
Leyland-O'Brien Timber Company ... ..	10,000,000
Messrs. Manders and Bradley ... ..	17,000,000
Messrs. Park, Lamb, and Co. ... ..	5,600,000
The New Zealand Timber Company ... ..	14,176,000

The Crown has disposed of 356,000 superficial feet of totara during the financial year.

*Kauri-gum Reserves "Under Kauri-Gum Industry Act, 1898."*—Nine reserves, containing 7,422 acres, have been gazetted; and seven reserves, containing 20,400 acres, are proposed.

*Expenditure of "Thirds" and "Fourths."*—Schemes have been submitted by fifty-eight local bodies, and passed by the Land Board, the total amount so approved being £4,902 2s. 2d. The unappropriated money at the 31st March was £5,128 3s. 4d.

#### *Lands under "The Land for Settlements Act, 1894."*

The *Opouriao Estate*, situated in Whakatane County, and containing 7,604 acres, is in a fairly prosperous condition, notwithstanding the fact that certain portions of it have been visited for three years in succession with sharp frosts in the summer time, thereby damaging the maize-crop, which hitherto has been the mainstay of the settlers. The number of selectors is sixty-four, holding between them 6,865 acres. Sixty selectors are in occupation. The population resident number 252, an increase of twenty-four over last year. The number of houses on the estate is sixty-two. The total value of improvements amount to £18,337. The value actually effected by selectors is £14,357, an increase for the year of £2,602. The number of dairy cows in milking is 416, and more are continually being obtained, so that the cheese-factory recently erected will have to be enlarged. The area under maize is 1,465 acres, a decrease of 400 acres for the year, pasture having taken its place. Twenty-one settlers are in arrears with their rent to the amount of £322, out of an annual rental payable of £1,390.

The *Okauia Estate* (in Piako County, near Matamata).—The area settled is 4,324 acres, held by nine selectors. Six houses have been erected. Only five selectors are at present resident, making, with their families, thirteen souls. The improvements made by selectors are valued at £1,157, an approximate increase for the year of £500. Three selectors owe arrears of £90 out of an annual rental payable of £287. The pasture is not luxuriant, though the season has been favourable for its growth.

The *Rangiatea Estate* (in Piako County, near Te Aroha).—Available area held, 3,914 acres, by nineteen selectors. Of these seventeen are in occupation, the total population being one hundred souls, an increase for the year of fourteen. The total value of the improvements is £4,374. The value of the improvements effected by selectors is £3,955, an increase for the year of £1,487. There are seventeen houses on the estate, and 368 dairy cows. This settlement is almost entirely utilised for dairying purposes, and the past season has been an excellent one for pasture. I regret to say that the Canadian thistle is very prevalent on almost every section. Six settlers are in arrears with their rent, amounting to £150.

The *Karapiro Estate* (in Waikato County, close to Cambridge).—Area 2,276 acres, held by seventeen selectors. The number in occupation is fourteen, the number of souls being forty-eight, and the number of houses ten. The total value of improvements is £1,893. The value put on by lessees is £1,320. One hundred and seventy dairy cows are owned by the settlement, which is principally engaged in dairying. The season has been good and grass plentiful. I regret to say that this settlement is also infected with the Canadian thistle. The arrears of rent are only £26.

The *Fencourt Estate* (also in Waikato County, and also near Cambridge).—Area, 7,102 acres. The area selected to date is 5,792 acres, held by thirty-four selectors. Of these twenty are residing on their selections. The total value of the improvements is £11,035; value actually effected by