

of a head race or water channel has been completed to supply the workings about Naseby, and a survey is now proceeding in order to ascertain whether the water of the Manuherikia River can be made available for the further development of the auriferous resources of the district. In Westland, the survey of the Waimea Water Race has been completed. Under the Act of 1871, the Government have authorized advances by way of subsidy to six Gold Mining Companies, to the aggregate amount of £13,023. Two other applications are now under consideration; and I have reason to believe that the provisions of this Act will be very largely taken advantage of, now that they begin to be more clearly understood by the public upon the Gold Fields.

#### PURCHASE OF NATIVE LANDS, NORTH ISLAND.

A large quantity of valuable land has been acquired during the past year, and negotiations are in progress for the acquisition of other blocks. In the Province of Auckland, Mr. James Mackay is negotiating for the purchase of a very extensive tract of country, including the Thames Gold Fields, and reports the arrangements for purchase so far advanced as to justify the expectation that a very considerable portion of the Coromandel peninsula will be shortly acquired. The value of the acquisition of this district will be very great, and must tend to the further development of the Thames Gold Fields.

In the Province of Wellington, a large block, containing upwards of 140,000 acres, at the Wairarapa end of the Seventy-Mile Bush, has been acquired, together with other smaller blocks in the same locality; whilst on the West Coast the purchase of the Paraekaretu Block, of 46,000 acres, has been completed, and negotiations are in progress for a large quantity of land between Wanganui and Waikanae, the Native owners having made application for a sitting of the Native Land Court, to determine the proprietorship of these lands, before selling them to the Government. A large proportion of the land acquired and under negotiation is admirably suited for settlement, and will maintain a very large population when means of access to it are afforded.

In the Province of Taranaki, I am glad to state, the Ngatimaru Tribe have lately disposed of a block of land to the Government, situate inland of the Waitara, and have offered larger blocks so soon as the boundaries can be defined. The fact of the Natives of the Ngatimaru district disposing of their lands to Government is the best evidence of their altered feeling towards Europeans, and, with the acquisition of territory, the rapid advance of the Province of Taranaki is assured.

The total cost of the different blocks acquired, and in respect to which advances have been made, is £49,434.

#### IMMIGRATION.

Parliament, by the legislation of last year, placed this important subject under the absolute and direct control of the Colonial Government. It may be said that Emigration to New Zealand had practically ceased, except in the cases of the Provinces of Otago and Canterbury, so that, in giving effect to this part of the policy, arrangements have had to be made by the Agent-General for securing a stream of Immigration under circumstances of unusual difficulty, and measures have had to be taken in the Colony for the receipt and distribution of the Immigrants on their arrival. The Papers which have been laid upon the Table will have given the House some insight into the difficulties which the Agent-General has had to surmount. I can best describe this by quoting from his letters of the 16th November, 1871, and 8th February 1872, in which, referring to the difficulties of securing emigrants, he states:—