

the nominal price of £16,000. After the conclusion of the purchase of the Hawke's Bay end of the Bush, there were still left 200,000 acres at the Wairarapa end, the acquisition of which would enable public works and settlement to be carried on, and so connect the open land at Ruataniwha Plains, Hawke's Bay, with the settled country in Wairarapa Valley—a distance of seventy miles—and thus remove an obstacle that virtually put a stop to communication by dray traffic between the East Coast settlements, and would also place in the hands of the Government some half million acres of excellent land for settlement.

In pursuance with instructions I accordingly proceeded in September last to Wellington, and from thence to Masterton, where a Land Court was being held by Judge Rogan, when the whole block of 194,000 acres—excepting a piece of 7,000 acres—passed the Court in ten divisions. This was done to allow of a fair representation of the owners to appear in the grants. The grantees then proceeded to Wellington, where the sale to the Government of 125,000 acres—less 4,369 acres for Native Reserves—was concluded for the nominal price of £10,000, leaving a block of 62,000 acres which has passed the Land Court (and on which instalments have been paid) and a block of 7,000 acres which has not passed the Court, but has been applied for hearing at the next sitting of the Native Land Court in Hawke's Bay.

The other land purchases consist of a block of 534 acres in Tapuaeharuru, Taupo, the outlet of the Taupo Lake into the Waikato River, for the sum of £400. This block is in a most central and commanding position for an inland town, being the point on which all the roads to the interior converge, and from the facility offered by the Lake, communication can be held with all the most important settlements in the interior. A telegraph station, redoubt for the Armed Constabulary, and a Court House have already been erected; also an hotel, stores, and other buildings. I should here state that if the Government contemplate laying off a township in this locality very little difficulty would be experienced in extending this purchase.

Next in rotation comes the purchase of a block of 382 acres and one rood, for the sum of £100, at Opepe, ten miles from Tapuaeharuru, the present head-quarters of the Armed Constabulary stationed at Taupo; besides which negotiations have been entered into and an advance made on a block of 188 acres at Runanga, also a Constabulary station. There is also a small block of fifty-one acres at Oruanui, Taupo, over which the Government have a claim, it having been acquired many years back as a residence for the Government officer stationed at Taupo.

I forward herewith a tracing showing the position of the lands referred to.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
S. LOCKE.

#### Enclosure in No. 49.

##### SCHEDULE of Contents of SEVENTY MILE BUSH.

Purchased by Government	...	...	...	350,761 acres.
Passed Land Court in hands of Natives, alienable	...	...	...	173,268 "
" " " " inalienable	...	...	...	41,000 "
Not passed Land Court	...	...	...	95,900 "
Reserves in purchased blocks	...	...	...	11,239 "
Total	...	...	...	672,168 acres.

#### No. 50.

The UNDER SECRETARY for PUBLIC WORKS to Mr. H. MITCHELL.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 6th August, 1872.

I am directed by Mr. Ormond to inform you that your services will be temporarily engaged under this department, and you will be good enough to proceed to Napier by the "Luna" to-morrow.

It is intended that you should be chiefly employed in marking out the claims of the non-sellers in the Seventy Mile Bush, and on your arrival in Napier you will at once put yourself in communication with Mr. Locke, or in his absence with Mr. Hamlin, who will give you all the assistance in their power, and who have been instructed to send notice to each of the non-selling Natives of the work you are about to undertake. You will be the bearer of letters from Karaitiana to Natives of the selling party, requesting their assistance in pointing out the claims of the non-sellers, and you will take care to explain to the Natives that the object of marking out the non-sellers' claims is to have the same investigated by the Native Land Court.

As it is desirable that these claims should be marked out as soon as possible, you will be good enough to use the utmost promptitude in concluding your work, and report to Mr. Ormond your progress from time to time.

Mr. Ross, who is laying out the settlements and road works in the Seventy Mile Bush, has been informed that when not engaged in the survey of the Native claims he is to avail himself of your services on such work as he may find requisite, and you will be careful to note the time you are engaged in Native and Immigration duties respectively.

Your salary has been fixed at £400 a year, including all travelling allowances, and will commence from this date.

I have, &c.,  
JOHN KNOWLES.

H. Mitchell, Esq., Wellington.  
10 G.—8.