

The lands held under lease are in the Province of Auckland, and amount to 339,499 acres. So that the completed transactions, including the leases, cover an area of 2,109,471 acres.

To give some idea of the extent of the work completed, I may mention that 245 deeds, representing 1,924,602 acres, have been received in Wellington, and have been deposited in the Crown Lands Office.

When it is considered that each block, however small, involved a great deal of time and patience, unlike similar negotiations with Europeans, the result as shown above may, I think, be considered very satisfactory.

I will now say a few words on the uncompleted transactions. In the district to the north of Auckland there are twenty-seven blocks, representing 57,536 acres, which have been surveyed, and are awaiting investigation in the Native Land Court. On these lands advances have been made. As soon as the Court has decided upon the proper Native owners, there is no reason why these should not be completed immediately after. There are twelve other blocks to the north of Auckland, not included in the above, now being surveyed, and which also will be submitted to the Native Land Court, and closed as soon practicable.

The incomplete transactions for the purchase and lease of lands are as follows :—

PURCHASES.				
Auckland	...	...	...	1,937,852 acres
Hawke's Bay	...	...	...	22,000 "
Wellington	...	...	...	694,763 "
Taranaki	...	...	...	41,252 "
Total	...	...	...	2,695,867 "
LEASES.				
Auckland	...	...	...	1,171,077 acres
Wellington	...	...	...	307,833 "
				1,478,912 "

I have not included in these figures the estimated 200,000 acre blocks in the Taranaki Province.

The land purchase transactions last year, in a return laid before Parliament last Session, show as follow :—

Complete.	Purchased lands	...	...	1,331,522 acres
"	Leased lands	...	...	391,601 "
Incomplete.	Lands under purchase	...	...	2,941,842 "
"	Lands under lease	...	...	1,522,502 "
Total	...	...	...	6,187,467 "

At the close of the year ended 30th June, 1876, the several purchases and leases are as follow :—

Purchased land complete	...	...	1,769,972 acres.
Leased land complete	...	...	339,499 "
Purchases incomplete	...	...	2,695,867 "
Leases incomplete	...	...	1,478,912 "
Total	...	...	6,284,250 "

From the above figures, as compared with those given last year, it would appear that the negotiations entered into during the year represent only 96,783 acres; but this is not the case, the actual area brought under negotiation being 573,916 acres. The difference is explained by the fact that some areas approximately given in last year's return have in certain instances proved less, on actual survey, than the estimate.