

1876.

NEW ZEALAND.

PURCHASE OF LAND FROM THE NATIVES.

(REPORTS FROM OFFICERS.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Mr. J. W. PREECE, Auckland, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER..

SIR,—

Auckland, 1st June, 1876.

I have the honor to report, for your information, the progress made in the land purchases within the district under my charge, namely, that to the north of Auckland, since the first of July last.

The lands handed to me to complete the purchase of (namely, Mr. Brissenden's incomplete transaction) were fifty-two blocks, estimated to contain in the aggregate 377,529 acres; of these blocks thirty-six are now surveyed, and contain 261,629 acres, leaving sixteen blocks yet unsurveyed, estimated to contain 115,900 acres. Of these latter there are now seven blocks being surveyed, and will shortly be completed. The survey of the other nine blocks is delayed in consequence of disputes among the owners, most of which, however, I hope to settle as soon as an opportunity offers of meeting the different disputants together. During the first few months, after taking over these matters, I was unable to show any apparent progress in the completion of any of the transactions, owing in a great measure to the fact of there having been only one sitting of the Native Lands Court to the north of Auckland—namely, at Ahipara, in November, and at that sitting the claims were all adjourned without any progress having been made; the time, however, was profitably occupied in getting matters in train for the Courts, and in furthering the negotiations as much as I could.

During the month of January I concluded the purchase of the Waimamaku Block, containing 27,200 acres. Some of the owners of this block had refused to sell at the time the title was investigated, in June previously, but eventually came to terms.

On the occasion of the sitting of the Native Lands Court at Kaihu, in January, I was enabled to complete the purchase of the following blocks, namely, Opouteke, Kairara, Pekapekarau, Waerekahakaha, One, Waipoua, and Maunganui, containing in the aggregate 155,400 acres. No Courts have been held since that date, or I should have been able to have completed the purchase of over 50,000 acres more out of the 77,400 acres, the surveys of which are completed, and only await the holding of Courts to complete the title to them. The delay will, however, enable me to have a larger area ready for investigation of title when the Courts do sit, although it causes my present list of completed transactions to be of a less area than it otherwise would have been.

During the months of March and April I paid several visits to the Whangarei District, and put matters in train there preparatory to getting the blocks in that district brought before the Court. While there I purchased a small block held under Crown grant containing 882 acres, and named Ngatahuna. There are only three blocks in that district, the negotiations for which are all in a forward state, namely, the Kioreroa, Te Tihitihi, and Opuhete Blocks.

During the present month I have completed the purchase of the Papuroua Block, containing 1,220 acres, and so far completed the purchase of the Taungako as to have a deed fully executed by all the surviving owners. Two persons have yet to be appointed by the Court to succeed to the interests of two deceased owners, and a Court is to be held on the 4th July for the purpose. The area of this last-mentioned block is 2,115 acres.

By the foregoing it will be seen that, out of the 377,529 acres comprising transactions incomplete in July last, there have been completed since the 1st of January, 183,820 acres, in addition to which is the Ngatahuna Block, which is not comprised in the former area, being a recently offered block, the area of which is 882 acres, thus making a total of 184,702 acres, at a cost, exclusive of surveys and incidental expenses, of £12,815 6s. 6d., being a fraction over 1s. 4½d. per acre all round; deeds of conveyance for which have been fully signed and completed, and, with two exceptions, registered.

Of the 193,709 acres, the purchase of which is yet incomplete, there will be about 100,000 acres surveyed and ready for the investigation of title within the next two months, immediately after which the titles can be completed unless any unforeseen difficulties arise, which will reduce the list of transactions now on hand to a comparatively small area.

I have in the foregoing only given a bare statement of the progress of the negotiations for the completion of the titles to the blocks now under purchase.

The Inspector of Surveys reported fully last year as to the quality of the lands, so that it is unnecessary for me to go into the subject, as he is possessed of more detailed information on the subject than I am. However, from what I have seen, I am of opinion that these purchases will form a very valuable estate.

The Hon. Sir D. McLean, K.C.M.G.,
Native Minister, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
J. W. PREECE.

No. 2.

Messrs. C. O. DAVIS and HENRY MITCHELL, Rotorua, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

Rotorua, 24th April, 1876.

SIR,—

We have the honor to transmit, for your information, the following remarks relative to land matters in our district, in the hope that some points requiring elucidation may be made clear to you. And although this report may be considered diffusive to you, being well versed in Maori feelings and opinions, yet the points mooted may not be superfluous or devoid of interest.

By way of explanation, we may observe that, prior to the decision of Government relative to purchasing and leasing lands in the Arawa country, extensive runs were taken by Messrs. Tetley, Seymour, Beaumont, Cox, Grace, Young, and others; but, prior to our services being secured on behalf of the Government, we had become the agents of Messrs. Millar, Buckland, and others, to secure in the whole of the Arawa District every available block of land by lease, &c., at high rates, considerably in advance of those we subsequently paid on behalf of Government.

The Arawa country, as a whole, has been cried down as a "desert of pumice;" and those who profess to have great knowledge of soils, and their adaptation to grasses, speak loudly against the runholders for taking up so dreary a country, and some of the local newspapers have criticised the action of Government for "wasting," as they say, "money on such deserts." It never has been proved, however, that these poor-looking pumice soils will not grow grasses, for the simple reason that no attempt has been made to try their capabilities. Some persons indeed, in their fool-hardiness, ploughed up certain places at Taupo and scattered grass seed, forgetting at the time that the plough-share should not have touched the soil, as it did not require to be made more porous by ploughing, but more compressed by rollers. One thing is certain, that, in many localities where no plough-share has been introduced, fine clover and various other English grasses have embedded themselves in the pumice soil, and on some of the despised runs sheep are thriving remarkably well, the runholders sending yearly their wool to the Napier market. The late William Buckland, whose practical knowledge in agricultural pursuits was most extensive, often expressed his conviction that the very worst-looking pumice land of Taupo would be productive of English grasses some day, should the work be intrusted to competent and skilful persons.

In relation to Maori feelings with regard to land matters in the Arawa country, we may state that long before the origin of the famous land league of the Waikatos, which led to their election of the Maori King, the Arawa tribes came to the unanimous decision that no lands should be alienated to either Government or private individuals; but that their country would be opened for lease, a determination they seem to have adhered to, with little or no variation, up to the year 1872. The wonder therefore is that we succeeded in buying Otamarakau, 28,000 acres; Kaikokopu, 17,000; Paengawa, 25,000; Te Puke, 30,000; and Te Rotohokahoka, 20,000, in the Maketu and Rotorua districts, all of which are known to be suitable for special settlement.

Up to the year 1871 the various attempts made by the Judges of the Native Lands Court to investigate the titles of land at Maketu and Rotorua signally failed, and the proceedings of the Arawas were of so violent a character as to preclude the possibility of further action being taken in their country, a circumstance which induced the authorities to transfer from Maketu and Rotorua to Tauranga the sitting of the Lands Court, in the hope that the spirit of turbulence in regard to the Arawa land matters would be subdued; but even here, to prevent the outbreak of hostilities, Sir Donald McLean was compelled to order the closing of the Court, and the withdrawal from the district of all surveyors.

From the year 1866 up to 1872, various private individuals from both the North and Middle Islands, anxious to obtain runs in the Arawa country, treated directly with the Natives, and paid large deposits to the professed owners, contrary to law, so determined were they to gain possession, if possible, of the lands in question, notwithstanding the oft-repeated assertion that the whole of the country is a "silent, barren desert." In some instances sheep were placed on runs, but were driven hither and thither by antagonistic Maori claimants; and when any attempt was made to survey the lands, the surveyors were at once expelled by the Natives, and more recently, when De Thierry, Dalton, O'Mera, Fitzgerald, and other Auckland speculators, ventured to commence surveys at Rotorua and Taupo, hostile Natives appeared in armed force, and, to prevent the shedding of blood, the military authorities were obliged to interfere, unarm the Maoris, and warn the surveyors to move off. By this judicious interference of the military in 1873, the belligerent Natives were quelled and peace restored to the district.

The leading chiefs of the Arawas, having discovered that no settlement of land was likely to be effected by the lawfully constituted Court, and dreading that the Maori heartburning, keenly felt by the Hawke's Bay Natives in consequence of their entanglement by runholders, mortgages, &c., would extend itself to the Arawa country, forwarded petitions to Government in 1871 and 1872, praying that some system be adopted by which the long-pending vexed question of Arawa titles to land might be settled; and when land agents were authorized by Government to buy and lease Arawa territory, the tribes unanimously declared that this decision of our rulers was the granting of the Arawa request

for the adoption of some suitable land system to meet the urgent wishes of the Arawa tribes: hence the cordial and extreme friendly welcome experienced by the land agents on the occasion of their first visit to Taupo, Runanga, Paewa, Parekarangi, Te Wairoa, Maketu, Te Awa-o-te-Atua, Kokohinau, Fort Galatea, and other Native settlements; and up to the present time it may be said, with all truthfulness, that little or no opposition rules throughout the district, except that of the old land league and certain chiefs, who have little or no land to sell.

The spirit of rivalry among the Arawa tribes from the earliest times seems to have been based upon what they designate *mana*—i.e., influence, power, authority, superstition, dread, &c. In all our negotiations throughout the Arawa country this *mana* protrudes itself, but the two dominant parties now assuming to hold this power are the Ngatiwhakaue and Tuhourangi tribes. It has been our practice from the first to ignore the *mana*, because it professes to be perfectly distinct from the ownership of the soil, and moreover the assumed *mana* by these dominant tribes is repudiated by the genuine owners of the soil. It does seem strange indeed that in these times, when Maori rule is almost annihilated by European usages, that any chiefs or tribes in the Arawa country should be found to assert their *mana* and to base their pretensions on it, and this seems doubly strange when we take into consideration the fact that all the leading chiefs of the Arawa are receiving Government salaries, by which act they have to all intents and purposes virtually abandoned the Maori notions of authority. To retain their ancient rights of *mana* and to draw their Government salaries is perfectly incompatible, and to attempt usurpation by claiming to have *mana* now, when the great majority of the people repudiate their assumption, is equally absurd. We do not go into the basis of this *mana*, as to how it comes to pass that one tribe should possess it and not another; but as far as we have been able to glean information, the *mana* question has arisen from the practice of the more powerful domineering over the weak; the power arising from birth, intellect, and other fortuitous circumstances. It will be seen by the above remarks that it would be quite out of place for us, as land agents, to recognize the *mana* of chiefs or tribes; and accordingly we have steadily adhered to our first determination, namely, to treat only with the recognized owners of the soil. The attitude assumed by us in this respect has induced the chiefs and tribes claiming *mana* to deluge the Government with letters and telegrams, in the hope that they would be able to extort money on the ground of this Maori *mana*, forfeited long ago and fully ignored by all parties. It may be remarked here that when Christianity was introduced into New Zealand all Maori slaves were emancipated, and every individual Maori was looked upon as the owner of his land, the chiefs having been disrobed of their *mana* power. The repeated endeavours of the Arawa chiefs and tribes to base upon this *mana* their claim to compensation in regard to Maori lands is simply the reiterated cry, "Give, give;" and they assure themselves that nothing is lost by making the demand. This has been our experience in dealing with this *mana* question. But should the adherents of this undefined Maori *mana* continue to exert their clamour, the matter may readily enough be set at rest by a series of Native meetings, aided by Government, as these simple tribunals would be the only effectual mode of settling this purely Maori supremacy.

Another subject which has given rise to fierce argumentation among the Arawas themselves, and harassed us perpetually, is that of the *toa*, or braves, and the singularity of the question, and the extent of its ramifications throughout the district and far beyond it, is as troublesome as it is remarkable. The simple and advisable course would be to ignore the claims of the *toa*, not being based on Maori custom, and on the ground of its having been repudiated by the Native Lands Court in a full and lengthened sitting, under the able inquiry of that excellent Maori scholar, Judge Smith. But the Arawas, as a people, do not argue but resort to declamation, a course which intimidates the weak, who are generally right, and strengthens the position of the more powerful, who are almost always wrong. The demands made by the braves proper are based upon the supposed military services achieved by them on their own behalf and on behalf of certain tribes acknowledged to be owners of the Maketu soil, which military services were carried out long antecedent to the colonization of New Zealand, and on this ground alone the assumption of these braves should have been repudiated, especially when a large number of the so-called braves who performed the military services are owners of the soil; but though they have alienated the land to Government, they also demand compensation as braves: thus by Maori scheming and mere braggardism they hope to secure double payments from Government, one for the soil itself, and the other for military services on their own behalf. There are four sets of braves, those with whom the attacks upon the common enemy originated, those who risked their lives by personal daring, those who lost most relatives in the fight, and the great crowd who rushed to take loot and otherwise help the army when the foe was routed. It should be stated that many of the braves who have no interest in Maketu soil, but are residing thereon, have abundantly compensated themselves long ago by taking possession of certain lands there which they cultivated and still retain. To eject this class of claimants from the lands now in their occupation would probably bring about local disturbances, but to grant them other privileges is most unjust to all other outside tribes who assisted in the tribal wars. As, however, the *toa* question has been recognized, the greatest care and prudence are required to set the matter at rest, as it still agitates the whole Arawa community at Maketu and Rotorua, and since the recognition numbers of claimants from distant parts have started up from their concealment demanding compensation on account of the old Maori fights.

The peculiarity of the Arawa country, in relation to its wonderful terraces, its geysers and numerous mineral springs, is attracting numbers of visitors year by year from Europe, America, Australia, North and South Islands of New Zealand; and owing to this large concourse of persons during the summer months, and the benefits derived by invalids from various mineral baths, said to contain sulphur, arsenic, naphtha, alum, iron, and other chemicals, many private speculators have leased and bought plots of land unlawfully, anticipating that the district will ere long become populous, in consequence of its multitudinous springs and other advantages. That such a country should become the property of the Crown, and that strenuous efforts be put forth to secure so desirable an object, will scarcely be questioned by any man of reflection, although it is considered fashionable by newspaper writers to deplore the action of Government in its attempt to secure this valuable public domain, and to cry the country down as a "silent barren desert," broken only by its lakes—Taupo, Rotorua

Tikitapu, Rotokakahi, Okareka, Okataina, Tarawera, Rerewhakaitu, Rotomahana, Rotoma, Rotoehu, Rotoiti, and others.

The acquisition of these lands by lease, politically considered, is, without doubt, of paramount consequence, the country being intersected by roads and telegraph lines, accessible by coach and horse, and forming the area between the great centres of population in the North Island—namely, Wellington, Auckland, and Napier. Nor should the great importance of establishing permanent peaceful relations with the large Maori population of this district be overlooked, as it will tend materially to intimidate the action of less friendly Maori communities, and raise the confidence of New Zealand colonists.

Viewing the leasing of these lands by the Government from a commercial standpoint, the rentals being extremely low, there are good grounds for believing that the Government will be gainers; nor should it be imagined that these lands will be untenanted for any time after they are thrown open by Government for selection: as, for instance, Runanga No. 1 and No. 2, well wooded and watered, having areas of respectively of 45,000 and 42,000 acres, are applied for by runholders; also Tatua East and West, containing 30,000 or 40,000 acres; Parekarangi, of 80,000; and a firm from Auckland desires a long lease of Tawhatirahi or Otuhounga, of 19,000 acres, for the purpose of procuring sulphur. Paeroa, of 100,000 acres, and other blocks, might be enumerated; but the above will suffice to show the eagerness of the public to secure the runs in the Arawa country, which have been so often proclaimed by newspaper writers and political partizans as “silent barren deserts.”

While writing on this subject, it should be stated that all the Native owners interested in runs generally are exceedingly desirous to see them in the occupation of settlers placed thereon by Government; and we may add that, the titles being clear, immediate possession can be given.

In reference to this point, many leading chiefs from time to time have made requests to us by letter and otherwise that the various runs in these localities, on which they have received public money, should be as speedily as possible covered with stock; and some of the tribes interested are petitioning the General Assembly to expedite their earnest wishes in this respect, a course that will tend to the advancement of the country, the union of rival chieftains, and the unanimous confidence of the Arawa people in the land scheme of the present Government, in the Bay of Plenty and its inland districts.

We have, &c.,

C. O. DAVIS.

HENRY MITCHELL.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 2.

SUMMARY of TRANSACTIONS in ARAWA DISTRICTS, LAND PURCHASE DEPARTMENT PURCHASES.

<i>Mohaka</i> .—Two blocks, 47,000 acres.	} One block surveyed and title completed, one unsurveyed and balance in hand.
<i>Taupo</i> .—Four blocks, 40,000 acres.	
<i>Rotorua</i> .—One block, 20,000 acres.	} All surveyed and titles completed; Native reserve not yet surveyed.
<i>Maketu</i> .—Four block, 90,000 acres.	
<i>Matata</i> .—Eleven blocks, 20,000 acres.	} Unsurveyed, and balance in hand.
	} Two blocks surveyed and two partially; balance in hand upon each block.
	} Surveyed and titles completed.
Total 217,000 acres.	

NOTE.—The foregoing twenty-two blocks contain 217,000 acres, of which sixteen blocks are completed; area, 70,000 acres; average price, 1s. 10½d. per acre. The remaining six blocks are undergoing adjustment of Native claims in order that satisfactory and final payments of the balances of the consideration moneys be made, and the area of these six is about 147,000 acres; average price, 2s. per acre, ranging from 10d. to 4s. per acre.

LEASES.

The leases comprise sixteen blocks, containing 980,000 acres, six blocks of which, containing 235,000 acres are completed, at an average annual rental for the first seven years of ¼d. per acre in Taupo, and 1d. per acre in the Bay of Plenty.

In Rotorua District chiefly, ten blocks remain to be completed, containing 750,000 acres, at an annual rental of ½d. per acre.

No. 3.

Mr. C. O. DAVIS, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

SIR,—

Ohinemutu, 16th June, 1876.

I have the honor to transmit, for your information, the accompanying report relative to our operations in these districts, from the 1st July, 1875, to 31st May, 1876.

The monetary department of our business having, at the commencement of our work, at my request, solely devolved on Mr. Mitchell, he is forwarding to you the necessary report on that subject.

As the report forwarded to you in April last bears on many points omitted in the enclosed paper, and in order that a continuous narrative of our operations be as palpable as possible, may I ask the favour of your attaching the April report to the one now forwarded, which will enable you to comprehend the various phases of our somewhat lengthened land negotiations in the Bay of Plenty and Lake Districts.

I have, &c.,

H. T. Clarke, Esq., Under Secretary, Wellington.

C. O. DAVIS.

Enclosure in No. 3.

Mr. C. O. DAVIS to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

Sir,—

Ohinemutu, 15th June, 1876.

In accordance with your telegram of the 23rd ultimo, requesting us to furnish a full report of all land purchase transactions in the district since the 1st of July last, we have the honor to record herein all points bearing on the subject named in your communication.

As some of our documentary statements were transmitted to you early in July last, it may very considerably help you to understand our negotiations if citations be made from papers previously written; although some of the matters quoted may date anterior to that mentioned in your instructions.

It may not be necessary to particularize our business, in the way of Maori meetings and other preliminaries transacted by us during the first few days of July, but we will extract portions of the report alluded to in a previous paragraph. Under date 10th July we remark:—"We have had some difficulties to encounter in our land-purchase operations, which at times threatened to bring about a collapse. Some of the Arawa chiefs, acting under the advice of Hawke's Bay tribes and their Pakeha friends, whose opposition to the present Government is well known, have, by petitions to the Assembly, by numerous letters and telegrams, and by various other means, endeavoured to stay our land proceedings in the Arawa country. The various petitions and other communications forwarded by the Arawas generally have been notable only for their gross misrepresentations.

"Added to the wonted troublesomeness of these Arawa tribes, their cupidity has been excited and their known character of dishonesty encouraged by private individuals, who persistently endeavour to lease and buy Maori lands within our district; although they well know that it is impossible under the circumstances to obtain a legal title; and that by foolishly bargaining with the unscrupulous Arawa they are but wasting time and money; and no doubt, at some future period, when driven to their wits' ends they will fall back, as their predecessors have done, on the Government for compensation, with what show of justice remains to be seen. We have pleasure in stating, however, that, notwithstanding the violence of the opposition, and the various obstacles referred to with which we have had to contend, land matters at present throughout the whole of our district, as far as our operations are concerned, are standing upon a most satisfactory basis; and now that the Arawas have discovered that we unflinchingly adhere to the principles of truth and justice, and that their threats are either treated with indifference, or met by sound argument, their feelings have become somewhat mollified, and they now profess to be desirous of aiding the Government scheme, which indeed does not surprise us, as they are sufficiently intelligent to see that such a course will be advantageous to themselves."

It will be remembered, perhaps, that we intimated in our last general report the probability of our success in respect to purchasing the block of land at Maketu known as Te Puke, in which case our operations would be extended to the Maketu flats, known as Te Papanui, Paengaroa, &c. We have to state that the proposed line of action we then ventured to suggest was carried out by us. We treated with the Waitaha and Tapuika tribes, to whom it is fully known these lands really belong; and although the *toa* element raised its crest, our determined indifference towards the braves, on the grounds of justice, so thoroughly convinced them of the untenableness of their position, and the fictitiousness of their claims, that they agreed to confine their demands to a few hundred acres of worthless sandy soil near the sea coast, including Te Tumu, the famous battle-ground where Ngaiterangi were worsted. On procuring the signatures of the Waitaha and Tapuika tribes to our deeds, they warmly repudiated any claim whatever by the *toa*, stating that the Ngatiwhakaue and others claiming as *toa* put forward their fictitious demands for the purpose of extorting money, and taking advantage of the ignorance of Europeans as regards these Maori questions. With the above sayings and other arguments of our own showing the fallacies of the *toa* claims, the whole of the element suddenly collapsed, and we were told by the Ngatiwhakaue to go on with the ancestral claimants, but that as an act of grace, they hoped we would not overlook them.

In justice to the braves generally, it becomes necessary to draw a line of demarcation between the two prominent sections, namely, the anti-leasing and anti-selling party, and those who have treated with us for the alienation of their lands. Of the former, the great leading personage is Te Pokiha Taranui, more commonly known as Fox, a man of indomitable pride. He carries with him only a small section of the Ngatipikeao tribe named Te Ngatikakinga, who are known to possess but small influence and very little land.

The Ngatipikeao tribe, who are with the Government in the land scheme, comprise the large majority under the old chiefs Te Puehu, Te Mapu, Rotorangihoro, Te Matangi, Pita te Wharetoroa, and others. With this large section of Ngatipikeao range the tribes of Waitaha, Tapuika, Ngatipukenga, Ngatimoko, and many others. In fact, the real landholders generally throughout the Arawa country favour both selling and leasing their tribal lands; and it is found that the opposing party, as a rule, have little or no land either to sell or lease; consequently the genuine owners of the soil view the acts and clamours of the anti-sellers with extreme bitterness.

Throughout the Taupo District, we may say that the tone of feeling is in favour of Government; and although Henare Matua and other Hawke's Bay celebrities have sent their written and oral messages to the Taupo Natives, stirring them up to oppose any attempt on the part of the Crown to secure land in this district by purchase or lease, the machinations of the Napier chiefs have been unsuccessful, and their gratuitous opinions treated with profound indifference.

During the month in which the foregoing extracts were written we visited Tokanu, and held a series of meetings with some of the resident chiefs relative to the main trunk road from Taupo to Whanganui and site for Native village school, which propositions were received approvingly by the principal chiefs present. On this occasion complaints were made to us in relation to the interference of Tareha and other Hawke's Bay chiefs with respect to the Mohaka Block, sold by the Taupo Natives to the Government, and declared to be their property exclusively, although the points mooted here were publicly discussed at a Native meeting held previously at Napier, when a sum of money on the Mohaka Block was paid to Tareha by request of deputations sent to Napier by the Taupo Natives. At the

same time a portion of the block in question, claimed by the great chief Renata Kawepo, was excluded from the sale, by which arrangement all Maori difficulties relative to the Mohaka purchase were removed.

In July also we completed the deeds of Tauhara Middle lease, Runanga No. 2 lease, and Tauhara Block purchase, transmitting the same to Wellington.

In the month of August the following conveyances were forwarded to the Under Secretary at Wellington—namely, Te Puke, Paengaroa, Kaikokopu, and Waitahanui Blocks, estimated at over 100,000 acres.

A series of meetings with the chiefs Poihipi Tukairangi, Hohepa Tamamutu, Hitiri te Paerata, Takerei, Ruha te Parangitungetu, Te Reweti Waikato, Te Papanui, Te Heu Heu, Hauraki, and others, regarding land claims on the west shores of Lake Taupo, Te Tatu on Waikato, Paeroa, Kaingaroa, and other places; and we succeeded in obtaining the necessary signatures to complete the conveyance of Tauhara North.

Early in September we proceeded to Ohinemutu, where we met numerous deputations of Ngatiwhakaue, Ngatituara, Ngatiraukawa, Ngatitahu, Ngatiwhaoa, Ngatiwahiao, and others, who expressed their general approval of the system adopted by us in relation to the land transactions throughout the district, and pleaded the necessity of settling the land titles by ourselves and local committees, as suggested by us when our land negotiations on behalf of the Crown were first initiated.

In this month likewise we completed and posted deeds of Tauhara Middle purchase, Tauhara North purchase, and Oruanui lease, accompanied by explanatory memoranda. Also in this month was held the great Taupo meeting relative to certain territory on the western shores of Lake Taupo, disputed on the one side by the Hau-Hau element, under the chiefs Hauraki, Te Tuhi, and others, and on the other by the friendly Natives under Te Heu Heu, Paurini, and Hohepa Tamamutu. Major Scannel was chosen president of the meeting, and the assessors who aided in the deliberations were Te Kepa te Rangipuawhe and Arekatera te Puni. The evidence taken was most voluminous; the inquiry extended over fifteen days. The whole of the testimony adduced at this local Court was forwarded to the Hon. the Native Minister, for his information.

In November a meeting of the Ngatimanawa and other tribes was held in respect to boundaries of the Kaingaroa previously leased conditionally to Government; also an energetic discussion regarding the building of a Maori village schoolhouse, Ngatimanawa having presented as an endowment forty-two acres of land, and proposed to collect the sum of £50 in aid of the building fund. Subsequently a meeting was convened at Wairoa for the purpose of inquiring in respect to multitudinous claimants of the Paeroa lease and Kaingaroa generally. The meeting was largely attended by the Tuhourangi, under the leading men Te Kepa te Rangipuawhe, Waretini, Aporo te Rangikaniwhaniwha, Hohua te Manihera, Pauroa Takahuriokanui, and others. There were representatives also of the Ngatiwhaoa present, Ngatitahu and Ngatitaru. No decision was arrived at regarding surveys and the inquiry into Maori titles of land, in consequence of the opposition pertinaciously adhered to by the Tuhourangis.

In December a meeting with the Ngatirangitihi tribe was held at Te Awa-o-te-Atua relative to land matters generally and the question of survey. Result on the whole satisfactory.

At Maketu a meeting was held relative to the Puke, Rangioru, Papanui, and Paengaroa Blocks, the various owners having expressed a desire to close without delay the land transactions between themselves and the Government.

At the request of Mr. Brabant, Inspector of Native Schools, a meeting was held in the carved house, Tamatekapua, at Rotorua, the land agents being present with the resident tribes, the business being the collection of money in aid of the Ohinemutu school fund, to which the chiefs agreed. Next in order is a conference with Ngatitahu and Ngatiwhaoa respecting the leases already initiated of Tumunui, Rotoreka, Kapenga, and Paeroa. A communication regarding these blocks was, in consequence, transmitted to the Government.

During the month of January the surveys of the Heruiwi and Puke Blocks were initiated and continued till nearly the end of February, when a local disturbance, caused by armed Natives in respect to the Puke Block, induced us, after two days' patient investigation in the Maketu Court House, before Mr. Hamlin, R.M., regarding the various points in dispute by the belligerents, to withdraw temporarily the survey party; but the surveys of the leased blocks, named Heruiwi and Pukahunui, were continued and ultimately completed.

Relative to a local land dispute at Taupo of about twenty-five years' standing, between the Ngatitahu and the Ngatitama, Mr. Young was deputed by the Hon. the Native Minister to inquire into and settle if possible the long-pending difficulty, and after various conferences with the disputants the matter was referred to a meeting convened at Paeroa for final settlement, at which place it was arranged, Mr. Young being present, that two of the contending claimants on the Ngatitama side should be allowed to remain in peaceful possession of the disputed territory named Tutukau. Thus terminated this vehement disputation of many years' standing, which periodically threatened to decimate by war the contending tribes, and thereby involve a tribal or general rise to arms in the Arawa country.

In the month of March, Petera te Rangihiroa and other members of the Ngatihineuru tribe entered into a compact with Hawke's Bay Natives to repudiate the leases previously agreed to by themselves and Government; and in order to recall Petera te Rangihiroa and his adherents to a sense of their just duty, Mr. Young was instructed to meet the dissentients at Runanga, where, after considerable speechifying Petera, evaded the subject, which compelled us to instruct both Captain Lloyd and Mr. John McGregor to complete as speedily as possible the necessary surveys.

The great event affecting our numerous negotiations in the Bay of Plenty and Lake Districts was a large gathering at Paeroa, twenty-five miles from Ohinemutu. We being engaged with G. S. Cooper, Esq., and having other matters of consequence requiring our immediate attention, we were represented at the important Paeroa meeting by Mr. Young, who took the notes of the proceedings and replied to various questions mooted by the different speakers regarding certain points respecting land estimated to be of considerable consequence by the Maoris, and published by the *Bay of Plenty Times* and by the *Waka Maori*, which we append here:—

"The originators of the meeting, Ngatitaha and Ngatiwhaoa, opened the proceedings by reading a paper to the assembled tribes, numbering in all about 600 persons, consisting of Ngatiwhaoa, Ngatitahu, Ngatimanawa, Te Urewera, Ngatihineuru, Ngatitutewha, Ngatituwharetoa, Ngatiwhakaue, Ngatirangitahi, Ngatihinewai, Ngatiraukawa, Ngatituara, and Tuhourangi, under the leadership of its Putaiki or Council of Twelve. The land policy of the Government was keenly argued before one of its representatives, and notwithstanding the audacity of Tuhourangi in proclaiming itself the sole dictator of the proceedings, its pretentious assumptions were at once repudiated by the confederate tribes in the following terms:—'Who has constituted you an authority to dictate to us as to what we shall do respecting our land matters? We refuse to acknowledge your pretensions in any way, and here let your interference in our land matters cease.'

"Notwithstanding the fierce opposition to all general measures in the district by the Tuhourangis, the twelve confederate tribes declared for the Government, affirming their determination to keep inviolable all their bargains, and to facilitate in every possible way the settlement of the lands in the Arawa country; adding, with emphatic outspokenness, the land agents of the Government have acted throughout the negotiations in an open straightforward manner. After four days' continuous discussion the meeting was brought to a conclusion, the anti-selling Tuhourangi tribe retiring completely crestfallen to its home at the Wairoa, threatening to convene another monster meeting to defend itself, which meeting is still in abeyance."

In the month of April various matters of minor importance commanded our attention, and we deemed it advisable to transmit to you a general report, which, in order to connect a continuous narrative of our operations, should be embodied here, but unfortunately the copy of the report in question has been mislaid, owing to which act of carelessness, allow us to refer you to the original already in your hands.

In May we proceeded to Whakatane, Kokohinau, Te Teko, Te Umuhika, and Te Matata; at the latter place we held a series of meetings with Ngatirangitahi on land affairs, and procured the necessary signatures to the final lease of Tawhitinui and Otuhangu, known as lots Nos. 31 and 39, Parish of Matata.

At a Native settlement named Te Umuhika, six miles from Te Awa-o-te-Atua, upwards of 300 persons presented themselves, the occasion being what the Natives term "*he hui*," or gathering. We took advantage of this tribal meeting, in which the Ngatiawa, Te Uriwera, and the Arawas were largely represented, and placed before the assembled through the long-pending dispute regarding the ownership of certain lands in the Pokohu Block, at Rangitaiki, leased by us previously. After explanatory speeches by us, and selecting nine or ten of the most intelligent Native chiefs and assessors to serve as a jury, the various points in dispute were submitted to the multitude, allowing each tribe to conduct its own business as it seemed fit. No attempt on our part was made to interfere with the discussions, nor impediment placed in the way of any person who desired to speak; and after the subjects, one by one, were thoroughly exhausted, and the audience had no further desire to continue the examination, we withdrew with our ten jurymen to settle the decision, refraining to give any opinion till after the chiefs and assessors had concluded their remarks, and to our surprise and great satisfaction the views held by the jury of ten coincided precisely with those held by ourselves; and we found that the opinions held by ourselves and the jurymen on the disputed points were indorsed by the large audience generally. This mode of investigating title to Maori land has called forth the plaudits of the tribes in the Bay of Plenty and Lake Districts, the leading chiefs having expressed their entire confidence in the course adopted by us in this respect; and it would seem, from various communications received, that the result is bringing about almost universal satisfaction. The owners of the Puke Block, the survey of which engendered hostile feeling and a rise to arms, desire that an investigation regarding Te Puke, similar to that held at the Umuhika, should be accorded by the Government, as will be seen by the following document transmitted by the Waitaha tribes to the Hon. the Native Minister:—

[TRANSLATION.]

To Sir DONALD McLEAN.

Father, Salutations!—

Te Awahou, Rotorua, 6th June, 1876.

This is a prayer by us, the tribe of Waitaha, to you regarding our land, Te Puke, that there may be an inquiry, a similar investigation to that held by Mr. C. O. Davis at Te Umuhika. That inquiry was most excellent and very clear; let the same mode of inquiry be introduced into our district. We do not approve of the Native Lands Court, nor do we approve of the investigation which took place at Horo Horo; but our wish is that the inquiry be clear on the side of the Pakeha, and clear on the side of the Maori, so that the confused state of things in which our land is involved may be managed. Do you signify your approval that Mr. C. O. Davis be the director of this mode of inquiry. Sufficient.

By the whole of the committee of Waitaha.

Na Ereatara Taramaoa.
Na Hakaria Tipene.
Na Hoani Ngahao.
Na Hirini Haimona.
Na Ngapea.
Na Te Whetu.
Na Ratana Tekapaiwaho.
Na Hotene Terata.

The following is extracted from a paper drawn up by Pererika Ngahuruhuru on the same subject:—

[TRANSLATION.]

The tribes that met at Whakatane on the 9th of May, 1876, were the Nagatiawa, the Ngatipukeko, the Patuai, the Urewera, and the Arawa, where discussion commenced regarding the Pokohu [a block

of land leased by Government at Rangitaiki]. The person who introduced this subject was Ranagi Tukehu, whose thoughts were directed towards advances made to some tribes on the Pokohu and other places. The object of this elderly man in bringing forward this subject was to express his disapprobation with respect to money paid to certain tribes.

The Taweras called a meeting at Te Umuhika for the purpose of subscribing moneys for a flour-mill, and there, on the 17th of May, 1876. an inquiry commenced [on land matters]. A proposal was made to Tukehu, relative to the selection of a committee to sit during the investigation [of the Pokohu land], to which he agreed.

The following are the names of the persons chosen :—

Ko Pererika Ngahuruhuru,
Ko te Warahi Whakaahua,
Ko Niheta Mokonuiarangi,
Ko te Mapu Takaanewa,
Ko Rota Rangihoro,
Ko Hori Karaka,
Ko Paora Patu,
Ko Hona te Hauiti,
Ko te Meihana,
Ko Rawiri,

together with the Land Agents of the Government.

The inquiry lasted two days and two nights, and then the committee withdrew to consider its decision in relation to the money advances on which were based the grounds of Tukehu's complaint. The judgment of the committee was, that the moneys had been advanced to the right parties on the lands owned by them [*i.e.* within the Pokohu Block]. Tukehu was found to be wrong, but right with respect to certain localities which were his own. "Now, O friends! the advances made by Government on those lands as to right have been fully established." There were 300 persons present.

NA PERERIKI NGAHURUHURU.

While at Te Awa-o-te-Atua, a deputation from Hawke's Bay arrived, and a paper was read to the assembled Natives at Te Umuhika, and invitations sent requesting the Bay of Plenty Natives to attend a meeting, to be held at Napier, on certain land and political questions. The following is the paper :—

[TRANSLATION.]

TO WIREMU RANGIKAHEKE and OTHERS.

O Chiefs and Tribes, salutations—

Pakowhai, 4th May, 1876.

This is a notice to you, that your men may come hither who can clearly express your thoughts or wishes. The gathering will be at Pakowhai on the 27th of May, and on the 29th of May, the speechifying will commence with respect to the grounds on which account you are called hither.

1st Basis.—The establishment of a Parliament for the Maoris to conduct the affairs of their island.

2nd Basis.—The tribes of this island to be united under one system.

3rd Basis.—The years for Maori members to be in Parliament has ceased; there are to be none after this. What shall we do?

4th Basis.—The word of the island has long gone forth that the Court, [*i.e.* Native Lands Court,] be terminated; it is not terminated. What shall be done to end it?

5th Basis.—The word of the island has long gone forth that land selling cease; it has not ceased. What shall we do to end it?

6th Basis.—Have we advanced or retrograded by the doings of Parliament during past years?

7th Basis.—Would it not be well for us to request the Queen to inquire into the grievances which are pressing us down.

8th Basis.—What are the thoughts [of the Maoris] with respect to elections?

These are the grounds on account of which you have been invited. You have certain grounds [for complaint] yourselves which the men you send will make known.

Sufficient these words.

By the Committee of Kahungunu.

Na Henare Tomoana.
Na Henare Matua.
Na Noa te Hianga.
Na Renata Kawepo.
Na Paora Kaiwhata.
Na Karaitiana Takamoana.

Subsequently to the meetings held at the Umuhika, we visited the Tawhitinui, Whakarewa, and Waitahanui Natives in relation to the marking out of certain reserves previously agreed to.

On the occasion of our arrival at Maketu, the acknowledged owners of the lands there lately purchased by us earnestly urged the necessity of paying to them the balances due; but having no special instructions to that effect, we recommended them to exercise patience, the Government being engaged in matters of far more importance just now.

In order to elucidate somewhat the extent of our land transactions within the Bay of Plenty and Lake Districts, we may enumerate the lands to which titles have been settled, and the final deeds transmitted to yourself. They comprise the following :—

No. 1. Tauhara purchase.

No. 2. Tauhara lease.

- No. 3. Rotokawa purchase.
- No. 4. Taharua purchase.
- No. 5. Oruanui lease.
- No. 6. Runanga No. 2 lease.
- No. 7. Block from Ngatiwhakaue purchase.
- No. 8. " Patuai purchase.
- No. 9. " Ngatipikeao purchase.
- No. 10. " Ngatikereru purchase.
- No. 11. " Ngatimanawa purchase.
- No. 12. " Ngatiraukawa purchase.
- No. 13. " Ngatitu purchase.
- No. 14. " Ngatirangiteaorere purchase.
- No. 15. " Ngatiuenukopako purchase.
- No. 16. " Ngatituwharetoa purchase.

The blocks all but completed are,—

- No. 1. Runanga No. 1 lease.
- No. 2. Paeroa lease.
- No. 3. Parekarangi lease.
- No. 4. Te Tatu East and West lease.
- No. 5. Heruiwi and Pukahunui lease.
- No. 6. Tawhitinui and Otuhangu lease.
- No. 7. Whakarewa lease.
- No. 8. Kaikokopu lease.
- No. 9. Te Puke purchase.
- No. 10. Paengaroa purchase.
- No. 11. Kaikopu purchase.
- No. 12. Waitahanui purchase.

Negotiations regarding the following blocks have been initiated, and advances paid thereon, but their settlement is more remote:—

- No. 1. Owihitiura and Whakarewarewa lease.
- No. 2. Te Koutu lease.
- No. 3. Rotohokahoka purchase.
- No. 4. Te Pokohu lease.
- No. 5. Kaingaroa Upper and Lower lease, including certain lands abutting on Rotomahana.

It will be observed that no reference is made to monetary matters in this paper, that part of our work having been, at my request, intrusted, from the commencement of our negotiations, solely to Mr. Mitchell, who will transmit to you his report, containing the whole of the information required on this subject.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that, throughout the Bay of Plenty and Lake Districts at the present juncture, the utmost confidence in the Government scheme with respect to land purchases and leases is expressed by the tribes generally.

H. T. Clarke, Esq., Under Secretary, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
C. O. DAVIS.

No. 4.

Captain PORTER, Gisborne, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Gisborne, 5th June, 1876.

I have the honor to furnish the following report of my land-purchase transactions for the year ended the 31st May, 1876:—

By reference to the Schedule attached hereto, it will be seen that a total area of 324,011 acres is under offer and negotiation, 142,622 acres is shown in course of completion and prices fixed, and 181,389 acres under offer, but for which negotiations have been deferred, pending the investigation of the several titles by the Native Lands Court, and for which prices have not yet been arranged. The Waitahaia and Aorangi Wai Blocks, representing a total of 59,252 acres, have passed the Court during the last month, and were in each case adjudged to the hapus and persons with whom I had dealt in my preliminary negotiations. The deeds of conveyance for these blocks have been signed, and with the exception of a few signatures required from grantees at a distance, are now complete. The authority for survey of the other blocks has been issued by Mr. Baker, Deputy Inspector of Surveys, and at the next sittings of the Lands Court I trust to be able to report a very large area of land passing through on Government account.

In my negotiations for the past year, I have found it necessary to depart, in one or two instances, from the generally existing systems of land purchase throughout the island, and I take the liberty of pointing out their disadvantages. The first is the payment of advance, or earnest money, on lands before the title to them has been adjudged by the Native Lands Court. I found that in almost every case there were two parties, claimants and counter-claimants, and the onus of deciding the right of one or other of these fell to the Purchase Officer, a responsibility that he should not incur at the risk of wrongfully paying away Government money, which, apart from other reasons, determined me to ask the Government to allow of my discontinuing payments of this nature within my district, and which request was willingly approved by you.

The next subject is that of surveys. I have instituted the system of throwing the onus of this upon the Natives, by arranging with them the price per acre, less the cost of survey. I have found this a very good precaution, as, knowing they have to pay, the Natives are careful not to cause delays,

or to lead over wrong boundaries, as is often the case in surveys of Native lands to which the title is disputed, and further, the Government incur no risk of loss.

The obtaining of signatures, in accordance with the provisions of the Native Lands Act, within my district entails a great deal of unnecessary expense to Government, and delay in completion of transactions. I particularly refer to the necessity of having an interpreter authorized by the Act, and the presence of a Resident Magistrate. I find this is a most unpleasant feature of my duty, as however anxious to complete deeds of purchase, I am wholly dependent upon these officers, as in several instances I missed favourable opportunities owing to the inability to obtain one or other of them. I have seriously considered the disadvantages Government work under in comparison with the private speculator: Government under the present system are compelled to employ two officers to carry out their purchases, namely, Purchase Officer and interpreter, whereas the private speculator has only to employ the interpreter, who invariably acts as negotiator also. This is obviously prejudicial to Government interests, and gives an unfair advantage to private dealers; and it would be only right that Purchase Officers, where qualified, should be allowed to act as interpreter in conjunction with the Resident Magistrate, as required by the Act.

In concluding, I may remark that, with the exception of these few remediable difficulties in connection with the service, I have much pleasure in reporting that all my dealings with the Natives have been most satisfactory, and have not met with any obstruction or opposition; on the contrary, I have received valuable assistance from the leading chiefs of the tribe, who unanimously express themselves satisfied at the working of the policy.

The Under Secretary, Native Office,
(Land Purchase Branch,) Wellington.

I have, &c.,
T. W. PORTER,
Land Purchase Officer.

SCHEDULE REFERRED TO IN FOREGOING.

I.—PURCHASES IN COURSE OF COMPLETION.

Block.			Area.			Price, including Cost of Survey.			Payments made to date.			Remarks.
			Acres.			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Te Ngaere	...	...	70,000			10,500	0	0	1,605	0	0	Estimated area.
Waitahaia	...	...	50,067			6,258	7	6	3,622	0	0	
Aorangi Wai	...	...	9,185			1,377	15	0	1,119	6	3	Estimated area.
Tututohora	...	...	5,000			375	0	0	200	0	0	
Puke-a-Maru	...	...	5,000			312	10	0	150	0	0	Estimated area.
Taitai	...	...	3,370			496	5	0	310	0	0	
Total	...	...	142,622			19,319	17	6	7,006	6	3	

II.—BLOCKS UNDER OFFER, BUT FOR WHICH NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN DEFERRED, PENDING INVESTIGATION OF TITLES BY NATIVE LANDS COURT.

Block.				Area.	Remarks.	
				Acres.		
Poro-Ika-Moana	...	...	...	2,093	Estimated.	Prices not yet arranged.
Matahiia	...	...	...	3,185		
Aorangi	...	...	...	3,000		
Tikorangi	...	...	...	15,000		
Ngahaua	...	...	...	20,000		
Pouturu	...	...	...	5,000		
Takapauwharanui	...	...	...	1,000		
Hikurangi (Mountain)	...	...	...	12,000		
Kawakawa	...	...	...	10,000		
Whangaparaoa	...	...	...	50,000		
Maika	...	...	...	1,500		
Te Pohatu	...	...	...	2,000		
Kopua Pounamu	...	...	...	3,000		
Ahi-o-Te-Atua	...	...	...	2,455		
Waitangi	...	...	...	1,156		
Ranga-a-Potahi	...	...	...	50,000	Estimated.	
East Cape Island	...	...	...	—	Offered as a site for a lighthouse.	
				181,389		

Totals, No. 1 ... 142,622 acres.
 „ No. 2 ... 181,389 „
 324,011 „

No. 5.

The GENERAL GOVERNMENT AGENT, Napier, to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,— General Government Agent's Office, Napier, 9th December, 1875.

I have the honor to enclose Mr. J. P. Hamlin's report of the purchase of the Waiau, Tukurangi, Taramarama, and Ruakituri Blocks, in the Wairoa District, comprising in all about 150,000 acres, the cost amounting to £12,610. In this is included a sum of £1,500, which is to be paid in extinguishment of the claims of the loyal Natives, who had an interest in the blocks given them by the Government in consideration of services during the war. Ample reserves have also been set apart for the Natives. The purchase is in many respects an important one. It settled a long-standing feud between the Ngatikahungunu and Urewera tribes, who disputed the ownership of these lands. Both parties have now disposed of their interests to the Crown. This is, I believe, the first instance of any sale of land by the Urewera.

Mr. J. P. Hamlin deserves great credit for his conduct of the negotiations for this purchase, in which he was largely assisted by Mr. Locke, who, in view of the important political reasons for getting the differences between the tribes satisfactorily settled, did all in his power to promote a settlement.

I shall be obliged if you will cause £1,500 to be sent here, to pay the loyal Natives for their interest in the block, as Mr. Hamlin is desirous of at once concluding the whole matter, and will proceed to the Wairoa for the purpose.

A sum of £465 1s. 4d. is also required to complete the purchase money paid to the Natives, for which a temporary arrangement has had to be made.

I have, &c.,

J. D. ORMOND,

General Government Agent.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Napier.

Enclosure in No. 5.

Mr. J. P. HAMLIN to the GENERAL GOVERNMENT AGENT, Napier.

SIR,—

Napier, 4th December, 1875.

I have the honor to report, for your information, that I have completed the purchase of the Waiau, Tukurangi, Taramarama, and Ruakituri Blocks, containing 157,000 acres, for the sum of £12,610; the deeds for which, fully signed and attested, I forward herewith, the land having passed the Native Lands Court at Wairoa in accordance with Native Land Acts, 1873, and 1874. The deeds, however, only show the purchase money as amounting to £9,700: this is explained, as follows:—

I also forward deed signed by Urewera and Ngatikuapani tribes, acknowledging receipt of £1,250, paid to them in relinquishment of their claims over the above-named blocks of land. A sum of £100 was paid over and above the specified consideration named in the deeds of sale to Ngatikahungunu, and also a sum of £60 to the Urewera and Ngatikuapani; these moneys were paid to some of the leading chiefs for services performed in assisting me in the negotiations. A further sum of £1,500 is to be paid to the loyal Natives of Wairoa, Mohaka, Nuhaka, and Mahia districts, as compensation for their claims on these lands acquired, in accordance with agreement at Hatipi, 1867.

The following reserves were set apart for the Natives in each of the blocks:—Tukurangi, 3,800 acres; Taramarama, 1,700 acres; Ruakituri, 2,900 acres: amounting in all to 8,400 acres for the Ngatikahungunu, and a further reserve of 2,500 acres promised to Urewera and Ngatikuapani tribes, making a total of 10,900 acres of reserves.

The sites for the several reserves for the Ngatikahungunu have been fixed, and a surveyor is now engaged in marking them off.

It is my intention, on my next visit to Wairoa, during the present month, to meet the Urewera and Ngatikuapani on the land, and fix the sites for their reserves, and leave direction with the surveyor for defining them.

The total quantity acquired by the Government by this purchase, excluding reserves, amounts to 146,080 acres, at a cost of a fraction under 1s. 8½d. per acre.

I have, &c.,

J. P. HAMLIN,

Land Purchase Officer.

J. D. Ormond, Esq., General Government Agent, Napier.

No. 6.

The Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER to the GENERAL GOVERNMENT AGENT, Napier.

SIR,—

Napier, 13th December, 1875.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Honor's letter, of the 9th instant, enclosing Mr. J. P. Hamlin's report of the purchase of the Waiau, Tukurangi, Taramarama, and Ruakituri Blocks in the Wairoa District, comprising, in all, about 150,000 acres, out of which ample reserves have been set apart for the Natives.

I concur in the opinion expressed by your Honor, of the importance of this purchase, as settling a long-standing feud between the Ngatikahungunu and Urewera tribes, who hitherto disputed the ownership of these lands, both parties having now disposed of their interests to the Crown. The purchase is also of great importance, being the first instance in which the Urewera have joined in the sale of land, and may be accepted as an evidence of a desire, on the part of that tribe, hitherto bitterly opposed to Europeans, to maintain friendly relations. The fact of their having participated in the purchase money is the best proof they can afford of an intention to live on peaceable terms with the colonists.

You will be good enough to convey to Mr. Hamlin my appreciation of the value of his services in successfully concluding these negotiations, and my thanks to Mr. Locke for the able and valuable assistance he has rendered in the matter, especially in the settlement of the differences between the tribes concerned.

Instructions have been telegraphed to Wellington to imprest to your Honor the sum of £2,000, to enable Mr. Hamlin to complete the payments, and to repay the advance, amounting to £465 ls. 4d., for which temporary arrangements had to be made.

I shall feel obliged by your forwarding the deeds, when completed, to the Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

His Honor J. D. Ormond, General Government Agent, Napier.

I have, &c.,
DONALD McLEAN.

No. 7.

Mr. J. P. HAMLIN, Napier, to the ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY Native Department.

SIR,—

Napier, 6th December, 1875.

I have the honor to state, for your information, that the following are the reserves in each of the blocks purchased by me in the Upper Wairoa:—Tukurangi, 3,800 acres; Taramarama, 1,700 acres; Ruakituri, 2,920 acres; and a further reserve of 2,500 acres promised to the Ureweras and Ngatiruanapani tribes; making a total of 10,920 acres of reserves.

H. Halse, Esq., Wellington.

I have, &c.,
J. P. HAMLIN.

No. 8.

Mr. JAMES BOOTH to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Wellington, 30th June, 1876.

I have the honor to report that during the past year the completion of the purchase of land in the Whanganui and Wellington Districts by me amounts to 58,458 acres, at the average cost of 2s. 9½d. per acre, as paid to the Natives. This land is in eighteen blocks, sixteen of which are in the Wellington District between Manawatu and Waikanae, and contain 34,625 acres; two are in the Whanganui District; one in the Tuhua District, Upper Whanganui, containing 17,933 acres; and the other on the Mangawhero River, containing 5,900 acres.

The acquisition of the block containing 17,933 acres, and known as Kirikau, is of importance, as it is in the heart of the country, and the owners not more than two or three years ago were Kingites and Hauhaus, and, as such, opposed to the sale of lands. There are two blocks adjoining Kirikau, named Retaruke and Kauautahi, the purchases of which will in all probability be completed in a few months. Moreover, the Upper Whanganui Natives, having now begun to sell their waste lands to Government, are most anxious to have roads made so that Europeans may be enabled to occupy the lands so ceded to the Crown.

The purchases on the West Coast, comprise portions of what will eventually be a considerable estate. The land, as awarded by the Native Lands Court, is cut up into a large number of blocks and awarded to families or *hapus*, the number of claimants to each block ranging from 10 to 200; the acquisition of this block, therefore, is a work of considerable labour. There are still a few gaps in the block which is being acquired between Manawatu and Waikanae, but I am in hopes that the purchase of the whole block will be completed before the end of next year.

I will only add, in connection with these purchases, that the Natives are, and have been, allowed to have whatever reserves they have asked for; but as these reserves have always been chosen in the vicinity of the Native settlements, the land which is being acquired in this (West Coast) district, when the purchases are completed, will form one entire estate.

I am pleased to be able to state that all moneys which have been advanced by various Land Purchase Officers during many years past, on land purchased during the past year, have been recovered, the amount so recovered during the twelve months being £2,747 5s. 3d., former advances.

There have been several attempts made during the year by private speculators to obtain Native land, either by lease or purchase, but in every case in which the Native owners had commenced negotiations with the Government, they have resisted the temptation to deal privately.

I herewith enclose Mr. John Buller's yearly report.

I have, &c.,
JAMES BOOTH,
Land Purchase Officer.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 8.

Mr. J. W. BULLER to Mr. BOOTH.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 17th June, 1876.

I have the honor to report the following for your information:—

I am glad to be able to report that during the last twelve months the Natives in the South Taupo and Tuhua Districts have, in a great measure, got over their objection to sell and lease lands to the Government. This will, I think, be sufficiently apparent, from reports which I have forwarded to you

from time to time, of meetings which have taken place in these districts. For instance, I attended a meeting in February last, at Taumaranui, a *kainga* in the Tuhua country, about 250 miles up the Whanganui River. I may mention that about twelve months ago this place was a hotbed of Hau-haus and King Natives, and that no Europeans have been allowed there until quite lately. The meeting was convened by Rewi, the known Waikato chief, and a few others, for the purpose of getting the Whanganui Natives to support the King party in their land league, and other matters. A large number of the Wanganui chiefs attended the meeting, but instead of giving their support to the King party, they, with a few exceptions, opposed them in the strongest terms, and declined to allow Rewi to interfere in any way with their affairs. Old Topine te Mamaku, one of the oldest and most influential chiefs in the Tuhua country, behaved very well. He declined to have anything to do with the King party. He said that they were now surveying their lands for sale to the Government, and that they would continue doing so. Nearly all of the Whanganui chiefs supported him in this. A full account of this meeting will be found in my report, dated 8th March.

The purchase of the Kirikau and part purchase of the Retaruke Blocks, as well as applications for other surveys in that district, will prove that the Whanganui Natives were quite sincere in what they said on this occasion.

The negotiations for purchases and leases in the Taupo, Patea, and Murimotu Districts, are progressing slowly, but satisfactorily. I am glad to be able to report that Topia Turoa and Renata Kawepo have arranged their differences in the matter of the Taupo-Patea Block. This is a great point gained, as Renata, for the last two years, has been opposed to the survey of this block. There is now every probability of this survey being completed early next year.

I have further to report that the surveyors returned last week from the Maungaoira Block, in the Rangitikei District, which they had been surveying for the Government. They had to leave off work on account of wet and cold weather. They will resume the work again next spring. They met with no interruptions during the survey, and report very favourably of the quality of the soil.

I have, &c.,

J. W. BULLER,

Land Purchase Officer.

James Booth, Esq.

No. 9.

MR. JAMES MACKAY to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Auckland, 4th July, 1876.

I have the honor to enclose herewith a return of land purchase transactions, conducted through my agency, from 1st July, 1875, to 30th June, 1876.

Owing to delays at Wellington, caused by my being summoned to appear before several Parliamentary Committees, and subsequently from detention there in arranging with the Government respecting land purchases, I was unable to enter into any negotiations between the 1st July and the 31st December, 1875. Since that time I have devoted the whole of my available time to arranging questions about the Piako, Waihou East and West, Waitoa, Te Aroha, and Waiharakeke blocks, and in directing the surveys and settling disputes about the internal divisions of those blocks.

The survey of the Piako block involved the arranging and laying off on the ground of the eastern boundary of the Waikato confiscated lands from Pukorokoro, on the shores of the Hauraki Gulf, to Pukemoremore, near Cambridge, which has proved to be a most difficult task in consequence of the continued interruption of the Surveyors by disaffected Natives living at the Moerangi and Tauhei settlements, near the edge of the Whitekahu (so-called Piako) Swamp. I am, however, happy to say that this line has been completed throughout.

As the lands suitable for settlement, and which are so urgently required by the population of the Thames District, are, with the exception of Ohinemuri, all included within the blocks previously mentioned, I have deemed it advisable to let other purchases, which were nearer completion, stand over for the present, in order to meet, as speedily as possible, the wishes of those persons who are anxious to become permanent settlers.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MACKAY.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBUXY, Government Printer, Wellington.

