

No. 5.

The UNDER-SECRETARY for LANDS to the SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Crown Lands Office, Wellington, 23rd February, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th January, relative to the dealing with the Otago education reserves.

In reply, I am directed to ask you to be good enough to report what sections have been leased in Block X., Waikaia District, showing the names of the lessees, sectional number, and area in each case, together with the date and term of each lease. Will you also please state if any leases have been issued over any of the other blocks included in the twenty thousand acres set apart by proclamation.

I have, &c.,

FRAS. STEVENS,

(for Under-Secretary).

J. P. Maitland, Esq., Chairman, School Commissioners, Dunedin.

No. 6.

J. P. MAITLAND, Esq., to the UNDER-SECRETARY for LANDS.

(Telegram)

Dunedin, 1st March, 1883.

REPLYING to your letter of the 23rd ultimo, the sections leased in Block X. are—Waikaia No. 3, containing 220 acres, to W. G. Turnbull, twenty-one years, from 8th August, 1880, rent £32; No. 13, containing 260 acres, to James Gall, same period, rent £26; and No. 7, to A. T. Elwell, 320 acres, twenty-one years, from April, 1881, rent £32. No sections leased in other blocks mentioned in Proclamations. Necessary you take steps at once to have land dealt with, as per letters of 21st November and 27th January.

J. P. MAITLAND.

The Under-Secretary for Crown Lands, Wellington.

No. 7.

The SURVEYOR-GENERAL to the SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS, Dunedin.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 2nd March, 1883.

YOUR telegram of yesterday, urging immediate dealing with lands Waikaia, as recommended by School Commissioners, will be attended to as soon as Mr. Rolleston returns here; meanwhile County Council of Southland and Mr. Arthur have been invited to co-operate in opening of blocks by roads.

J. McKERROW.

J. P. Maitland, Esq., Chairman, School Commissioners, Dunedin.

No. 8.

The UNDER-SECRETARY for LANDS to the SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS, Dunedin.

(Telegram.)

Government Buildings, Wellington, 19th March, 1883.

LETTER posted to you to-day stating that, for reasons given therein, Government cannot comply with request of Commissioners that reserves at Waikaia, Maitland, and Wyndham should be sold instead of leased. In the letter you are requested to bring the question again before the Commissioners, and, in the event of the proposals of the Government to lease the lands under the Land Act of last session not being agreed to by the Commissioners, the power of leasing conferred by the Education Reserves Leasing Act of 1878 will have to be exercised over the twenty thousand acres which have been already proclaimed, but it would be more desirable to deal with the whole of the lands under the leasing provisions of the Act of last session. Will you please arrange for a meeting of the Commissioners to be held to consider the letter immediately it reaches you, as the Government is desirous that no further delay should take place in opening the land for settlement.

The Chairman, School Commissioners, Dunedin.

H. J. H. ELIOTT.

No. 9.

The UNDER-SECRETARY for LANDS to the SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Crown Lands Office, Wellington, 19th March, 1883.

Referring to your letter of the 27th January, intimating that the School Commissioners of Otago had decided not to offer on lease any of the agricultural lands of the education reserves enumerated in your letter of the 21st November, 1882, comprising in all 68,000 acres in the Waikaia, Maitland, and Wyndham Valleys:

I am directed to state, in reply, that the Government, in view of the fact that the Legislature amended the Land Act last session so that endowment reserves of this class could be dealt with under its provisions, and at the same time empowered the Governor in Council to set apart one-third of the area of agricultural land in each land district for perpetual leasing, would not be justified in agreeing to this large area being entirely excluded from the operation of the Act, the more especially as it is, both as regards quality and situation, the most valuable area of public lands, for its size, available for the future extension of settlement in the colony.

I am further to point out that in "The Otago and Southland Education Reserve Leasing Act, 1878," there was special provision made for the leasing of twenty thousand acres of the land in question; so that it will be seen that both the general provisions of the Land Act, as applying to