

We are proposing to render available for settlement an area of land greater in extent than some kingdoms and independent States. It behoves us to advise that all dealings with this land, and all titles bestowed for it or parts of it, should be—

- (1.) Safe, certain, and easily understood ;
- (2.) Obtained by a speedy and simple process ;
- (3.) Economic in cost ;
- (4.) Permanent in character ;
- (5.) On terms mutually advantageous to both parties ; and
- (6.) Subject to the interest of the public.

CROWN'S PRE-EMPTIVE RIGHT.

The opinions of some of the most experienced witnesses are identical on the point that the abandonment of the Crown's pre-emptive right was a grave and serious error.

Mr. Carroll does not concur in the paragraphs concerning the Crown's pre-emptive right. A note by him is hereinafter appended.

UNANIMITY OF NATIVES AS TO THE FUTURE.

The unanimity of the Natives was not merely negative, and condemnatory of the past and present—it was also displayed in their wishes for the future. Everywhere they gave substantially the same evidence as to the desire of the tribes regarding the future management of their land. Titles they believe can be found and determined, boundaries can be settled, and lists of owners prepared, by the Maoris themselves, leaving only a few disputed cases to be determined by the Court. The respective interests of the owners they think can be arranged by the Committees, with the aid of the District Commissioner and District Judge hereinafter mentioned.

This is strongly confirmed by the experience of Mr. Rennell on the West Coast, and of Judge Ward at Waitotara, and of Judge Mackay at Wellington; and by well-known cases, such as Porangahau, Tahora, and Kaiti, in which last case most valuable land at Gisborne was partitioned by consent into upwards of three hundred sections.

Those remarkable instances prove conclusively that the task of partitioning tribal lands and individualising the respective interests can be made easy by proper management and clever men, whose integrity commands the confidence of the Maoris. The Natives unhesitatingly state their aversion to individuals being allowed to sell or lease lands unless subdivided and held in severalty. They think that a Committee chosen from the owners, with a Government officer, could arrange for leasing, and that the Government officer should distribute the rents among the owners. They are averse to selling, but willing and anxious to lease their lands. They desire in some localities liberal reserves for the education of their children and the establishment of industrial schools. They wish that, where any of their numbers are able and willing to manage for themselves, then they should by friendly arrangement receive a fair share of the tribal land in severalty for farming or other purposes, of course relinquishing by so much their claims upon the rent of the whole block. They are unanimous in desiring a competent Commission to settle all existing disputes. Where the European is blameless, he should have his title made good; where there is no dispute the Court should settle it for ever. They wish in certain cases to effect improvements upon their lands.

The Europeans examined were almost equally unanimous, and in all principal points generally coincided with the Natives.

Among members of both races there were diversities of opinion upon minor points and matters of detail, but on the main principles the agreement between them was remarkable and striking. It would seem that men of every shade of party and of different rank and race were irresistibly forced to the same conclusions.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF PARLIAMENT TO LEGISLATE.

The right of Parliament to legislate for the lands of the Natives cannot be doubted. By the Treaty of Waitangi the Natives were guaranteed the full possession of all their rights in the soil of New Zealand. An attempt was made in the very early days of the colony to restrict the meaning of the treaty entered into on behalf of the Crown within very narrow limits.

Urged by the New Zealand Company and the numerous and powerful supporters whom Mr. Edward Gibbon Wakefield had gathered round him, Earl Grey, in his despatch to Governor Grey which enclosed the Constitution and Charter of 1846, laid down the principle that the Natives' rights existed only so far as the lands which they actually cultivated or could cultivate, and no further, and that all the lands of New Zealand beyond this were waste lands of