

than five persons who wish to subdivide their lands may do so, in the same manner that, according to that section, more than five now can. This would facilitate the subdivision of lands, a thing I believe desirable; and I am of opinion that before many years scarcely any two Natives will be content to hold a piece of land jointly. Indeed they are already wishing to subdivide, and in several cases have cut the subdivision lines on the land, and will no doubt soon apply to the Court to have the subdivision legally confirmed.

With respect to the Act of 1866, I have no suggestion to make. I can only say I think it were better entirely repealed, with perhaps the exception of the eleventh section—which section, however, I think hardly necessary.

F. D. Fenton, Esq.,
Chief Judge, Native Lands Court, Auckland.

I have, &c.,
F. E. MANING.

No. 3.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. MANING to Mr. FENTON.

SIR,—

Hokianga, 28th June, 1867.

In addition to my report of the 24th instant, I have the honor to mention the following particulars illustrative of the working of the Native Lands Act in this district.

I have lately been applied to by the representatives of tribes here for direction as to the proper mode of procedure in procuring Crown titles for four different blocks of land, two of which I estimate at about 100,000 acres each, and the other two at about 30,000 acres each. The survey of one of the 30,000 acre blocks is now nearly completed, and the application to have the title investigated will soon be sent in. The survey of the second 30,000 acre block will, I believe, soon be commenced, arrangements having been made for that purpose.

The surveys of the two larger blocks may not be commenced for some time, as the expense will be very considerable, much forest line having to be cut, and the Native owners of the land will have to raise the money to meet the expense of survey previous to commencing the work, and also to come to an understanding as to exact boundaries with neighbouring Native landholders. The intention of the owners of the two larger blocks, which I estimate at about 100,000 acres each, is, in the first instance, to secure the whole tribal estate by a grant from the Crown to the tribe, and afterwards to subdivide the whole, giving each family its share, to be also secured by a grant from the Crown to individuals the heads of families.

The labour and expense incident to the first general survey and the subsequent division and subdivision, will be very great as compared to the means of the Natives for meeting it, and consequently I daresay it will be three or four years before the whole operation respecting these two blocks be completed.

The block of 30,000 acres, of which I have said the survey will probably be soon commenced, is a very valuable piece of land, and is intended to be offered for sale by the owners, who have already secured to themselves 14,000 acres of first-rate land by grants, inalienable, from the Crown, and have also about 25,000 more, which they wish to secure to themselves in the same manner, and of which the survey is now very nearly completed. Notwithstanding the heavy expense, and consequent delay which Natives are put to in establishing their claims and procuring Crown Grants for the same, I do not think it would be advisable, except in very exceptional cases, to give them any assistance under section seventy-seven, "Native Lands Act, 1865;" for if it was afforded in one case many applications would be made for the like, and difficulties would probably in many cases arise before the Government would be reimbursed the expense. Another reason which appears to me of weight against giving assistance as above is, that the progress hitherto made in the working of "The Native Lands Act" has arisen, and will arise from the *bona fide* exertions and expense gone to by the Natives themselves, and to which they have been prompted by a not unintelligent appreciation of the benefit of holding land as private property; and which progress, whatever it may be, will therefore present reliable data for political speculation; whereas under the circumstances of assistance being given, if to any considerable extent, the apparent progress made might be delusive.

F. D. Fenton, Esq.,
Chief Judge, Native Land Court, Auckland.

I have, &c.,
F. E. MANING.

No. 4.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. MONRO to Mr. FENTON.

SIR,—

Auckland, 27th June, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular of the 17th instant requesting a report as to the working of "The Native Lands Act, 1865."

Although always receiving the Act in a favourable light, I was unprepared for the very great success which has attended it. A large quantity of land has been passed through the Court at its various sittings throughout the Northern Island, and in scarcely a single instance has a decision been appealed against.

The Natives, wherever I have been, have repeatedly expressed their satisfaction at the mode of procedure, and appear generally to have the utmost confidence in the Court. Questions which a few years ago used to be decided by an appeal to arms, they are now content to leave to its peaceful arbitration.

My operations have extended principally over the Districts of Waikato, Coromandel, Hauraki, and the Province of Hawke's Bay. In the latter place certificates of title have been issued for upwards of