

No. 12.

Major HEAPHY, V.C., to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Bluff, 15th May, 1870.

I have the honor to forward herewith a report on the Native Reserves in the Province of Southland, with a series of plans and appendices. The report is intended to form part of the General Report on the Native Reserves of the Colony. I find that for the sake of expedition, it is better that I should send to you each provincial report as it becomes finished, than to wait for the completion of the whole.

I have the honor to suggest that the Report should be printed, if you see no objection, for the use of the General Assembly. The maps alluded to are either now attached, or have been sent to Mr. Marchant, in Wellington, for lithographing.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES HEAPHY,

Acting Commissioner of Native Reserves.

The Hon. the Native Minister.

Enclosure 1 in No. 12.

REPORT ON THE NATIVE RESERVES IN THE PROVINCE OF SOUTHLAND.

THE Native Reserves of Southland consist, chiefly, of two classes, one of which comprises lands situated on the mainland, and set apart for the use and benefit of the local natives, by the terms of the sale of the Murehika Block, together with a series of Reserves on Stewart's Island and the adjacent islets, made on the extinction of the Native title to that place.

The other class comprises lands situated at "The Neck," on Stewart's Island, recommended by Mr. Land Purchase Commissioner Clarke to be reserved for certain half-castes, the children of the sealers who first settled Foveaux Straits, by Maori wives, who were owners of land at Murituku and Stewart's Island.

There are two other Native Reserves that do not come within these classes, and which will be described separately.

The Reserves on the mainland have apparently been selected from having been the sites of old cultivations; they seem generally to be well chosen, and are likely to become valuable. On Stewart's Island, the Reserves have been selected less with regard to their value for purposes of cultivation than on account of some local or peculiar object, such as *titi* or mutton bird catching, fishing, whaling, &c., and are much scattered. It would be advantageous if those on the main island could, with the consent of the Natives interested, be consolidated into half or a third of their number of blocks, and taken in fertile situations. I have reason to believe that His Honor the Superintendent of Southland is not averse to the plan of consolidation being carried into effect, on the basis of equal value, and I have instructed the chief surveyor, upon whom will devolve the duty of supervising the survey of these Reserves, to throw two or more together where the Natives consent to it, and there is no reason to prevent its being done.

A number of small islands (Titi Islands) lying chiefly off the South West Cape, Stewart's Island, have been reserved for mutton-bird catching. In the autumn these islands, which, with one or two exceptions, are mere rocks, are resorted to by those birds, in great numbers, and for several weeks the natives from the coast of Foveaux Straits and Ruapuke Island subsist almost entirely on the young birds.

One or two boat harbors were, by the terms of the deed of sale, reserved for the use of the Natives whilst so employed. From Port William, round Stewart's Island to these islets, great quantities of fish exist—probably more than in any other part of the coast of New Zealand—and the possession of these islets and the boat harbors will always prevent the possibility of destitution to the local Natives, even in a season of scanty or failing crops.

At "The Neck"—an island at Paterson's Inlet, connected at low water by a sandspit with the main of Stewart's Island—there are located a number of half-caste families, who claim in the aggregate far more land than the island comprises. The facilities which "The Neck" afforded for whaling operations—the harbor giving shelter to the boats, whilst the outer sea was in immediate view, and of ready access—caused this place to have great attractions, and at the present time almost each of the old sealers and whalers has a representative upon it. Mr. Commissioner Clarke promised that ten acres of land should be reserved at this place for each male, and eight acres for each female. Mr. Commissioner Mackay has furnished a nominal list of ninety-four half-caste claimants to the above-mentioned area of land.

But upon "The Neck" there are also two undefined old land claims—those of Anglem and Joss—and as the area of the island is but about 719 acres, it is probable that only a small number, and certain that not *all*, of the half-castes will be able to obtain their allotments at that place.

The Chief Topi gave up a piece of land at Bluff Harbour for the purpose of affording a site for Campbelltown, and in compensation is to receive from the Provincial Government a block of land of 178 acres 0 roods 16 perches, at the east end of Oraka Beach, and 227 acres 3 roods 24 perches, in lots 42 and part of 43 in block 7, at Jacob's River; in all 400 acres. I furnish herewith measurements of these lands, and respectfully suggest that Crown Grants should be prepared for them.

By the terms of the Deed of Sale of Stewart's Island, it was provided that £2000 of the purchase money should be appropriated to the acquisition of an estate in Southland of 2000 acres for an endowment for education and other Native purposes.

A block of excellent land in the Hokonui District, comprising 2000 acres has been obtained, and is now let to Mr. J. B. Kingswell, of Invercargill, for a term of 21 and a half years, from 1st June, 1869, on a rental of £75 a year for the first three years, and £100 a year for the remainder of the