

REPORTS ON THE SETTLEMENT OF CONFISCATED LANDS.

No. 1.

Mr. R. PHARAZYN to the SECRETARY for CROWN LANDS.

SIR,—

Confiscated Lands Office, Wellington, 7th June, 1870.

I have the honor to bring under your notice the fact that, up to the present time, no general trigonometrical survey has been made of the confiscated lands on the West Coast.

I understand from Messrs. Wray and Williams that tie lines of a considerable length have been the only means used to check the surveys at all in that part of the district in which land has been surveyed for military settlements, with the exception of a few trigonometrical stations used to fix the position of some principal points in the course of the Patea River, and of the township of Carlyle.

An incomplete trigonometrical survey was made of land to the west of the Waitotara River, but probably most, if not all, of the stations were destroyed during the war, so that much of the work would have to be done over again, if it is decided to make a general trigonometrical survey of the whole district, a course that I strongly recommend should be adopted.

Messrs. Wray and Williams might be employed to execute this work during the time that must elapse before any of those lands can be surveyed for sale, in consequence of the unsettled state of the Crown title, owing to claims made by Natives, under Compensation Court awards and promises made to them by Government, many of which can only be dealt with by the Legislature, or by arrangements being made with the Natives, by Mr. McLean, by which all rights shall be strictly defined.

Under any circumstances it will be necessary to have a complete system of survey, without which it will be impossible to deal with the lands in a satisfactory manner.

The more complex the boundaries between European and Native land, the more necessary it is to have maps made which will scale correctly, a result which can only be obtained by basing them upon an accurate trigonometrical survey.

Were the land entirely free to be dealt with as the Government pleases, it might be possible to adopt the plan commonly used in those parts of the United States where land is comparatively valueless, and simply divide it into rectangular blocks, by cutting parallel lines and others at right angles to them, and selling the blocks as containing a certain number of acres more or less; but in the case of the West Coast lands, such a method would lead to endless confusion and ultimate expenditure, besides producing a general feeling of insecurity very injurious to the settlement of the country.

From a report of the Chief Surveyor of the Province of Wellington, Mr. H. Jackson, published in the volume of Acts and Proceedings of the Provincial Council of Wellington for 1868, E. No. 7, I find that the survey of 550 square miles of major triangulation of eight to ten miles a side, cost $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per acre, and 607 $\frac{1}{2}$ square miles of minor triangulation of two or three miles a side, cost $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per acre, of which latter the maximum error was only 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet per mile. The average cost of the sectional surveys in connection with the above was 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per acre.

I need scarcely point out that, under the contract system of surveying, the expense of checking surveys is very much lessened by making them depend upon a trigonometrical survey, which, if executed by contractors, would itself be required to be checked, an operation which would cost very little, while of course a trigonometrical survey once completed would form a standard by which the accuracy of all sectional surveys would be insured, and all the expense, trouble, and annoyance caused to the Government and to private individuals by inaccurate surveys, would be entirely prevented.

Before anything is decided it would be well to consult Mr. Marchant on the question which forms the subject of this letter, as I do not pretend to have more than a general acquaintance with the principles involved in the practical art of surveying.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT PHARAZYN,

Commissioner of Confiscated Lands.

The Secretary for Crown Lands, Wellington.

No. 2.

Mr. R. PHARAZYN to the SECRETARY for CROWN LANDS.

SIR,—

Confiscated Lands Office, Wellington, 16th June, 1870.

In accordance with instructions contained in the Hon. the Premier's memorandum relative to my appointment as Commissioner of Confiscated Lands, I have the honor to report as follows on the amount and character of the land available for settlement within that portion of the West Coast district which has been placed in my charge.

The district comprises the greater part of the Ngatiruanui Block, which was proclaimed confiscated land in the New Zealand Government *Gazette* of the 5th December, 1865. This included all the land between the sea and a line drawn from the summit of Mount Egmont to Parakino, a place some thirty miles up the Wanganui River, excepting, of course, all land purchased by the Crown, such as the Waitotara and Wanganui Blocks and others, estimated to contain 498,000 acres.

Subsequently, the Crown abandoned its right to all the land between the Wanganui River and a line north 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ ° east from the point where the inland boundary of the Waitotara Block strikes the Waitotara River.