

acres. Alternate blocks, of about 1,000 acres each, it is intended to dispose of to our own immigrants and some others for actual occupation on the deferred-payment system, charging a light rental and giving a right to purchase at a given price at the end of from seven to ten years. Periodical auction sales, the first of which will probably be about November next, will be made of the intermediate blocks (amounting to 10,000 acres) and a certain number of town and suburban sections. These sales will be for cash.

In all cases the best blocks of timber will be reserved from sale, as it is the intention of the Corporation gradually to establish an extensive timber trade for the supply of the West Coast towards Taranaki, and for export from Wanganui and Foxton.

The prices fixed upon the land will to some extent depend upon circumstances which it is impossible to foresee, and they will vary according to situation and quality and the character of the timber upon the various sections.

The present upset price of sections in the Fielding township is from £10 per acre for outer sections, to £25 each for quarter-acre sections in central positions. At present I am only allowing land to be taken up on condition of immediate occupation. With this restriction, the most expensive allotments are fast being disposed of, and I should have no difficulty in selling the whole town at once at the upset price were I to remove that restriction.

The upset price at auction of suburban sections will probably be from £5 to £8 per acre, and of country lands from £2 to £4; leased lands will be charged from 2s. 6d. to 4s. per acre rental, with a right to purchase at from £3 to £5 at the end of the lease of seven or ten years.

Of course, in fixing these prices the Corporation contemplates a considerable expenditure in road work, which will in all cases, where practicable, be done in anticipation of sale and settlement.

What with the railway formation at present, the timber supply when the railway work is finished, the formation of internal roads and tramways, the cultivation of the land when the timber is gone, and the manifold industries which a population creates for its own supply, I see no reason to fear that for many years to come there will not be ample and remunerative employment for a very large number of workmen; and when the Manchester Block shall have been stripped of its timber, a similar process of colonization carried on over the adjoining lands will long continue to support far more men than the terms of the Fielding contract contemplate the introduction of.

In conclusion, Sir, I desire to express my sense of the consideration and assistance I have met with at the hands of the Government in the execution of the difficult work which has been confided to my charge.

I have, &c.,

A. FOLLETT HALCOMBE,

Agent, Emigrant and Colonist's Aid Corporation.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration, Wellington.