

A.—PEKAPEKARAU, WHAREKANAKAHA, and OPOUTEKE.

THE 2s. 6d. per acre for these lands belong to the first arrangement agreed to; and the money advanced, with a trifling addition, is to be expended at that rate; but the remaining acres are to be at the rate of 1s. 3d. per acre.

One (Rev. — Baker's claim), comprised in two blocks, has been arranged for the sum of £160; I had much difficulty in settling this long-vexed and old Native land claim. I had to make presents to individuals, but these are included in the sum I have mentioned. One contains some very fine well-watered land, suitable for settlement.

Tutamoe and Kairara Blocks contain and include the blocks Taimahue and Totarapoka. The two last-mentioned blocks have also been reduced in price, from 2s. and 2s. 6d. per acre to 1s. 3d. per acre; but the money given in advance on these two blocks (£40) is to be expended on the land, at the old rate of 2s. and 2s. 6d. per acre. With this trifling exception, the price for the whole is arranged for 1s. 3d. per acre. This land is now being surveyed.

THOS. McDONNELL,
Land Purchase Agent.

No. 79.

Sir D. McLEAN to the DISTRICT OFFICER, Bay of Islands.

Memorandum for District Officer, Bay of Islands.

20th January, 1875.

A QUESTION of disputed title exists, with regard to two blocks of land near Whangaroa, called Otangaroa and Te Patoa; the rival claimants being respectively the Ngapuhi, Hongi Hika's tribe, and the Ngatipo, Wiremu Maihi's tribe. Messrs. Brissenden and McDonnell entered into some negotiations for the purchase of these lands, and orders were given for the survey, which, however, was not carried out. You will find in H.A.L.A., 1873 (see 21 *et seq.*), that you should have made inquiry into the title before the survey could take place; but from the brief time during which you have held the position of District Officer, it was not to be expected that you could have attended to this duty in this particular case. In future, however, in all instances where Natives are about to bring their lands under investigation before the Native Land Court, or intend to dispose of them to the Government, you will be required to make a full preliminary inquiry, so as to be able to state whether the survey can be proceeded with without affecting the peace of the district.

"The Native Lands Act, 1873," so clearly lays down the duties of District Officers, that I am only to direct your notice to its provisions, and to request you to give them your particular attention.

I have also to point out to you the necessity of your making yourself acquainted with all land transactions in the district, and also with the surplus lands that have reverted to the Crown, so as to protect the interests of the public in the event of an attempt being made to reclaim the latter, to re-dispose of them either to the Government or to private individuals, or to deal with them in any other manner.

W. Webster, Esq., Bay of Islands.

DONALD McLEAN.

No. 80.

Lieut.-Colonel McDONNELL to Lieut.-Colonel St. JOHN.

SIR,—

Auckland, February, 1875.

I have the honor to beg that you will lay this letter before the Hon. the Native Minister for his information and consideration.

I have been for some time past negotiating lands North, at Ahipara, Mangakahia, and elsewhere. I have made considerable purchases. In all transactions I have been careful to avoid cause for dissatisfaction; and the system I have pursued has, in many instances, been the means of healing old disagreements.

I have arranged the Mangakahia lands with every hope of being able to complete them with a considerable saving of money—about £2,000—but this has to be ratified by other Natives.

If my negotiations are left with me to finish, this money will be saved; but I fear that, if they are handed over for others to conclude, the former agreement of 2s. 6d. per acre will have to be carried out in place of the present understanding: this will affect all lands in that neighbourhood.

During my last visit to Ahipara, I bought a very fine block of land, next to the Victoria Valley purchase, for 3s. an acre, called Orowahana. There is a very barren piece of land adjoining, called Epakauri, that has also been bought for the Government at 4d. an acre. As these two blocks join each other, the Natives intend to increase the acreage of the good block by taking in a good slice of the worthless country.

I therefore suggest that I be permitted to finish the purchase of this block, as well as the lands I have negotiated for at Mangakahia, including the Tutamoe and Kairara forest of timber. I know all the Native owners and the proper boundaries to be observed. Many of the lands alluded to above have been surveyed for many months past, and would have been out of hand now but for delays of the Native Land Court.

Colonel St. John, Private Secretary, Native Office.

I have, &c.,
THOS. McDONNELL.

No. 81.

Sir D. McLEAN to Lieut.-Colonel McDONNELL.

SIR,—

Auckland, 1st March, 1875.

I have the honor to inform you that I have received from Major Green an intimation that you are desirous of obtaining an appointment elsewhere than in Auckland. As it does not appear