

1877.

NEW ZEALAND.

PURCHASE OF LAND FROM THE NATIVES.

(REPORTS FROM OFFICERS.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department, to LAND PURCHASE OFFICERS.

(Circular letter N.L.P. 155-2.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 17th May, 1877.

I have the honor, by direction of the Hon. Mr. Ormond, to request that you will be good enough to furnish for general information a report of your land-purchase transactions since the 1st July last. This report is intended to be printed as a parliamentary paper, and should contain the fullest information. You should state the number of blocks of land purchased by you during the year, the number under negotiation of purchase, the area, whether surveyed or under survey, the price per acre, the amount of money paid or to be paid on the several blocks, and the approximate date upon which you consider the purchases will be completed; whether the land has been individualized by the Native Land Court, or applications made for hearing; the capability of the land, whether suitable for settlement, agricultural or pastoral purposes; together with such other information as you may consider necessary.

The report should be accompanied by a tabular statement containing detailed particulars, and forwarded to this office not later than the 30th June next.

I have, &c.,

HENRY T. CLARKE,
Under Secretary.

No. 2.

Mr. J. W. PREECE, Auckland, to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Auckland, 26th June, 1877.

I have the honor to forward, for your information, a return in three parts, showing the progress of the land-purchase operations in my district—namely, that to the North of Auckland—during the past year, stating the number of blocks purchased, the area and cost of the same, the number of blocks the purchase of which is nearly completed, and the number under negotiation, together with such other information as I am able to give, and to report generally on the same. Table I. shows the completed transactions—namely, twenty-nine blocks, containing in the aggregate 50,919 acres, which have been purchased at a cost of £5,302 10s., being at the rate of a fraction over 2s. 0½d. per acre, exclusive of survey and incidental expenses. The area purchased contrasts very unfavourably with that of the land purchased by me last year, which was nine blocks, containing 182,198 acres; but the amount of work which this year's transactions have entailed has been much greater than that of last year, which may be partly accounted for by the fact that the number of blocks exceed the latter by twenty. Very large payments had also been made by way of deposit, which left the balance to pay on closing the transactions very small when compared with the number of persons among whom it had to be divided, many of whom had not participated in the primary payments. Many of the owners also were scattered about in various parts of the North, and had to be sought out at their several settlements. These circumstances, together with the ordinary difficulties which one has invariably to contend against in purchasing land from the Natives, rendered the completion of these transactions far more difficult than they would have been had the negotiations never been initiated.

1—G. 7.