

Since the publication of the draft of the proposed Native Lands Act, 1877, whereby provision is about to be made for the removal of these "minors in succession difficulties," it would appear that it might be well to delay bringing this case before the Court now, so that a final remedy be provided under the new law, and this course will probably be adopted if no better solution of the difficulty be possible.

Oruanui Block: Purchase, 10,000 acres; and lease, 20,000 acres.—Title, Crown grant, in favour of ten grantees. A successor had to be appointed to a deceased grantee, and we obtained a unanimous application in favour of one individual as this successor, who signed the deeds, together with one of the grantees (Wi Warena) who had hitherto refused to sign unless at an increased rate of rental to what all the others had agreed upon. Having obtained this form and signatures, and forwarded same to the Court, it was considered advisable to fix the date of commencement of the Government lease. As already reported the date of Oruanui lease was fixed by Captain Mair and self from the 10th July, 1875; and a sum of £50, representing one year's rent, was paid to the ten grantees for the year 1875-76. The deeds of Oruanui will be forwarded to Wellington as soon as the Court actually appoints the successor referred to, and when his signature is attested before a Resident Magistrate, or the Judge of the Court. I also arranged the reserve which the grantees stipulated for at Oruanui pa, and made a preliminary survey of same on the ground.

Tauhara North: Purchase, 7,829 acres.—Title, Crown grant, in favour of two individuals. After duly agreeing to this sale, and the deeds completed and forwarded to Wellington, an objection was raised by the grantees to the direction of the Northern boundary, and they refused to satisfy the questions asked by Major Roberts, who was acting for Colonel Haultain, the Native Lands Trust Commissioner. Since then the chief grantee (Hare Rewiti te Kume) has expressed himself satisfied, and wishes to accompany me on to the ground to fix the direction of the line as laid down on the deed. The line of purchase was a due North one, running from Hipaua to the Waikato River; but was not surveyed on the ground, it not being considered necessary to incur the expense. I intend shortly accompanying both grantees on to the ground, so as to finally arrange this matter. Arrangements were then made by self and the District Officer with the Native owners for the survey of two extensive blocks at Mohaka under negotiation for purchase, and proposed now to be taken before the Court at its first sitting at Taupo. Under approval of the Surveyor-General's Department, I employed Mr. Thomas Hallet as my assistant for these Mohaka surveys, he being a competent surveyor and also a resident runholder in the locality, and who would be able to take advantage of the weather when suitable for surveying in that bleak and rugged region. After traversing the Mohaka boundary of both blocks the winter set in, and operations had to be suspended until the spring. Sufficient data is now obtained, however, to enable me to compile sufficiently accurate maps for the investigation of title by the Court.

The surveys of Tatua West Block and Te Hukui next occupied attention, and a general consent was obtained to the latter work as soon as the services of a surveyor could be given by the District Surveyor, Captain Turner, of Tauranga. The survey of Tatua is very anxiously looked for by the section who were decided by the Court in 1869 as the owners (Hitiri Paerata, Te Papanui, and party), and who, in 1874, leased the land to the Government. But there is also a considerable opposition to the survey from sections ignored by the Court and by us, the Government Land Purchase Agents. This opposition consists of a Hauhau section, who are supposed to uphold the King's policy of anti-leasing or selling land, and of a Queenite section, headed by old Poihipi Tukairangi, who professes to ignore the judgment of the Court, because no survey was permitted by the Natives within the twelve months allowed by the Court on issuing its interlocutory order. Claims have now been sent in to the Chief Judge, so that the interlocutory order of 1869 may be sustained, or else a fresh investigation take place. But before either of these courses can be taken the survey must be made. I intend meeting all the sections interested in the Tatua, with the District Officer, and hope to clear away the opposition which has so long existed to a settlement of the disputes regarding the ownership of this tract of country.

The sitting of the first Court in the Arawa country is now fixed to take place at Taupo, on the 20th August next; and the business mentioned in the foregoing is all duly set down for hearing on that occasion.

After concluding these arrangements in the Taupo District, attention was directed to the incomplete negotiations at Maketu, in the Bay of Plenty. The survey of Te Puke Block was recommenced by Mr. Edgcombe, of the Surveyor-General's Department, and completed without any very serious interruption, thanks to the amicable understanding established by the Hon. Dr. Pollen with the Ngati-whakaue tribe at Tauranga in January last, and due also to the tact, energy, and discretion displayed by Captain Mair, the District Officer, who conducted throughout the whole of the delicate and troublesome negotiations connected with this important work. The surveys of the other Maketu Blocks will be proceeded with as soon as the surveyor can overtake the work; and, having held a consultation recently in Auckland with the Chief Surveyor and the District Surveyor, it has been decided to adopt the original Native Land Court surveys for the Government transactions, and only to survey any new boundaries which may be required to define same. This will greatly simplify and lessen the work for the surveyor, and no delay need take place in bringing all the Maketu negotiations before the Native Land Court immediately after the Taupo sitting. At the same time it may be remarked that it would seem wise to delay the hearing of these cases until the proposed provisions for protecting the interests of the Crown over lands under negotiation have been secured under the new Act, otherwise the action of private speculators may prove troublesome.

The following is a list of the blocks of land which have been prepared or are now under survey for the Native Lands Court, showing areas:—

LANDS, TAUPO DISTRICT.

Hilly Pastoral.

	Acres.
1 and 2. Mohaka, 2 blocks, purchases, under survey	60,000
3. Taharua, purchases under survey	14,000
4. Runanga No. 1, lease; claim for hearing sent; surveyed	43,000