

1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

LANDS ON THE WEST COAST TAKEN UNDER THE NEW ZEALAND SETTLEMENTS ACTS

(PAPERS RELATING TO).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Sheehan, with the leave of the House.

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM by the Hon. Mr. SHEEHAN.

New Plymouth, 14th April, 1879.

ARRIVED here on Saturday evening, and landed on Sunday morning. On Monday morning had a long conversation with Mr. Mackay, the details of which appear in the report annexed hereto. Immediately afterwards conferred with Major Brown, Civil Commissioner, and Mr. Parris, in the presence of Mr. Mackay. The subject of discussion was the question of unfulfilled promises in respect of lands taken under New Zealand Settlements Acts, between the Waitotara River on the south, and the Pukearuhe or White Cliffs Station on the north. We had before us a map of the whole of this area, showing the various blocks; and also all records and papers belonging to our office bearing on the West Coast confiscation. I first of all read, for the information of all present, Sir Donald McLean's instructions to Messrs. Parris and Worgan, dated 20th January, 1872, and also instructions by the same Minister to Major Brown, on his taking over Mr. Parris's work in April, 1876.

I then explained to the gentlemen present that the main object of my visit to Taranaki on the present occasion was to ascertain what foundation there was for the statements made in many quarters, and believed in a great many others, to the effect that important promises made by the Government in respect of the West Coast confiscated area had not been fulfilled; it being broadly stated that the existence of these unfulfilled promises had a great deal to do with the recent interruption of the survey of the Waimate Plains. We spent over two hours in full and searching inquiry into these matters; and the result I propose to give to Ministers in the present minute. This memorandum of mine will require to be read in connection with Mr. Mackay's report. Mr. Mackay was specially requested by me to travel through the district now under consideration. The fact of his having no official connection with the Government gave him unusual facilities for acquiring a knowledge of the real views of the Natives upon the question. Mr. Mackay has, in the course of his journey from Wanganui to the northern boundary of the confiscation, visited Parihaka and many other of the principal settlements, and interviewed a great many of the principal chiefs, including Titokowaru and Te Whiti. The result of his inquiries, as already mentioned, will be found in the report annexed. I shall take another and more fitting opportunity of expressing my opinion upon the services thus unselfishly rendered by Mr. Mackay, contenting myself meanwhile by saying that, in the discussion which took place this morning, and the conclusions to which I have come in this memorandum, I have been largely aided by the result of Mr. Mackay's labours. In proceeding to deal with the question it will be convenient to put it before Ministers as it was taken by ourselves this morning.

We began with the northernmost area of confiscation, at Pukearuhe, or White Cliffs, extending to the Hangatahua River, south of New Plymouth. From Hangatahua, going northwards, to the south bank of the Waitara River there is nothing calling for special comment, excepting that it appears that a great many of the reserves made for the Natives have since passed into the hands of Europeans. There may be, perhaps, in this area a few small questions respecting the areas, or boundaries, or locations of reserves, but not such as to have any appreciable effect upon the present aspect of affairs. Between the north bank of the Waitara and Pukearuhe are living a large number of Natives, many of whom hold land-scrip, or certificates, issued to them by the Compensation Court which sat in New Plymouth between 1865 and 1867. Of these awards a few—mainly tribal ones—have been allocated. All, or nearly all, of the individual awards still