

All the sections are down to 30s. We might reasonably expect ours to be the same.

Mr. Donald Reid valued the *best* holdings here at five to seven shillings more. It is generally admitted, that it was through some error of the wording of the Act, that the deferred-payment sections were put at that price. It has been said by members of the House that there was no intention to raise the land at once to double its former price. The price,—it is at all events admitted,—is too high; and it was a mistake to do so. Surely the Government ought to relieve the few who are suffering from this mistake. The Crown lands belong to the people, and all should be put on equal terms.

I have written Mr. Bathgate, M.H.R., on this subject, and I trust you will try to fall on some other plan of relief than the one proposed in this Bill.

Trusting you will take these remarks into your favourable consideration.

I am, &c.,
W. H. BAYLEY.

No. 3.

Mr. JAS. HARTSTONGE to Mr. C. A. DeLATOUR, M.H.R.

SIR,—

Newthorne, Macrae's, Otago, 25th July, 1882.

May I take the liberty of asking you to place my case before the proper person, and use your influence on my behalf. The case is, I took up 92 acres of poor land, under the Land Act of 1877, at three pounds per acre; and have paid two years' rent of it, which amounts to twelve shillings per acre; but, through the lowness of prices, and as you are aware our remoteness from market, the grain never paid costs, leaving nothing to either live on or pay the rent. The section in question is, Section Two, Block Two, Budle, and what I now offer to do is, to pay in cash one pound ten shillings per acre, which money a friend of mine will advance me, and as the Government will have then in all two pounds two shillings per acre, there will, at the Government side, be no loss, as if the instalment were kept up for the ten years, the interest on the money would reduce the price to what I now offer, and for a refuse section 1,640 feet above sea level. I think no fairly disposed person could refuse. I therefore request you will on my behalf make this offer, and use your influence to get it accepted, or give me any directions as to petition of which I can get 100 to sign, and forward on if required; and should the Government accept my offer, the money will be paid on receipt of their acceptance. As to the Government's proposed Land Bill, I shall never take up one acre under, nor will any of my children do so. There being no purchasing clause, people coming here from the old country did so with a hope of one day being able to say, we are our own landlords, and depend if no alteration be made in this direction, capital will drain quickly out of New Zealand.

Hoping you will effect an agreement as to the purchase of the section for me.

I have, &c.,
JAMES HARTSTONGE.

No. 4.

Mr. C. E. DeLATOUR, M.H.R., to the CHAIRMAN Waste Lands Committee.

Re Hartstonge and others.

SIR,—

Wellington, 1st August, 1882.

Being detained on the Goldfield's Committee, I cannot attend.

There is nothing exceptional in the case of these petitioners, other than in the case of other petitioners, whose claims for relief you have examined Mr. Connell upon.

Mr. Hartstonge and others represent settlers at Macrae's and Hydes, who have taken up their lands in some instances at the minimum price allowed by law, during the period that the Crown Lands Sale Act was in operation, and who find themselves unable to pay the rent they have accepted.

The others, not included in this class, have competed at auction for sections put up in limited quantities; and have been induced to give too high rents rather than go without land for an indefinite time.

I have, &c.,
Mr. C. A. DeLATOUR.

No. 5.

REPORT UPON THE PETITION OF DEFERRED-PAYMENT SETTLERS in the Waitoa Block No. 11.
Petition No. 341.

As stated by the petitioners, certain drainage works were carried out by the Public Works Department.

On the 30th May last Mr. Thomas Taylor, one of the petitioners, addressed the Auckland Land Board with reference to the insufficiency of the drainage scheme carried out by the Government.

Mr. Taylor's letter was forwarded to the Government by the Commissioner of Crown Lands at Auckland, and upon the correspondence being submitted to the Minister of Lands instructions were given to communicate with the Auckland Board, pointing out that if the Waitoa Highway Board consented to expend whatever sum was lying at the Treasury to its credit, on account of receipts of deferred-payment lands, in pursuance of section 59 of the Land Act, the Government would contribute a further sum of £350 towards an extension of the drainage scheme at Te Aroha. The additional works to be carried out under the supervision of the District Engineer of the Public Works Department.

By a statement compiled in the Treasury on the 17th July ultimo, it appears that the sum of £299 is to the credit of the Highway Board, on account of deferred-payment receipts; and as the engineer estimates that the work will only cost £600, ample funds will be provided for carrying out the work applied for by the petitioners.