

tion. You do not give the reply thereto, which contains the undertaking of the Government in this matter. It is as follows: "Public Works Office, Wellington, 20th February, 1882. Sir,—I have the honour to state that after carefully considering the application made on behalf of the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company (Limited), by your letter of the 13th instant, the Government are prepared to agree to insert in the contract a clause to the effect that if within five years from signing of the contract there should be Crown lands within the prescribed limits which, in the opinion of the Government are available for the purpose, the Government will allocate to the company out of such lands an area sufficient to make the estimated value, as ascertained under the Act of the land granted to the company, equal to 30 per cent. of the estimated cost of the railway, upon the basis of the total length of the line being 84½ miles, and its average cost £5,000 per mile.—I have, &c., WALTER W. JOHNSTON. J. E. Nathan, Esq., Chairman, Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company (Limited)."

On the next day the following letter was sent to Mr. Travers, as solicitor for the company: "Public Works Office, Wellington, 21st February, 1882. Sir,—I am directed by the Acting Minister for Public Works to return to you the draft contract in connection with the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company (Limited), for consideration of the addition made thereto by the Government, and for the insertion of a clause embodying the arrangements contained in the Minister's letter of yesterday's date. The number of years limiting the exercise of the Governor's power to purchase is still blank, not having yet been determined. I am to add that if before returning the draft for final consideration it should be necessary to consult the Solicitor-General that officer will be at liberty at any time you may suggest.—I have, &c., JOHN KNOWLES, Under-Secretary, Public Works. W. T. L. Travers, Esq., Wellington."

The Minister is not aware that any later and further agreement on the subject was made with the company.

The Minister directs me to add that he submitted to the Cabinet the inquiry of the company as to whether the Government were continuing their efforts to acquire lands within the prescribed limits, and especially the blocks named in your letter, and that he is authorised to mention that the Hon. the Native Minister is endeavouring to acquire these blocks.

The Chairman,
Wellington-Manawatu Railway Company (Limited).

I have, &c.,
JOHN KNOWLES,
Under-Secretary, Public Works.

REPORT by SECRETARY on Interview he had with the Hon. the Native Minister relative to Tawhakatupua and other Blocks of Native Land.

I WAS only able to obtain a very brief interview with Mr. Bryce on the above subject, owing to pressure of public business.

I put the matter of the Tawhakatupua before him, as referred to in Mr. McD's letter of the 5th instant, by reading it to him. In reply, he said he would furnish the names of the Native owners to whom advances had been made, and the names of the persons who had made them.

I suggested, in the event of there being a difficulty in getting a refund of the whole of the advance, or the Native owners refusing to admit the advances, that the Government should back up their own claim and seek to complete the purchase, so that the land should revert to the company by allocation. To this he objected, stating that the Government would at once seek to have their claims, to the extent of advances, made good, and revoke the Proclamation over the remainder of the blocks.

Mr. Bryce then said that the Government had determined to deal with all Native lands in either of three ways: first, to stop all treaty for lands which were considered to be of no value for settlements; second, to deal with those lands, of which the title was involved, and that were not likely to be bought at a fair price, or in reasonable time, having the Government's claims defined to amount of advance and releasing the balance; third, those blocks which were considered suitable for settlement, and could be bought at fair prices and within reasonable time, to be dealt with, and negotiations completed for purchase.

I asked, for information, in what category he had placed the Aorangi and Horowhenua Blocks. Owing to the absence of the officials of his department, he could not say, but I might have the information on application. On being reminded that the company had a claim to have the deficiency of their allocation made up, he said it was no part of his business to buy land for that purpose. He did not think Government should find money for that specifically. Speaking generally, he said the Government could not treat the company exceptionally in reference to Native lands; and, for himself, he would be very careful to do no more for the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company than he would for a private individual. He expressed himself grateful for any information I had given him, and would be glad, at any time, to receive any further information about the intricacies of any Maori title affecting the blocks the company were likely to become interested in.

JAS. WALLACE, Secretary.

The SECRETARY, Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company (Limited), to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER, Wellington.

SIR,—

17th July, 1882.

Referring to the interview you honoured me with on Saturday, as Secretary of the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company, relative to certain blocks of Native land in which the company is interested, when you stated you could furnish the names of the owners of Tuwhakatupua to whom advances had been made, and by whom made, I should be obliged if you would give instructions for that being done for use of the company. You were kind enough to intimate the mode in which the Government intended treating all Native land, and specified that it would be carried out in either of three ways. First, that for all blocks which were considered valueless for settlement the negotiations