

APPROXIMATE RETURN of Native Lands purchased since 1870 in the Provincial District of Auckland, and handed over to the administration of the Crown Lands Department, up to 1879. (Published in Appendix for 1879.)

Year.					Acres handed over.	Acres sold.	Value.	Cash received.	Remarks.
1870)	...	...	...	...	Nil.	Nil.	£	£	
1873)	...	...	...	...	122,102	Nil.	...	...
1874	...	...	...	...	Nil.	Nil.	...	...
1875	...	...	...	...	27,307	302	566	303	Scrip, £263.
1876)	...	...	...	...	604,239	389			
1877)	...	...	...	...	1,153,648	691			
1878)	...	...	...	...			566	303	
1879)	...	...	...	...			566	303	

The expenditure is given in the same return, of which Auckland might be debited with perhaps half:—

Year.					Appropriation.			Expenditure.		
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1871)	...	...	...	...				230	0	0
1872)	...	...	...	...	200,000	0	0	49,432	5	6
1873)	...	...	...	...	500,000	0	0	67,808	9	4
1874)	...	...	...	...				98,286	14	7
1875)	...	...	...	...				145,615	15	3
1876	...	...	...	...	103,550	0	0	84,030	17	5
1877	...	...	...	...	125,817	14	6	85,644	4	9
1878	...	...	...	...	91,825	19	9	50,033	9	8
1879	...	...	...	...	150,918	3	6	124,412	1	1
Total	...	...	...	...				705,493	17	7
Outstanding liabilities								£1,121,677	0	0
Total								1,827,170	17	7

No. 8.

J. T. LARGE, Esq., Licensed Interpreter, Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, to the NATIVE-LAND LAWS COMMISSIONERS.

SIR,—

Wairoa, Hawke's Bay, 9th May, 1891.

In submitting my views on some of the questions forming the subject of inquiry of your Commission, I beg to state that I have been a licensed interpreter in practice since 1874, and was, moreover, for a considerable time employed in the Government Land-purchase Department on the East Coast. I have therefore had a good deal of experience in Native-land matters. In consequence of your Commission not sitting at Wairoa I have been unable to appear personally before you to give evidence, and therefore beg to forward my views in writing.

Native Land Court.—I believe there is a general consensus of opinion amongst interpreters and others qualified to form an opinion on the subject that the Judges, Recorders, or other officers presiding over Native Land Courts should have a competent knowledge of the Maori language, and customs relating to Native-land tenure, to enable them to understand everything that is said by the Native witnesses, without the intervention of an interpreter, and form a correct estimate of the weight of evidence. At the present time many of the Judges are entirely dependent on the interpretation given by the Court interpreter, which does not always convey the exact meaning intended by the witness, and, moreover, is often greatly abbreviated, so that much of what is said is lost to the Court. I am also of opinion that the evidence should be taken down in the Maori language by the Judge or Recorder, and that the evidence of each witness should be read over to, and signed by, such witness on the completion thereof. The evidence being taken down in Maori by the Judge or Recorder would render the employment of an interpreter and a clerk unnecessary, the Judge or Recorder and the Native Assessor being sufficient to conduct all the proceedings; and thus the expense of these tribunals would be greatly lessened.

The Court should in all cases sit as near to the lands the subject of investigation as possible, so that all the old, infirm, or indigent Native owners may attend to give evidence if they wish to do so; it being a notorious fact that many of the Natives, younger and better off, endeavour to have cases in which they are interested heard at a distance from the settlement where the bulk of the owners reside, in order that the latter may be prevented from attending to give evidence in support of their claims; and the aforesaid schemers thus have the whole of the "say" when the hearing takes place, to the detriment, in many cases, of the real owners of the land—sometimes, indeed, to their absolute exclusion from the certificate of ownership. Another important reason why the Court should sit as near as possible to the land being adjudicated upon is so that the Court may be enabled to go on