

83. We propose to adopt the latter method, and in so doing we refer to—

- (a) The despatch to Governor Fitzroy dated the 21st August, 1843, wherein he states, *inter alia* : “ I entirely agree in the principle of the land orders—that is to say, the order receivable, as money, in payment for public lands ; which document Mr. Shortland proposes to offer to claimants who will accept them in lieu of the particular land included in their claims. It should be the great object to give such parties every facility to take their lands where a settlement is in progress, and for this purpose the proposed orders afford a simple and commodious expedient. But while agreeing in the principle of the arrangement there is one of the details which appears likely to defeat this object. The orders are not to be for a number of pounds sterling, equal to the number of acres which have been awarded to the party, but for the actual sum reported by the Commissioners to have been originally expended by the claimants. Thus if a party having proved an expenditure of £200, and being entitled therefore to a quantity of 800 acres, at the rate of 5s. per acre, or even to much more, under some parts of the graduated scale of prices, were to accept one of the proposed orders available for the Crown lands, of which the minimum price is £1, he could not obtain more than 200 acres. This would appear much the reverse of an encouragement ; and unless the measure shall have been since modified in this particular, I am apprehensive that it may have proved a failure. Should this have been the case, and should you contemplate a renewal of some similar arrangement for claims hereafter decided your best course would appear to be to make the offer at *once of orders equivalent at £1 per acre to the quantity of land awarded to the party.*”

Where the land was not available for grant to the claimant by reason of the Government having disposed of it, scrip, money, or debentures were issued in lieu thereof. *Where scrip or debentures were granted, it was at the rate of £1 per acre.*

As to the amount of money, scrip, or debentures issued in respect of the above we quote from the report of Mr. Commissioner Bell of the 8th July, 1862 :—

The totals under these heads amount in the aggregate to the large sum of £109,289 14s. 11d. Of this amount, scrip to the amount of £91,510 15s. was granted by Governor Fitzroy ; scrip, debentures, and money, to the amount of £8,467 0s. 6d. by Governor Sir George Grey ; and scrip to the amount of £8,932 5s. by me. £101,152 5s. 4d. was issued in old land claims ; in pre-emptive claims, £8,137 9s. 7d.

The scrip issued by Governor Fitzroy was in exchange for awards of the Commissioners, under an arrangement sanctioned by Lord Stanley for giving claims a credit at the Treasury equal to the award, to enable them to buy land in the vicinity of the capital. In order to show what the public got out of this transaction it is only necessary to mention two facts :—

- (1) A large proportion of the scrip was expended in the purchase of allotments within the City of Auckland, which allotments must now be worth at least ten times what they cost at auction in 1844.

We would draw attention to the paragraph in the above referring to scrip or debentures being exchanged for allotments within the City of Auckland—the fact of this value of £1 per acre being placed upon the land at that time and scrip being issued in place of grants, enabled many of these old land claimants to amass considerable fortunes.

- (b) The Land Claims Settlement Act of 1856, section 32, reads :—

In any case of claim or grant, when the particular lands which would otherwise have been directed to be granted shall have been alienated by the Government, the Commissioners may direct a grant to be made of other lands, being part of the demesne lands of the Crown in the province in which the claim arises, by way of compensation for the original claim. In estimating the quantity of compensation land to be given as land aforesaid, the Commissioners shall estimate the same by the amount realized upon such alienation of the land comprised in the original claim, but in no case shall the original land be estimated as having realized more than £1 per acre.