

10 to 100 acres. There are about 60 or 70 settlers at Tapanui. They are anxious that a Run should be thrown into Hundreds. The blocks are put up at £1. A great extent of the one already sold has been bought by the holder of the Run from which it was taken. The blocks, as to their locality, would be suitable for settlement by the Tapanui settlers. But they cannot occupy these blocks as agricultural farmers without room for running cattle, as is given by the Hundred system.

Mr. Brown.
Continued.

No. 15.

Mr. Bastings being duly sworn, examined:—

During my residence here of three years, I have known a great many persons who have come up from Dunedin—some new arrivals—for the purpose of buying land and settling. They were all people having money. One, very well known, was Mr. Barlow, the comic singer. He was very anxious to settle here on land. I went about with him for two days, looking for land. He returned from Victoria for the very purpose of taking up land in this district. He was inclined to invest £1000 at least in land. We went to the Survey Office. Mr. Nicholson, the draughtsman, showed us all that was open for purchase; but all the good portions had been picked out, merely the refuse was left. Mr. Barlow then gave it up and went away. We went to the Tuapeka Mouth, and Flat, and to all the most likely places in the district. The Blocks on the Runs 123 and 137 were not then open. There were also two brothers named Bowen, from Victoria, which colony they were desirous of leaving, on account of the climate. They came with the intention of farming, and settling on freehold land. I had known them for years. They went everywhere about, and I with them, till we were sick of it. We always found the good parts of the land available for agriculture, had all been picked out and taken up. There were many other similar instances. A late one was the Rev. Mr. Margetts, who was seven days up here looking for land—a man of large means. He went about in the same way, walking over the country as far as the Teviot. He wished to buy three or four thousand acres, but could not find any. This was not more than three months ago. He afterwards lost a good deal of his money from lending it on bad security. I know from my own knowledge that many of the diggers on the Tuapeka Flat, and at the Blue Spur, have sums of money varying from £500 to £1000, and are anxious to invest this money in making homes for themselves, if facilities were afforded them of getting land. In my opinion, if the two Runs (123 and 137) were thrown open, there would be 500 or 600 families immediately settled upon the land. I do not overstate it. I know that the men are prepared to do so; and they will leave if facilities are not given them for settling. Another matter to be noticed is, the want of a Commonage for Towns. This is greatly wanted. We have petitioned the Superintendent about it. The answer was, he had no power, but would refer it to the Council. We went to the trouble of having a Block surveyed. The Reserve should be such as to secure Commonage and a place for recreation for the people for ten years to come at least. I will send the size of the Block proposed for this Town.—(See attached letter.) I do not think the people who are demanding land have for an object to become runholders. I think they want enough land to keep cattle and sheep to facilitate their agricultural farming.

No. 15.
Mr. Bastings.
22nd Feb, 1869.

No 16.

Supplementary to Mr. Bastings' Evidence.—Information as to Commonage.

Council Chambers,

Lawrence, March 26, 1869.

Messrs. Domett and Strode,

No. 16.
Letter from Town Council relative to Commonage.

GENTLEMEN—I am instructed by the Lawrence Town Council to furnish you with the following information relative to the site selected for a Commonage by this Corporation, in September, 1867:—

The Committee appointed to report on a suitable site for Commonage for the Town of Lawrence would recommend application to be made to the Government for an area of land South of Lawrence, containing 1700 acres, more or less, on Surveyed Block 2: and also, area of land North of Lawrence, containing 1000 acres, more or less, situated on the Spur between Weatherstones and Gabriel's Gully.

I have &c.,

WM. HAYES, Town Clerk.

SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE.—TUAPEKA DISTRICT.

No. 17.

(*Mr. Nicholson to the Commissioners.*)

Survey Office,
Lawrence, 25th February, 1869.

No. 17.
Letter from Mr. Nicholson.

GENTLEMEN,—In accordance with your request, I have the honour to forward the following information:—