

3. Should the Nuhaka and Mahia Blocks be devoted to immigration purposes, only 20,000 acres will be left for railway purposes, representing about five miles of line.

NOTE.—Should land be offered to the contractors for the construction of any railway, it appears to me advisable that such land should be as near to the proposed line as possible,—along each side of it, in fact,—as in this way every acre of land so situated would be worth much more to the contractors (and to the Province), even if of inferior quality, than that reserved at a distance. This I think should be borne in mind, and the contractors should at least have some choice in selection, as it is fair to assume that they would choose the bulk of it along the railway line, unless it were absolutely worthless.

JOHN BLACKETT.

14th February, 1871.

No. 21.

Mr. J. T. TYLER to the Hon. A. DOMETT.

Crown Lands Office, Napier, 18th April, 1871.

SIR,—

In compliance with instructions contained in your telegram of the 15th instant, calling on me to give my opinion upon the character and value of the land at Nuhaka, Mahia, and foot of Ruahine Ranges, proposed to be set aside for railway or other purposes, I have the honor to report that I am not sufficiently acquainted with the land to give an opinion from personal observation: indeed, the land at Nuhaka and Mahia I have never seen. I have therefore been compelled to obtain information as I best could, and this I have carefully collected from what I consider reliable authority.

Ruahine.—This land is nearly all bush, with a few clearings. It is situated between the foot of the Ruahine Ranges and the open land on the Ruataniwha Plains. Selections have been made here and there by several small settlers who are located on their allotments, which are chiefly on the edge of the plain. It is here also that the Militia and Volunteers of the Province have made their selections. There are small rises in various parts, but the general character of the block is level, and the soil of fair quality.

Nuhaka.—The south end of this land is very good; the centre portion rough and covered with timber, of which a large portion is good totara. The back part or northern side is hilly country, and good grazing for sheep; in the neighbourhood of the south side, a settler for many years cultivated vines with considerable success, and the whole of the southern side is suitable for such purposes.

Mahia.—Chiefly hilly land, with a good deal of bush and a few bays on the coast. These bays contain from 50 to 150 acres each of good rich level land. At Long Point is a very good harbour for vessels in all winds except the S.W. The northern portion of this block is good rich land, well sheltered, and admirably adapted for growing grapes and early crops.

With reference to the value, it is very difficult to fix any price on these lands: so much depends on the circumstances attending the sale. I will therefore merely state that all the land alluded to is considered agricultural land, and, as such, would not be sold at less than 10s. per acre.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Secretary for Crown Lands,
Wellington.

J. T. TYLER,
Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands.

No. 22.

His Honor J. D. ORMOND to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, Napier, 7th June, 1871.

I have the honor to transmit herewith copy of a resolution and report of a Select Committee of the Provincial Council of Hawke's Bay, both of which were passed unanimously, agreeing to set aside certain blocks of land for special settlement. The conditions upon which these lands shall be granted has been left by the Council to be arranged between the Government and myself; and before making specific recommendations to you, I shall be glad if you will inform me what terms other Provinces are proposing. I may, however, state that my wish is to grant these blocks of land free of cost to small societies of intending immigrants of a better class, who, on their part, should be required to undertake and guarantee that a certain number of immigrants will be brought out and settled upon the land,—the cost of passage from Europe, survey of the land, and all other expenses incidental to settlement, being borne by the parties to whom the land is given.

My hope is that these blocks may in this way be colonized by a class of immigrants who will bring sufficient capital to settle at once upon the land; and to effect this, I should desire to offer considerable advantages as regards acreage to be allowed each immigrant, and commonage where practicable. The blocks of land proposed to be granted for this purpose I will briefly describe:—

1. The Nuhaka Block, containing 14,000 acres, situate at the north end of Hawke's Bay. This block is very good land, chiefly open, but with plenty of good bush, containing totara and other useful timbers. It abuts on the shore of the bay, and the Mahia is the port. This block is represented to me as especially suited for Germans, as the vine grows well there. The climate is considerably warmer than Napier.

2. The Mahia Block, containing 15,000 acres. Although the acreage is in excess of Nuhaka, the available land is much less. The block is mostly timber and hilly, but there are a number of warm sheltered bays, well suited for settlement. Here again the vine would grow splendidly, and Germans would probably be the most suitable settlers. Part of the hills are open land, with fair grazing, and the bush hills, although broken, are said to be good soil.