

REPORT ON THE NATIVE RESERVES

3. The Sub. lot No. 8, of Allotment 11, Section 20, Onehunga, has been agreed to be let to Mr. M. H. Roe, for 21 years, from 1st July, 1872, at £4 10s. a year.

4. The footpaths having been removed by the City Council, at my request, and an improved way opened, I have been enabled to let by auction for 21 years, at £13 a year, the lower or Eastern portion of Allotment 4, of Section 12, City of Auckland. Mr. Andrew Craig, the tenant, has paid half a year's rent in advance.

Account current from 7th October, 1871, date of last account, to 30th June, 1872, is attached.

After the confiscation of the Waikato lands, Crown Grants were given to the loyal Natives of the Ngatiteata tribe for very extensive blocks of land, out of the territory so taken, at the West Waiuku, between the Waikato and Manukau Harbours. These grants were issued in pursuance of recommendations made by Mr. Commissioner Turton, and were confirmed by "The Friendly Natives Contracts Confirmation Act, 1866."

The Grants conveyed the land in some cases absolutely to several Natives, and in others in Trust to the Chiefs for the loyal Natives of the tribe. The interests in the lands were of a very varying character; occasionally the grantees were almost the sole owners, while in other cases they possessed but a moderate interest in the land. Some of the lands were for cultivation, some were *wahi tapu*, and some were fishing stations, or landing places.

From not understanding, in some cases, the nature of the responsibility attaching to the Trusts, and in others from cupidity, the grantees mismanaged the administration of these lands. They are stated to have illegally sold some, and to have misappropriated the rents of other of the reserves.

Under these circumstances they applied to the Government to extricate them from their difficulties, which had reached to such a height that the grantees, whose acts were loudly complained of by the inferior owners, were, themselves, anxious to hand over the Estates to Government Agents, for partition, either of area or interest, amongst the parties entitled to share in the respective Grants.

With this view, 103 pieces of land are being handed over by the Natives interested, in Trust, to Mr. John White and myself. This refers to the lands for which there are absolute grants. Where the Grants are in trust to the Chiefs, the latter are giving their consent to such an allocation of the land as will admit the inferior men, whose interests were before ignored, and are asking the Commissioner of Native Reserves to act on their own behalf. This work, which Mr. John White appears to be carrying out to the satisfaction of the Natives of both interests, will be very tedious, and will further involve some expense in surveying.

At the Piako, two estates are also being conveyed to Mr. Searancke, R.M., and myself, as Trustees, and in other places the Natives are desirous of doing similarly.

In the prosecution of my duties as Commissioner of Native Reserves, I have found that a considerable block of land in the Coromandel Peninsula, near Cape Colvill, belongs to the Crown. The place is called Whangataupiri, and takes its name from a beach and bay, situated mid-way between Cabbage Bay and the Cape. The block extends for a mile parallel with the beach, and about half-a-mile inland.

This land was purchased from the Natives by Mr. F. Peppercorne, who received from the Government, in 1848, or thereabouts, scrip to the amount of £125 in extinguishment of his claim. The land is supposed to be auriferous, and is well timbered. I should recommend that conspicuous branded pegs be placed at the four corners of the block, and its position trigonometrically fixed with regard to the off-lying islands.

CHAS. HEAPHY,

Commissioner of Native Reserves.

2nd July, 1872.