

and for a long time since its suppression, no attempt could be made to carry out the intentions of the Government towards the loyal Natives, by putting them in possession of their lands. So great was the demoralization of the European population after that disastrous outbreak, that it is probable, but for the promises made by the Hon. W. Fox, in November, 1869, to the handful of settlers remaining who exhibited any disposition to rebuild their ruined homes, that the district might yet be a desert. These promises, however—which amounted to a pledge on the part of the Government, that no rebel Natives, even after submission, should be allowed to return to the district—have been much misconstrued, and the term “rebel Native” has been distorted into meaning Native *pur et simple*.

It is scarcely necessary to say that it was never at any time contemplated that any injustice should be perpetrated towards those Natives who, besides the loyal assistance they rendered during the war—suffering jointly with the forces and the settlers in loss of life and property,—in many cases actually abandoned their private property at the request of the Government agents, when it was conceived that their so doing would give greater facilities to the operations of the Colonial forces. I allude particularly to the case of Hone Pihama and his people, who, since their abandonment of their settlement at Matangarara, on the 4th January, 1869, have, from one cause or another, not been permitted to return to it. I may as well state here, in place of referring to it again, that it is in my opinion desirable that Hone Pihama should be allowed to reoccupy the Wereroa reserve of 10,500 acres at once, as the season for potato planting is drawing near, and his heart, and that of all his people, is set upon the reoccupation by them of their favourite settlement.

In October, 1871, the Hon. the Native and Defence Minister honoured me with instructions to proceed to the West Coast, and commence the task of defining the Native claims between the Waingongoro and Waitotara Rivers. I did so in January, 1872, and after very careful study of the whole question, arrived at the conclusion that the first step to be taken towards freeing the district from Native claims was to define the position of the awards made by the Compensation Court. With the assistance of the Commissioner for Confiscated Lands and the aid of the Survey Staff, I have been enabled to do this, after first removing the obstruction offered by a long outstanding and persistent claim made by Te Kepa Te Rangihwenui to some 16,000 acres, covering the very land which I have since, with the co-operation of the Commissioner, used to satisfy the compensation awards.

Major Kemp, after being satisfied of the *bonâ fide* intentions of the Government to carry out the awards, withdrew his claim, and agreed to accept 400 acres, being a portion of a block under lease to a Mr. Vincent, in satisfaction of his demands. Mr. Booth, Land Purchase Commissioner, gave me material assistance in effecting this arrangement.

In addition to instructing me to define the Native claims, the Hon. Mr. McLean further gave me authority to purchase such of them as the Natives were willing to dispose of to the Government. In consequence of which, I have been enabled to acquire a considerable estate for the Government, for particulars of which see my letter of 19th July, 1872, and the tracing accompanying this report.

The incompleteness of the surveys still prevent great accuracy in making a return of the actual amount of land contained within the boundaries of the Waitotara and Waingongoro Rivers, and the line running from Ponakai to Parikino; nevertheless the following figures may be considered sufficiently accurate for the purposes of this report:—

*In the Province of Taranaki.*

	Acres.
Approximate area between sea coast and boundary of Confiscated Land, say	205,000
Appropriated to—	Acres.
Grants to Military Settlers ... ..	37,200
Railway Reserve ... ..	5,800
Native Awards ... ..	24,016
Would be at disposal of Government subject to possible further Native claims ... ..	137,984
	205,000
	205,000

*In the Province of Wellington.*

	Acres.
Approximate area between sea coast and boundary of Confiscated Land, say	90,000
Appropriated to—	Acres.
Grants to Military Settlers ... ..	18,000
Railway Reserve ... ..	3,800
Native Awards ... ..	16,458
At disposal of Government subject to possible further Native claims ... ..	51,742
	90,000
	90,000

Making a total of land contained within the boundaries comprised in this report of 295,000 acres, of which 189,726 acres, less the number of acres that have been disposed of by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, are at the disposal of the Government, subject, as before stated, to possible further Native claims. Of this acreage, however, I consider that not more than 40,000 acres are available for