

Murimotu District.

During the past year arrangements have been made to lease a block of land in this district, containing by estimation 300,000 acres; a deed of agreement to lease has been signed by one hundred and six claimants to the land in question. Considerable delay has been caused by dissensions among the claimants themselves as to the extent of their respective claims. I spent a considerable portion of time in the Murimotu District during the past summer. I suggested both personally and through other officers of the Department that the most direct way out of these difficulties was to have the land surveyed and passed through the Native Land Court; this advice has been adopted by a large proportion of the claimants, and applications are now being made by them to Government to have the land surveyed. The country embraced within the terms of the proposed lease is divided into several blocks, viz., Murimotu proper, containing 46,000 acres, Murimotu-Patea, containing 100,000 acres, Ruanui-Rangiwaea and other lands stretching up to the base of the Ruapehu mountain. The greater portion is good sheep grazing country, covered with Native grasses; the land towards the base of the mountain is of a poorer description.

Other blocks in the Murimotu District, mostly bush, and offered for sale during the past year, are,

- (1.) Okaka, acreage not estimated.
- (2.) Otairi, between Rangitikei and Murimotu, acreage not estimated.
- (3.) Te Arapakiaka, acreage not estimated.

Wanganui District.

Lands offered for sale in this district are,

- (1.) Tokomaru, containing about 30,000 acres. It has been surveyed during the year. Bush country, generally rough. Soil of excellent quality.
- (2.) Pikopiko, No. 3. 2,700 acres—adjoins land already acquired by Government.
- (3.) Wanganui Kai-iwi block. This is a very large block, extending from Wanganui to Waitotara. The western boundary being boundary of Crown Land. Survey now going on.
- (4.) Oteka, near Waitotara. Survey now going on.

Upper Wanganui District.

Lands offered for sale in this district during the past year are,

- (1.) Kirikau (survey completed) contains 17,900 acres, price agreed to, 2s. 6d. per acre, Government to pay survey and Court expenses. Survey expenses are estimated at about 6d per acre. This land is mostly bush. Soil of good quality.
- (2.) Retaruke. Surveyed acreage, 21,600 acres. Price and conditions same as for Kirikau.
- (3.) Kawautahi. About 5000 acres. Conditions as for above blocks.
- (4.) Te Kopanga. Acreage not estimated.
- (5.) Hauhungatahi. Very large block. Acreage not yet estimated. Situated to the west of Tongariro. Contains good sheep country.
- (6.) Maungaporau. Survey now going on. Land mostly bush, rough. Soil of good quality.
- (7.) Ngarakauwhakaaraara. Survey now going on. Mangaoira, in Wanganui-Rangitikei District, acreage not yet estimated.

The Under Secretary, Native Department,
Land Purchase Branch, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
JAMES BOOTH,
Land Purchase Officer.

No. 2.

Messrs. MITCHELL and DAVIES to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Lake Taupo, 10th July, 1875.

Since our last report we have had some difficulties to encounter in our land operations, which at times threatened to bring about a collapse. Some of the Arawa chiefs, acting under the advice of the Hawke's Bay Natives and their Pakaha friends, whose opposition to the present Government is well known, have, by petitions to the Assembly, by numerous letters and telegrams, and by various other means, endeavoured to stay our land proceedings in the Arawa country. The various petitions and other communications forwarded by the Arawa generally, have been notable only for the gross misrepresentations they contained, and in these demonstrations they have all well borne out the ancient proverb accorded to them by the universal voice of the Maori tribes, "Te Arawa Mangai Nui"—"The big-mouthed Arawa." Added to the wanton troublesomeness of these Arawa tribes, their cupidity has been excited, and their known character of dishonesty encouraged by private individuals, who persistently endeavour to lease and buy Maori lands within our district, although they well know that it is impossible, under the circumstances, to obtain a legal title, and by foolishly bargaining with unscrupulous Arawas, they are but wasting time and money; and no doubt, at some future period, when driven to their wit's end, they will fall back as their predecessors have done, on the Government for compensation, with what show of justice remains to be seen. We have pleasure in stating, however, that notwithstanding the violence of the opposition and the various obstacles