

objects added together shall be equal to an aggregate amount of not less than fifty acres per head for every Native man, woman, and child, resident in the district." This was merely a direction to the District Officer to see that sufficient land was reserved for Native purposes, and had no reference to the cession of lands. The other example occurred in 1860. In that year Governor Gore Browne caused to be set apart for the Natives residing on the west coast of the Middle Island land to the extent of 10,000 acres for a population not exceeding a hundred persons, being at the rate of 100 acres per individual. (*Vide* despatch dated Auckland, 22nd February, 1860, from Governor Gore Browne to His Grace the Duke of Newcastle.)

Of the quantity so set apart, 6,000 acres was intended for individual allotment, and 4,000 acres for the purpose of providing funds for the advancement of the Natives.

Some of these reserves, especially the one situated at Greymouth, have become exceedingly valuable through the occupation of the country by the Europeans, thereby fulfilling the condition of affairs that was anticipated would ensue, and which was looked on as the ultimate reward to the Natives for parting with their territory for a nominal sum. The Natives of the East Coast who formerly owned the Ngaitahu Block, with the exception of a few persons, are not interested in the West Coast reserves; consequently the advantages derived therefrom cannot be reckoned in their favour as a set-off against anything they may be entitled to.

An opinion is current in the minds of many persons that the Natives in the southern provinces of the Middle Island own land enough—more than sufficient for their wants, or that they can make a beneficial use of; consequently they have no further claim for consideration. This is a peculiar theory, and one that would not find favour with members of the European race under similar circumstances; but why it should be specially applied to the Natives it is difficult to understand. The obligations of the Government on account of the unfulfilled terms of purchase in which the southern Natives are concerned have been before Parliament on several occasions, and their right to consideration admitted. The last time the question was reported on by the Native Affairs Committee was in August, 1882. The Committee, after commenting on the various allegations contained in the petition, and describing the action taken in regard to medical aid and to promote education, conclude with the following recommendation: "The Committee thinks that it would be comparatively easy for the Government to ascertain how much the due carrying-out of these engagements would cost, and recommends that this should be done. This having been ascertained, the value ought to be given to the Natives in inalienable reserves, in such a manner as would insure against want in old age and sickness. Legislation will, no doubt, be required to carry out the recommendation in the foregoing paragraph, but, in view of arriving at a permanent and equitable settlement, the Committee considers that some trouble should be taken and the needful sacrifice made. The Committee recommends this report to the earnest attention of the Government."

With all deference to the report of the Committee, I would submit that a misconception exists with regard to schools and medical attendance having been supplied in the past, but especially as regards education, as the schools now in operation in the South Island were conducted (before the Education Act of 1877) under the general scheme of education that obtained in the colony under "The Native Schools Act, 1867," and cannot be considered as special institutions in fulfilment of the original promise, as the Natives would have gained the advantages derivable therefrom even if they had received a more advanced price for their land. The amount spent for medical aid in the southern provinces up to the 31st March, 1882, a period of nearly thirty-four years since the date of the first purchase, and twenty-nine years since the date of the second, only amounted to £2,559 18s. 8d.

Amongst other recommendations made by the Commissioners in their report under the Commission issued in 1879 for the settlement of the several outstanding questions in respect of the terms and conditions entered into between the Government and the Native vendors on the cession of these lands to the Crown, the following suggestions appear: "We propose that an account should be opened as between the Government and the Ngaitahu: that on one side should be entered the eleventh part of the proceeds of all lands sold by the Government within those two blocks (Otakou and Ngaitahu Blocks). On the other side of the account should be entered, first, the present value of all reserves which have been made, and are now in the possession of the Maoris, within those blocks; second, the total expenditure by the Government for the benefit of the Ngaitahu or other tribes interested in the land, including all payments on account of lands within the boundaries of the Ngaitahu and Otakou Blocks made subsequently to those referred to in the deeds of cession as the money-consideration."

With reference to the aforesaid proposals, I would observe that, as regards the eleventh part of the proceeds in respect of the Ngaitahu Block, it has already been explained that the Commissioners were under a misconception in supposing that the New Zealand Company's system of tenths extended to this purchase. And as regards the other part of the proposition relative to the proposed account to be opened between the Government and the Natives, I do not recommend that this course should be adopted, for the following reasons: Firstly, the present value of the reserves in the possession of the Natives cannot fairly be taken into account in the matter. It is a mere fallacy to point to the increased value of these lands as something they have gained by the settlement of the country; such increase confers no commensurate benefit on them, as the following illustration will show: In 1860 the Native reserves in the Province of Canterbury, comprising 7,000 acres, were estimated to be worth £67,000. The population at that date numbered five hundred, the average area per individual would therefore be fourteen acres. If these reserves at that date, when it was practicable to obtain land of equal quality in other localities at £2 per acre, had been exchanged for Crown land worth £67,000 at the upset price, the Native owners would have acquired an estate of 33,500 acres, and each individual would have increased his area by fifty-three acres. This would have been putting the enhancement of their lands to a practical use; but, as the Natives can neither sell nor exchange these reserves, the increased value of their lands is about as serviceable to them as a bag