

Government, stating the particulars of the proposed purchases. The right of sale, however, was barred in respect of any pas, burial-grounds, and cultivated lands then in use by the Natives, and one-tenth of all lands purchased was to be reserved for the benefit of the Natives, the purchaser to pay to the Crown 4s. per acre, and to bear the expenses of the survey on nine-tenths of the land on receiving the consent of the Government to waive the Crown's right. Then, on the issue of the grant a further payment of 6s. was to be made, in all 10s. per acre, as a contribution to the land fund. The measure thus adopted was understood to be limited to the districts adjacent to Auckland.

These terms were not deemed sufficiently liberal by land speculators, and only a small quantity of land was purchased. At the same time the Natives were led to believe that the Treaty of Waitangi was merely a ruse by means of which to deprive them of their land, and that the recent Proclamation was a badge of slavery. A sham display of strength was accordingly made by the Natives at the instigation of interested individuals to intimidate the Government into withdrawing the obnoxious Proclamation, and permit the sale of land on easier terms.

In October, 1844, another Proclamation was issued, known as "the penny-an-acre Proclamation," doing away with the payment of fees to the Crown for consenting to waive the right of pre-emption, and making a fee payable at the rate of 1d. an acre on the issue of the Crown grant. These measures, though tacitly assented to in the first place by the Imperial Government, were afterwards disallowed.

Both Proclamations enabled private individuals to purchase land in the vicinity of Auckland which Government should have purchased, and about 90,000 acres were acquired from the Natives under the later one.

It was expected that "the penny-an-acre Proclamation" would restore prosperity to the country, and allure emigrants from Australia; but the unsatisfactory condition of this colony at the time discouraged people from coming.

The landowners in the New Zealand Company's settlements complained bitterly of the reduction in the price of land, as they had invested their capital and industry to a considerable extent in those settlements on the supposition that the minimum price (£1 per acre) of waste land would remain permanent. With regard to the reduced minimum price of land occasioned by the aforesaid regulations, the Directors of the Company also expressed a wish that the Imperial Government, in justice to the parties who had purchased from the Crown at the minimum price named, and also to the Company, should peremptorily declare that thenceforward no Native should sell land to any one but the Government; and that in all purchases made under Captain Fitzroy's Proclamation the purchaser should only be entitled to one acre for every £1, including the payment to the Natives, together with the 10s. or the 1d. paid to the Government, as the case might be.

With reference to this suggestion, Lord Stanley stated that he could not disturb the purchases already made under these Proclamations: that a further communication had been made to Governor Grey in connection with the instructions already given, and, to allay any apprehension that existed on this subject in regard to that and other points raised, the Governor had also been directed to waive the Crown's right of pre-emption in order to facilitate the acquisition of land by the company. In conformity with these instructions, the Governor issued a Proclamation in February, 1846, waiving in favour of the New Zealand Company, but of no other persons, the Crown's right of pre-emption, until further notice shall be given, of all lands and rights belonging to the Natives within such portions of the Northern and Middle Islands commonly known as the company's districts. The right of pre-emption had been previously waived in favour of the company by Governor Fitzroy, in February, 1844, over 150,000 acres in the Middle Island, to enable them to found the Otago settlement. A waiver of pre-emption was also made about the same time over 150,000 acres of land in Wairarapa District, and 250,000 acres elsewhere within the limits of the company's districts, and Mr. Commissioner Spain was instructed to assist the company's agent in effecting a purchase. These purchases, however, were subsequently prevented by the Proclamation issued in 1844, authorising the purchase of land direct from the Natives on payment to the Crown of a fee of one penny per acre, and by the suspension of the company's operations.

With a view to facilitate the operations of the New Zealand Company in their selection of land, and to expedite the issue of a Crown grant for the land acquired by them on both sides of Cook Strait, Colonel McCleverty was despatched in January, 1846, by the Imperial Government as a Commissioner to assist the company in that respect, and to judge the reasonableness of any purchase they might make from the Natives.