

tending parties. Unfortunately, to determine absolutely what is just is often impossible in these cases, and were this otherwise, the British Government is not in a position to enforce its award.

In March, 1859, the present Governor visited New Plymouth, and on the 8th of that month held a public meeting of all the principal Chiefs of the District, the Native Secretary, Mr. McLean, acting as Interpreter. The proceedings had reference to the establishment of British law throughout the Taranaki district, and in the course of his address, the Governor said, "he thought the Maories would be wise to sell the land they could not use themselves, as what they retained would then become more valuable than the whole had previously been. He never would consent to buy land without an undisputed title. He would not permit any one to interfere in the sale of land unless he owned part of it; on the other hand, he would buy no man's land without his consent."

Immediately after this declaration by the Governor, a Waitara Native, named Teira, stepped forward, and speaking for himself and a considerable party of natives owning land at Waitara, declared, that he was desirous of ceding a Block at the mouth of the river, on the South bank. He minutely described the boundaries of the block, stating that the claims of himself and his party went beyond those limits, but that he purposely confined his offer to what indisputably belonged to himself and his friends. Being a man of standing, and his offer unexpected by many present, he was listened to with the greatest attention, and concluded by enquiring if the Governor would buy his land. Mr. McLean replied that the Governor accepted the offer conditionally on Teira's making out his title. Teira then advanced, and laid a Native Mat at the Governor's feet, thereby symbolically placing his land at His Excellency's disposal. Teira's right was denied by none except a Native named Paora, who informed the Governor, that Teira could not sell without the consent of Weteriki and himself. Teira replied, that Weteriki was dying (he is since dead) and that Paora was bound by the act of his relative Hemi, who concurred in the sale. William King then rose, but before addressing the Governor said to his people, "I wish only to say a few words and then we will depart." Then, turning to the Governor, he said,—“Listen Governor, notwithstanding Teira's offer, I will not permit the sale of Waitara to the Pakeha. Waitara is in my hands, I will not give it up; *e kore, e kore, e kore* (i.e., I will not, I will not, I will not), I have spoken,” and thereupon abruptly withdrew with his people.

William King was one of the Ngatiawa who had retired to Cook's Straits, whence he returned to Taranaki in 1848. Though a well-born Chief, his land claims are not considerable, and lie chiefly, if not wholly, to the North of Waitara. On his return to Taranaki, being still in fear of the Waikatos, he applied to Tamati Raru, Teira's father, for permission to build a Pah on the South bank, which was granted. He put up his Pah accordingly close to one occupied by Teira's party, but his cultivations are on the North side of the river. Rawiri Raupongo, Tamati Raru, Reimana, and the other members of Teira's party have cultivated the Block sold to the Governor. But King has been joined by a number of Natives who have gathered about him since his settlement at Waitara, and these men have encroached with their cultivations upon the proper owners. This has been a source of dissension, and one reason determining the sellers to part with their land. King's particular followers, who have been enjoying the use of the land without any claim to share in the proceeds of its sale, naturally support him in his opposition.

During the space of eight months which elapsed between the first offer and the final acceptance of the land, opportunity has been freely afforded to adverse claimants to come forward and establish their right. The last occasion was on the 29th November, 1859, on the payment of the first instalment of the purchase money, which was publicly done in presence of King and a large number of Europeans and Natives. On that occasion a document setting forth the boundaries of the Block was read to the assembled Natives by Mr. Parris. Appended to the document was a declaration, on behalf of the Governor, that if any man could prove his claim to any piece of land within the boundary described, such claim would be respected, and the claimant might hold or sell as he thought fit. No such claim, however, was put forward.

The question of title is one on which persons not versed in the intricacies of Native usage cannot expect to form an independent judgment. It is a question to be determined upon authority. The Native Secretary, Mr. McLean, who in addition to his general experience, has a special acquaintance with the Taranaki Land question, dating back to 1844, denies King's right to interfere. The Rev. John Whiteley, Wesleyan Missionary at New Plymouth, and Mr. Parris, the District Land Purchase Commissioner, both of whom have had a long acquaintance with the subject, agree with the Native Secretary. A very valuable testimony to the same effect is furnished by a letter recently addressed to various Chiefs of Waikato and Mokau by Wi Tako, a Ngatiawa Chief, a translation of which is appended to this Memorandum—(App. No. 1.)

Wi Tako's evidence carries great weight, as his prepossessions are adverse to the British Government. For some time he has been strenuously advocating the cause of the Maori King, and the letter in question was actually written by him whilst on his return to Wellington from Ngaruawahia, where he had been attending the deliberations of the Maori Council. It is said that he was specially deputed by Potatau to inquire into the merits of the Waitara question.

W. King himself does not assert a right of property, as plainly appears from Mr. Parris's official report of the meeting, already referred to, of 29th November, 1859—(App. No. 2.) In answer to the question, publicly put, "Does the land belong to Teira's party?" King says, "Yes, the land is theirs, but I will not let them sell it." Again, being asked "Why will you oppose their selling what is their own?" he replies, "Because I do not wish that the land should be disturbed, and though they have floated it, I will not let it go to sea. It is enough, Parris, their bellies are full with the sight of the money you have promised them. But don't give it to them. If you do, I will not let you have the land, but will take it and cultivate it myself."

King's stand is really taken upon his position as a Chief; and possibly had the Ngatiawa not been broken up, and driven from their territory, or had the circumstances of King's re-establishment