

No. 1.

MR. PARRIS TO CHIEF LAND PURCHASE COMMISSIONER.

New Plymouth, July 16th, 1860.

SIR,—

I have the honor to transmit the following report of occurrences connected with the negotiation for the block of land at Waitara from the time it was first offered to the Government, to the time of attempting the survey of the same.

2. This land was first offered to the Government on the 8th March, 1859, before a large meeting of Natives, assembled to meet His Excellency the Governor in the Town of New Plymouth; present, His Excellency the Governor, the Native Minister, the Native Secretary and Chief Commissioner, His Honor the Superintendent, Lieut.-Colonel Murray, Rev. Mr. Whiteley, and a number of Settlers. Among the Natives present were all the leading men of the Waitara, Puketapu, Ngamotu, and some of the Taranaki Tribes. After the usual salutations had been exchanged, and two or three short addresses to His Excellency the Governor, Teira rose and said, "Listen all present, both Europeans and Maories, I am going to offer the Governor my land." He then commenced to name the boundary, during which there was not the slightest interruption. Having finished, he put the question to His Excellency the Governor, Whether he would consent to buy his land. There was a pause while His Excellency was consulting with the Native Minister and the Chief Commissioner, before answering the question. In the interim, a Native called Piripi got up to propose that a block of land inland of Teira's, in which he (Piripi) has some claims, should be added to Teira's, and sold as one block. This proposal was instantly opposed by Patukakariki and several others, when another man (Hemi Kuka) got up to offer his land at Onaero, which caused some confusion; and seeing it was likely to interrupt Teira's question, I requested Hemi Kuka to sit down, which he did; Piripi was still standing, and Wm. King rose to put him down, when Teira said to him, "E Wi noho koe ki te whenua, maku e whakoti te tikanga a Piripi," (Wm. King, you sit down, I will stop Piripi.) Wm. King sat down, and Teira, addressing himself to Piripi, said, "I shall not consent for the land which I am offering to be entangled with any other; when mine is sold, you can do as you like with yours. Quietness having been restored, Teira again put the following question to His Excellency the Governor, "Will you consent to buy my land?" His Excellency replied through the Chief Commissioner, "If the land is yours, I consent to buy it;" upon which Teira walked up to His Excellency with a Kaitaka mat, and laid it down at his feet, as a token that the land had departed from him. Seeing there was no interruption, some Natives present said, "Kua riro a Waitara" (Waitara is gone), when Wm. King rose, and in a very disrespectful and sullen tone, said, "Governor, there is no land for you," and left most abruptly and unceremoniously, with his followers, without offering the slightest explanation.

3. Previously to His Excellency's departure from the settlement, I was instructed to investigate Teira's claim carefully and cautiously, and not to do any thing, or encourage any move on the part of the sellers, which would in any way be calculated to bring into hostile collision the two parties, and from time to time to report the result of my investigation.

4. After this offer of the land for sale, Teira associated with W. King and his people the same as before, but never let the subject rest. He frequently called them together, and in a quiet and kind manner, entreated them to withdraw their foolish opposition, assuring them that he never would give the question up; that the small piece of land he had offered to sell was but a very small portion of his and his supporters' claims, that if they continued to oppose him in the offer made to the Governor, he should also offer more, but if they behaved consistently he would stop with the offer made. Nothing but the justice of his claims could have encouraged him to meet them in the way he always has, fearless of the existing combination to annihilate all land-sellers. It is due to the opposition to state, that they never had recourse to harsh measures, for many months after the public offer of the land to His Excellency the Governor, but on the contrary, tried to work upon Teira by acts of kindness; they built him and Retimana a very nice house each, and showed them other attentions, which if appreciated, had not the desired effect, for he continued to write to His Excellency the Governor urging him to conclude the purchase.

5. For an interval of two months the negotiation for this land was suspended on account of peace negotiations, between the late contending parties, at the Ikamoana and Karaka, which I considered I should not be justified in interrupting, by forcing upon them negotiations for land. At the same time, although the public complained of the delay in the matter, I was absent for a month at Waikato negotiating for a line of road through the interior. On my return Teira came to Town and stopped a week with me, he informed me that during my absence William King's Natives had been threatening to cultivate some of the land, that he therefore wished me to resume the negotiation. On his return to Waitara he found that some fencing had been put up on the land, which he immediately cut down, for which they threatened to burn a large War Canoe (Manawatu) the only one at the River, owned by his father. In reply he told them, that if they injured the canoe, he would with his own hands, put a fire stick to every house in the Pas, which they knew were standing on his land. The canoe was not touched, and nothing further occurred.

6. In September last, the peace negotiations having been concluded, I went to Waitara, to have an interview with William King and his people, on the subject of resuming the negotiation for Teira's