

determination to retain this portion; subsequently Governor Browne and McLean endeavoured to purchase it, but we refused to sell. Those other tribes did not take it from us at that time. You have obtained both the Lower and Upper Manawatu blocks. This is comparatively a small portion which we are retaining. Let Nepia, Takana, Hoeta, Wiriharai, and all the other owners of the various portions first give their assent to the sale; my assent will then follow and be of use; but for me to venture to take the land, and give a futile assent to the sale, is beyond my power. There is a fixed determination not to sell Rangitikei. I can now do nothing in the matter. With reference to what you say about fighting, we have nothing to do with that; it is for the Governor to put that down. Two men with conflicting interests will continue to quarrel: now, you are connected with England, Featherston with New Zealand. Owing to the troubles arising from land purchases conducted in the same faulty way, you came here to restore peace. It is Dr. Featherston's duty to maintain the peace. It is for Parakaia's chief—for you are my chief—to mediate and judge. Attend now to what I say:—My own piece of land is distinct; it has been surveyed; it is, comparatively with the block, a small piece (meaning his and his immediate friends');—Nepia's is small, Rawiri's is small, Takana's is small, so is Wiriharai's, Hoeta's, so is each man's on to the end. They will none of them consent to part with their lands.

The Governor turned to Puckey (the interpreter), to inquire about Nepia's name. Some conversation took place. The Governor then told Puckey to ask Rawiri to speak, that he might hear whether he thought the Governor or Parakaia had taken the more satisfactory view of the question.

Rawiri te Wanui said, Their discussion has made nothing clear to my mind. But this is what I have to say. The old men of the tribe are dead; their resolution to return this land for the use of the tribe still holds good, and the Governor was plainly informed of their determination at the time. This talk about holding Rangitikei is nothing new, questions about other places in this island are of later date. Rangitikei still goes on. We who are alive shall not depart from the determination of those who are dead. But with regard to this talk about fighting, it never came from those who are dead, nor shall that evil word originate from us, their children, who survive.

Governor—You two did well to come to me. It is well. I am satisfied. Parakaia, our talk is ended.

Present: Hon. J. Richmond, Mr. Puckey, Mr. Halse, Parakaia Tokoroa, and Rawiri Te Wanui.

Enclosure 10 in No. 44.

MEMORANDUM on the Petition of PARAKAIA, PARANIHI, and RAWIRI TE WANUI to the QUEEN.

THE history of the Manawatu-Rangitikei land dispute is far from a singular one in New Zealand. An invading tribe, the Ngatiraukawa, took possession, in about 1830, of a large tract of country between Whanganui and Wellington, driving out the tribes which before inhabited it. After some years of slaughter and violence, the expelled tribes, the Ngatiapa and Rangitane, were suffered by the conquerors to return. They came back as slaves, but gradually resumed more and more of equality with the conquerors, intermarried with them, and cultivated the land. After the colonization of the islands, land purchases were made within the district by the Crown, and leases of an irregular kind were given by the Native occupants to private Europeans.

In these transactions the Ngatiapa and Rangitane took a part. The conquering tribe received but a small share of the proceeds of the first important sales. The leases were chiefly granted by them; but the Ngatiapa and Rangitane received an increasing share of the rents.

On the death of Nepia Taratoa, a Ngatiraukawa chief of great influence, who seems to have acted as moderator, differences as to their shares of the rents grew violent. The Ngatiapa, fortified by the alliance of their powerful neighbours the Whanganui, claimed the whole of the rents for themselves and the Rangitane.

The Ngatiraukawa, on their side, ignored all but their own claims, insisting on their right of conquest, and further alleging that an understanding had been arrived at previous to the former sales, that the unsold land was theirs exclusively. The quarrel was rapidly approaching a climax, and the tribes were in arms to ascertain their rights, when, in 1863, Dr. Featherston was requested by the Colonial Government to endeavour to effect some compromise. After some time spent in negotiations and a fruitless offer of arbitration, a sale to the Crown of the whole disputed land, the money paid to be distributed equitably among the tribes, was proposed by the Ngatiapa and Rangitane.

For a long time the Ngatiraukawa held back from the proposed arrangement. Peace was in the meantime preserved; and at last a majority of the Ngatiraukawa, including Ihakara, a leading man among them, accepted the terms. A portion of the tribe still refused to accede, among them the petitioners. The purchase money was fixed at £25,000, two-fifths to be given to each of the large tribes, and one-fifth to the Rangitane. This money has been paid.

The petitioners have been repeatedly assured by the Government of full justice. Surveys have not as yet been made, except to define certain reserves for the sellers. A share of the purchase money is reserved for the non-contents, and large allotments of land will in any case be set aside for them. It has, however, been thought advisable to allow considerable delay in winding up the transaction, that as many as possible of the non-contents may come in. It is doubtful whether the quarrel might not be renewed, if an extensive part of the block proportioned to their numbers were at present laid off for them.

It must be understood that the exact definition of a Maori land claim is rarely, perhaps, never possible. It would be impracticable to make any award to the non-contents in this case which would not be challenged by the sellers, who, though they have parted with their own interest in the land, might view its occupation by the other Natives with great bitterness.

The case is one, in short, of compromising an insoluble quarrel between half-civilized men, whose titles all rest on violence of a comparatively recent date, and who are only half weaned from regarding violence, even now, as the ultimate appeal.