

After the obstinate manner in which Ngatimaniapoto, a section of the tribe who occupy this land, resisted the passage of roads and railways, I was glad to find that, before my negotiation terminated, the chief Rawiri withdrew all opposition, and promised to offer no further obstacle to the progress of surveys, roads, and railways through the lands set apart for him.

I am satisfied that, when the surveys are fully completed by Mr. Carkeek, who is most diligent and efficient, no further obstacles of any importance will be presented in the way of the permanent settlement of the district.

His Honor the Superintendent, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

DONALD McLEAN.

No. 27.

MEMORANDUM of Data connected with the Rangitikei-Manawatu Purchase.

ON the 16th of December, 1866, a sum of £25,000 was paid over by the Province, through the Land Purchase Commissioner, to the Ngatiapa and Ngatiraukawa Tribes, as the purchase money of the Rangitikei-Manawatu Block.

Shortly afterwards, a certain number of the Ngatiraukawa Tribe, who had refused to sign the deed of cession, disputed the validity of the sale, and the Colonial Government was therefore, for the time, unable to declare the Native title over the block as having been extinguished.

In the beginning of 1868, the General Government referred the whole question to the Native Land Court, and after a lengthened investigation at the sittings then held at Otaki, the validity of the purchase was affirmed, and an award of 5,000 acres made to Parakaia and his section of unsatisfied claimants.

In July, 1869, the case was again heard at Wellington, before certain Judges of the Native Land Court, specially nominated by the Natives. The judgment of the Court amounted to a vindication of the validity of the purchase, the great bulk of the Ngatiraukawa claimants being declared to have no interest whatsoever in the block, and specific awards, amounting in all to 6,200 acres, were made by the Court to the claimants (sixty in number) who had been admitted as part owners.

On 16th October, 1869, the General Government published a notice in the *Gazette*, declaring that the Native title over the block had been extinguished, with the exception of certain specified awards made by the Native Land Court in favour of the dissentient Natives.

The survey of the reserves was at once undertaken, but within a few weeks the surveyors were obstructed by the Natives. This obstruction continued for a considerable time.

The Hon. the Native Minister and Mr. Kemp visited the district on more than one occasion, and had several interviews with the Natives on the question, as the result of which they made large additional gifts of land to both sellers and non-sellers, amounting to 14,389 acres. This land was for the most part the best in the block.

On 26th January, 1871, the Superintendent of the Province (Dr. Featherston) wrote to the Colonial Secretary protesting against the awards made by the Hon. the Native Minister and Mr. Kemp, and on behalf of the Province claiming payment from the General Government of £1 per acre for the whole of the land so given away.

On 10th February, 1871, the Colonial Secretary replies at length, contending that the case was one surrounded by exceptional difficulties, which justified the action of the General Government in effecting a compromise.

It has to be observed, with reference to this claim made by Dr. Featherston on behalf of the Province, that the data on which it was based were to some extent imperfect. It has since been definitely ascertained that the actual quantity of land given away by the Hon. the Native Minister, and afterwards surveyed, amounted to 14,389 acres, while some other claims yet remain unsettled.

Reverting to the further action taken by Dr. Featherston, it is found that on 11th February, 1871, he telegraphed to the Hon. the Native Minister, then at Auckland, protesting against his action in having awarded those reserves to the Natives, denying the right of the Government thus to deal with the Provincial estate, and stating that he had claimed on behalf of the Province, not only payment for the land, but also that the expenses of the survey, and the mission of the Native Minister and Mr. Kemp should not be charged provincially.

On 15th February, 1871, the Hon. the Native Minister replies at length, to the effect that to secure the peaceful settlement of the Manawatu district by Europeans, and the setting at rest of all matters in dispute, it was absolutely necessary to give those additional reserves to the Natives.

On 15th May, 1871, A. F. Halcombe, Esq., (Provincial Treasurer,) reports to His Honor the Superintendent, clearly pointing out that the mode of settling the Manawatu dispute adopted by the Hon. the Native Minister had never been contemplated either by the previous Superintendent, Dr. Featherston, or his Executive, and that they did not authorize him to give away the lands of the Province. He further entirely concurs in the views expressed by Dr. Featherston, and points out that the interference of the General Government was asked, not to decide any dispute as to ownership of the land—as Mr. McLean's action would imply—but to place the Province in peaceable possession of land which had been declared by the highest legal tribunal to be the property of the Province.

In August, 1871, the services of Mr. Morgan Carkeek were placed at the disposal of the General Government for the purpose of surveying the Native reserves; and on 25th November, the Hon. the Native Minister requested that the whole of the Provincial survey staff should be employed to complete this work, the General Government undertaking, in the first instance, to pay the expense thereof.

On 6th February, 1872, the Hon. the Native Minister directed the survey of the altered inland boundary of the Rangitikei-Manawatu Block, which has since been executed. The selection of this new boundary line has resulted in a loss to the Province of about 27,000 acres.

On 28th March, 1872, Mr. Alexander Dundas, District Surveyor, reports generally on the progress made in the survey of the reserves, and states that several of the Native claims are still outstanding