

and unsettled, at the same time pointing out that, owing to difficulties in arranging the acreage of reserves with the Natives, the surveys will take some further time to complete.

In May, 1872, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, at the request of His Honor the Superintendent, visited the district, and made arrangements for the completion of the survey of the reserves, to the satisfaction of the Natives.

The question, however, was again brought up with respect to the Himatangi Block by the Hon. the Native Minister, who, on 30th March, 1872, recommended, in a memorandum to His Honor the Superintendent, that though the Native Land Court had only awarded one-half of the block to Parakaia and his co-claimants, yet, on general grounds, it would be advisable that the whole block should be given up to them.

On 3rd September, 1872, His Honor the Superintendent forwards to the Hon. the Native Minister detailed schedules and tracings of all the Native reserves surveyed up to date. The reserve at Koputara, of 60 acres, is to be surveyed by Mr. Carkeek at once.

Subjoined will be found an estimate of the loss which has resulted to the Provincial estate owing to the reserves given and the altered inland boundary line decided by the Hon. the Native Minister; also, of the pecuniary loss arising from the obstruction of the surveys.

Crown Lands Office, Wellington, September, 1872.						Jos. G. HOLDSWORTH, Commissioner of Crown Lands.
Alteration of inland boundary	...	...	...	...	...	27,000 acres.
Himatangi...	...	...	...	...	...	6,500 "
Additional reserves—McLean, 14,389; less 514...	...	...	...	...	...	13,875 "
Total	...	...	...	...	...	47,375 "
Obstruction to the surveys	...	...	...	...	...	£1,500

No. 28.

His Honor I. E. FEATHERSTON to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

SIR,—
Superintendent's Office, 26th January, 1871.
I beg to bring under the consideration of Ministers the following facts connected with the Rangitikei-Manawatu purchase :—

On 16th December, 1866, a sum of £25,000 was paid over by this Province to the Ngatiapa and Ngatiraukawa Tribes, as the purchase money of a block of land lying between the Rangitikei and Manawatu Rivers, and estimated to contain 240,000 acres. The deed of cession had, at that time, been executed by considerably over 1,000 Natives having or claiming an interest in the land.

Owing, however, to the opposition of a small number of Ngatiraukawa claimants who had refused to sign the deed, the Government were unable to extinguish the Native title, and for a period of more than a year the Province was kept out of possession of its purchase, while every effort was being made by the Provincial agents to effect a settlement with the dissentients.

The principal obstacle to any final adjustment of the matter arose from the fact of some 800 Ngatiraukawa, whom the Commissioner refused to recognize as owners, asserting claims to various parts of the ceded block.

At length the Government decided to refer the whole question to the Native Land Court; and after a forty days' investigation at Otaki (before three Judges of the Court), in the beginning of 1868, the validity of the purchase was affirmed, and an award of 5,000 acres made to Parakaia and his section of unsatisfied claimants. Thereupon the other claims then before the Court were withdrawn by the Agent for the Natives, and every effort on the part of the Government to get them reinstated at a subsequent sitting of the Court at Rangitikei proved abortive.

The question was then hung up till July, 1869, when, at the request of the Native Agent, the whole case was reheard before other Judges of the Court, specially nominated by the Natives concerned. This investigation took place at Wellington, and extended over a period of nearly five weeks.

The judgment of the Court was a complete vindication of the purchase, the great bulk of the Ngatiraukawa claimants were declared to have no interest whatsoever in the block, and specific awards (amounting in all to 6,200 acres) were made to the claimants (sixty in number) who had been admitted as part owners.

A few days after the publication of this judgment in the *Gazette*, the Native title was declared to be extinguished over the whole of the block, save the portions awarded by the Land Court, and from that time it became a part of the territorial estate of the Province. The accumulated back rents (amounting to nearly £3,000) were then handed over to the Natives; and a staff of Provincial surveyors proceeded at once to the block, to lay off reserves and to commence a trigonometrical survey.

A small party of dissatisfied Natives interfered to obstruct the survey, and under the direction of the Hon. the Premier (who happened fortunately to be in the district at the time) the ringleader, Miritana, was arrested and dealt with summarily for a "breach of the Trigonometrical Stations Act" of the General Assembly. This vigorous action had the effect of putting a stop to all opposition, and for a time the survey of the block was pushed forward without any hindrance. As a recognition of this, Miritana received a free pardon, when only half his sentence of imprisonment had expired.

A few weeks after Miritana's liberation, a further obstruction was offered to the survey by another party of Natives (whose claims had been ignored by the Court), and in another part of the block.

The Natives were threatened with punishment, but no steps were taken to bring the offenders to justice, and the survey was accordingly suspended. For a period of many months the whole work was at a standstill, and the Province was precluded from turning to profitable account a single acre of the land purchased nearly four years before, and for which it had paid so liberal a price. At length—more