

The account-current with Sutton, is a good example of the profuse expenditure of some of the native chiefs during the time that they had money at command. Mr. Witty's analysis of the account from October 1st, 1868, shows that the total expenditure was thus divided:—

	£	s.	d.
Clothing	269	3	9
Wines, spirits, beer	262	16	6
Payments on Paora's account	1,284	9	8
Cash payments to Paora	188	6	6
Food and sundries	963	1	7
	£2,967 18 0		

A large part of this account, it will be observed, consisted of payments to other storekeepers and to tradesmen. Spirituous and fermented liquors are less than nine per cent. of the total; but a portion of the payments to other storekeepers, and of the cash payments, was no doubt spent in wine and spirits. Paul had four cupboards in the new house which he built. In them, he informed us, his Pakeha visitors during the time of his wealth were always able to find the means of refreshment. The natives are liberal entertainers, and we have reason to believe that a good deal of the liquor paid for by natives was consumed by their European acquaintances.

In this account-current figures the well-known new buggy which Paul drove out of town, with lamps lighted in broad daylight, much in the spirit of a seaman who has just been paid off. Paul with that childish inclination to make others responsible for his own follies so often perceptible in natives, told us that "Sutton lighted the lamps." The dealer lighted the lamps no doubt, as in many another case, but the native paid for the oil. There is no remedy for such things which is not worse than the disease.

C. W. RICHMOND.

NOTE.—This Report is concurred in by Mr. Commissioner Maning.

REPORT ON CASE No. XX.

COMPLAINTS Nos. 28, 68, and 92.—*Ex parte* HARE NGAWHAKAKAPINGA, RENATA KAWEPO, PAORA KAIWHATA (*Tunanui Block*).

These complaints related to a large block in the back country, containing about 30,000 acres. There were ten grantees, including the three complainants. The block appeared to have been sold to Messrs. A. H. and W. R. Russell through the agency of Mr. Maney.

Renata Kawepo complained, that Paora Kaiwhata and others had, as he said, mortgaged the land. He conceived that his share went when the others parted with theirs, although he denied having signed any deed. Apparently he desired to be satisfied, through the medium of the Commissioners, as to what he actually had done respecting his share in the block. The conveyance being in the hands of mortgagees who did not appear, it was not possible to give strict proof that Renata had executed; but the examination of Mr. H. Martyn Hamlin, who stated that he had attested the execution of the deed by all the ten grantees, left no real doubt upon the matter.

The total purchase money of the block was £3,000, with £1,000 of which Renata was credited in account with Mr. Maney. This chief resides close to Mr. Maney, and has for years been, and still is, connected with him in business, Maney being his sole European agent. It was difficult to make out what attitude Renata intended to assume towards Maney in this matter. Apparently it was not one of hostility.

The other two complainants seemed disposed to deny that they had been parties to a sale. Ultimately they appeared to give way under the weight of contrary evidence, which was certainly irresistible.

We have no information respecting this block except that it is rough hilly country. The price paid by Messrs. Russell to Mr. Maney was £3,000, with £200 commission, being at the low rate of little more than 2s. per acre.

The most serious question within the scope of our commission which is raised by this case, relates to the distribution of the purchase money. The appended statement will show how unequal this was. In addition to all the other grounds of objection to settlements made with ignorant natives by means of credits in account-current instead of by cash payments, there is reason to suspect that the desire of the middleman to square an account may sometimes influence the division of the purchase money. [*Compare* Report on Case No. II., Pahou]. In the present case Hare Ngawhakakapinga not unnaturally complained of the smallness of his share. It was answered, that it was as much as, and even more, than his claims upon the block would entitle him to, and the evidence undoubtedly showed that the three who received the largest sums were the most considerable claimants.

We disposed of our own doubts upon the subject of the division of the money, by the consideration, that questions of this kind must of necessity be determined according to the ideas of the natives themselves, and that their acquiescence must be taken as proof that the division has been a proper one. In the present case it was shown, that the distribution of the sale money had been acquiesced in from the time of the conveyance, in the early part of 1870, down to the appointment of the present Commission.

It is to be observed that in this case Mr. Maney appears to have allowed in account a larger sum than he himself received from the purchasers of the block.

C. W. RICHMOND.

NOTE.—This Report is concurred in by Mr. Commissioner Maning.