

office to see some plan which he thought might be in the office, and said the boundaries had been so fixed by Mr. Worgan that it rendered his lease valueless; that he had parted with it, and did not intend troubling himself further about it, so long as he recouped himself.

140. Have I not always stated on public grounds that I conceived the original of the lease to Major Turner should be confirmed by a properly drawn up legal instrument?—Yes, I agreed with you, and I urged that view strongly on Mr. Fox.

141. The survey of the 8,000 acre block was originally incomplete, and the traverse of the Waitotara has materially altered the position of the allotments?—Yes, considerably; the river was supposed to run due north, and was found to tend due east.

142. Is not the cost of surveying that part of the country very great?—Yes, it has been exceptionally high; so much so, that I required the surveyor to give explanations on the matter.

143. By inducing Natives to the number of nine or ten together to accept an allotment in one block, did I not effect a very large saving of expense to the country?—Yes, the whole cost of the sectional survey was saved by this proceeding, and also all incidental expenses. We discussed the matter together; and although it was more troublesome to you to proceed in this way, yet you entirely agreed with me that it was the best course to take, and the result was a saving of several thousand pounds to the country generally.

144. From the floating character which the compensation awards possessed, are you not of opinion that great difficulties and expenses would have arisen had I not been able to induce Natives to leave the allocation of their claims in my hands?—Yes, they would simply have "spotted" the country. I think your first proposal was to allocate their claims on the Whenuakura Block, against which I protested in the interests of the settlement of the district. You admitted the force of my arguments, and decided to allocate them as much as possible on the Lower Wairoa Block—a course it was more difficult for you to get them to agree to.

145. The refusal of the settlers to permit the return of Natives into the Waitotara district added very materially to the difficulties I had to contend with?—The state of feeling amongst the settlers renders it more difficult to satisfy the Natives, and at the same time more important to buy up their claims.

146. From your official knowledge of my position, from my instructions, you would consider that I was amply justified in adopting any legitimate means to serve the public interests intrusted to my care?—Most decidedly. The main object of the Government was simply to get rid of a very troublesome Native question; the Natives had rights which could not be ignored, and promises had been made to the settlers which could not be disregarded; the Government had practically given a guarantee that the Natives should not be allowed to return to the confiscated lands. On the strength of that the settlers reoccupied their own lands, and the only practical solution of the difficulty was to buy up as many of the Native claims as possible.

147. Do you remember the purchase of Hata Rio's allotment by Mr. H. S. Taylor? I fully explained the object of it to you?—It was to avoid a complication that had arisen in consequence of the action taken by Mr. Fox in granting some of his land to Shephard and Kells, under the impression that some of these men had been in rebellion.

148. *The Court.*] Had Mr. Worgan any power to deal with the confiscated lands without your permission?—He had no power to deal definitely with them without my sanction, but in many cases it rendered it difficult to say whether the floating claims would reduce a particular block of land into the condition of Native reserve. If there were any defined Native reserves, I suppose Mr. Worgan had full power to deal with them; at least I had not.

149. What are the boundaries of your district?—The boundaries, as gazetted, are from the Wanganui River to the Punehu; practically my boundary commenced at the Waitotara. The back boundary is a defined line, the front boundary is the sea. All lands within those boundaries are confiscated lands, with the exception of certain reserves; and within these boundaries certain awards had been granted by the Compensation Court, but only some of these were defined; about 17,000 acres were undefined.

150. Did not the Natives desire to have their land granted in one block?—I am not aware of it. The conditions under which they could exercise their right of selection were defined in the judgment of the Compensation Court.

151. What steps were taken by Mr. Worgan to define these boundaries?—(A map was produced and explanation given.)

152. Then am I to understand that all the steps taken by Mr. Worgan in this matter met with your concurrence?—Yes.

153. When you speak of the lease, which lease do you allude to?—There are three documents: first dated 28th May, 1868, from the Natives to Turner; second dated 30th March, 1872, from Turner to Taylor; and the third dated 27th May, 1872, from Natives to Taylor. I have referred merely in all cases to the land.

154. Why did you think it desirable that any document connected with the land should be legalized?—I considered it was a good holding title.

155. Was it within your knowledge that the Government considered the so-called lease no lease?—I understood that Mr. Fox held that opinion; the Attorney-General held a contrary one. I understood, from what I heard while in Wellington, that the Attorney-General differed from Mr. Fox.

156. Are you aware that Government made sundry efforts to obtain sight of the lease?—Yes; Mr. Fox told me that he had endeavoured to get a copy of it, and had instructed Mr. Worgan to furnish him with one. Mr. Worgan, I know, tried to get a copy on two or three occasions. He told me he had frequently urged Mr. H. S. Taylor to give him a copy. I believe Mr. Taylor objected to show his cards to his opponent till he knew his position. I think a copy of the lease was finally sent at my request; I wrote and obtained it from Mr. Taylor.

157. Are you aware that Mr. Worgan settled several questions by buying out European interests in Native claims?—Yes, the claim of Stephenson Smith in the Kakarama Block, and others referred to in Mr. Worgan's report.