

in regard to the main line of road and the telegraph wire through this particular block. Mr. Parris also informed Te Whiti of the intention of the Government to erect a lighthouse on Cape Egmont; and subsequently Major Brown made the same notification to Te Whiti. While admitting that, from a Native point of view, these several matters may be relied upon as furnishing some evidence of a distrust on our part of the justice of our own cause, and of our actual right to the land, yet I do not think that any blame whatever attaches to the officers named; on the contrary, I think they would have been criminal in the highest degree if, in view of all the surrounding circumstances, they had not acted as they did. In regard to this block, then, the fact remains that, while there is no evidence whatever of any intention—not to say promise—to return the land to the original owners, there is, on the other hand, positive evidence that the Government regarded the confiscation of this block as, legally speaking, *un fait accompli*. No doubt, regard being had to the number of Natives living on the block belonging to the Taranaki Tribe, the portion of land available for sale might have been comparatively small after due provision had been made for their requirements; but upon this point it is impossible to express a decided opinion, as, with the present means of information at our command, it is difficult to say who of those who are at Parihaka are of Parihaka. Before leaving this block, it is only fair to add that the delay already mentioned has perhaps had more evil effects here than upon any other part of the coast. From many causes, the officers in charge have up to the present time been unable to discuss with Te Whiti and his people the question of confiscation, and of the allotment of reserves for their support. This circumstance has no doubt helped to generate distrust in their minds; for, seeing the Waimate Plains in course of survey after a delay of about twelve years, they profess, and perhaps to some extent believe, the whole of their land will be next taken, inasmuch as nothing has yet been said to them of an authoritative character as to the intentions of the Government with reference to their particular tribal estate, although they are well aware of the effect of the Proclamation issued under the New Zealand Settlements Acts. Here I may mention an element of disturbance which is now perhaps the most important and powerful of all: I refer to the position which Te Whiti occupies—not only in regard to his own particular tribe of Taranaki, but also in regard to the whole of the West Coast people, and to many individual members of tribes in remoter districts. There can be no question as to the immense ascendancy which this remarkable man has obtained over his people; and no settlement of the question in dispute can be discussed unless full allowance for this unusual and important element of disturbance is made. Year by year, for years past, he has been prophesying that at a time named by himself there would happen the resurrection of the dead ancestors of his tribe, the re-establishment of the Native people in possession of the whole island, and the disappearance of the Europeans and *kupapas*, or friendly Natives, like a “swish” from the face of the country. Though year after year has witnessed the failure of these prophecies, still his influence remains without any sensible diminution. It is a moot point whether he is a believer in his own fanaticism, or whether he is not, under the guise of a prophet, endeavouring to become the saviour of the lands of himself and his own particular following. As a fact, it is well known that he looks down upon Tawhiao and the Waikato people, characterizing them as degraded, and as a people who are *kuri*, or dogs. I shall not take up time further by referring to this particular matter, and only mention it in further illustration of the difficulties with which we have to contend.

In conclusion, I may mention in reference to this particular block that Mr. Mackay informs me that Te Whiti sets up no claim whatever in respect of any promises made or alleged to have been made. In the course of his discussion with Mr. Mackay his talk had reference only to violation of promises said to have been made in respect of the Waimate Plains. I now pass on to the

OPUNAKE BLOCK.

This block is comprised between the Moutoti Stream on the north and the Taungatara Stream on the south, running by natural boundaries towards the summit of the mountain, and estimated approximately at 50,000 acres.

This block stands in almost the same position as the Stoney River Block, and has undoubtedly been promised to be given back to certain *hapus* of the Taranaki Tribe.* Out of the total area, Government took between fourteen and fifteen hundred acres around Opunake Bay; and on this block have cut up and partly disposed of the Opunake Township and rural lands adjoining. Here I will now refer to the qualification which I mentioned previously as affecting the cession of the Stoney River Block and this block, and as also attaching to the Parihaka Block: Over these three blocks, and also extending, as I am informed, as far south as the Kaupokonui Stream, compensation awards issued to loyal Natives are now in force and unexercised to the extent of about 10,000 acres.

No doubt, as the Stoney River Block and Opunake Block are meant to be given back to the *hapus* to which they originally belonged, those holders of compensation scrip whose *putakis* or claims were comprised in those two areas, may be considered as having, to some extent, merged their claims with those of their tribe. In regard to the Parihaka Block, and so much of the Waimate Plains as lies north of the Kaupokonui River, some of these awards are still in full force and effect, and will have to be met, either in land or money, when the land is dealt with.

* William Kingi Matakatea's and Arama Karaka's *hapus*.