

1879.

Evidence, Q. 985-983.

sections marked as Native reserves by Major Brown on the map at Wellington as before described, which he had then recommended should "for the present be withheld from sale." The Land Board had purposely left it to the Government to fill in the numbers of the sections to be put into each class, and never knew which had been chosen for that purpose till we showed them the advertisement that had been prepared for the *Gazette*.

VIII.—THE PLOUGHING OF THE SETTLERS' LANDS.

We have in the preceding narrative laid before Your Excellency the grounds for our own belief, that the true cause of the stoppage of the survey lay in the omission to do what ought to have been done before any survey of the Plains was ever attempted, namely, to settle the reserves which the Natives were to have, and lay them off upon the ground. We have now to trace the sequel in Te Whiti's attempt to force an issue with the Government by the device of ploughing up the settlers' lands.

Mr. Mackay promised Te Whiti on the 2nd and 3rd of April, as we have seen, to communicate what had passed to the Government, and if anything resulted to let him know: but nothing did result. We think it was because Te Whiti saw he was to have no response to his overtures from the Government, that he resorted to some more forcible demonstration as a means of bringing matters to an issue. At any rate, on the 25th of May he entered upon a new course, setting up a claim to be the proprietor of all the land in New Zealand, and in assertion of his title sending several parties of his followers to plough up land belonging to settlers which was held under Crown grant, and which they had purchased from the Government, not only within the confiscated boundaries, but in territory which had been bought from the Natives by the Government nearly forty years before. His followers who engaged in the ploughing expressly said that it was done "in order to force a settlement, and that Te Whiti only wanted the Governor to come to settle affairs." It is probable that other motives also may have operated to induce Te Whiti to take this course: vanity wounded by the Government not taking any further notice of him; a sense of his own greatly increased importance, from the success that had attended his removal of the surveyors, a removal which the Government had neither resisted nor resented, and had thus confirmed his followers' faith in his supernatural powers; the natural love of power; and, lastly, the prospect which seemed to open to him of retaining possession of all his own lands: these might well account for the enlarged pretensions which Te Whiti now made. And if this view be true, it is important as regards the prospect of the final adjustment which yet remains to be effected: for it certainly will prove more difficult now to bring Te Whiti to reasonable terms, than it would have been at the date of his interview with Mr. Mackay, or before he had committed himself by the ploughing to schemes of a wider intent than any at which he had previously aimed.

Hon. Mr. Sheehan, Telegram to Sir G. Grey, 23rd June 1879.

Mackay, Telegrams to Hon. Mr. Sheehan, 20th and 22nd June 1879.

Mr. Mackay seems to have travelled to and fro between Wellington and New Plymouth from the beginning of April till July. On the 20th of June he telegraphed from Okato that he "had not been near Te Whiti yet," and, on the 22nd that he had "invited Te Whiti to have a private talk, but had no reply." From this time he was employed as a Commissioner to investigate claims for fulfilment of alleged promises "in connection with the settled blocks on the West Coast," which seems to have excluded Waimate Plains, though this could hardly have been meant. He was gazetted to this appointment on 20th September 1879 with a salary of £650 a year to commence from 1st July 1879, "to be charged on Native Land Purchase Vote," having previously received £638 as remuneration for his visit to Te Whiti and travelling expenses during the three months from April to July. We can find, at any rate, no evidence of any further intervention by him in the questions pending with Te Whiti.

From the 25th May till the beginning of August, the ploughing went on in almost all parts of the Taranaki Provincial district, from the neighbourhood of Hawera, south of Waingongoro, to the north of Waitara. It was done on lands of all sorts of tenure: on confiscated lands, lands sold to Europeans by Natives who had received them as compensation from the Crown, and lands within blocks purchased from the Natives by the Crown thirty-five years ago and long since