1880.

NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

REPORTS ON THE PETITIONS OF THE REV. W. GITTOS AND ARAMA KARAKA HAUTUTU.

TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND APPENDIX.

REPORTS.

PETITIONER states that about 15 years ago Wi Apo died; that Wi Apo had been interested in the Pakiri Block; that Pakiri had since been sold to the Government; that the two sons of Wi Apo, who had been left in the care of the petitioner, had a share in the purchase-money to the extent of £400; that in respect of these lands, Arama Karaka, a Native chief, and Mr. John Sheehan were trustees for the sons of Wi Apo; that for the purpose of paying the expenses of the boys' education, Arama Karaka had signed a cheque for £20, which the petitioner sent to Mr. Sheehan for his signature, and to be placed in the bank to the credit of the petitioner; that the money had been withdrawn from the bank by Mr. Sheehan, but had not been paid to the petitioner nor lodged to his credit; that the petitioner had advanced the money out of his own pocket, but had never been repaid, or received any account of the disposal of the amount drawn from the bank by Mr. Sheehan; that, further, the sons of Wi Apo had not received the amount due to them out of the lands of the father in Pakiri.

The petitioner prays for inquiry and redress. Petitioner further prays for inquiry into the rights of certain Natives to a portion of the land alleged to have been erroneously included in the Pakiri Block.

I am directed to report as follows:—

That in reference to the sum of £20, alleged to be been sent by Mr. Gittos to Mr. Sheehan, the evidence shows that a cheque dated 8th December, 1874, for that amount was sent to Mr. Sheehan, and bears his indorsement, but Mr. Sheehan had no recollection of having received the money; but when under examination, Mr. Gittos stated that on his applying to Mr. Sheehan in 1877 on the subject, Mr. Sheehan expressed himself as willing to pay the amount on reasonable proof being produced that he had received the money, and that Mr. Gittos had not furnished the proof required. The claim still remains unsatisfied.

That part of the petition referring to Arama Karaka is reported upon in the proceedings upon Arama Karaka's petition.

The last portion, about the wrongful survey of Mangawhara as part of Pakiri, is founded upon a misapprehension of the facts, and is dealt with in another report.

26th August, 1880.

PETITIONER complains that certain money, the property of the sons of Wi Apo, has not been accounted for, and blames Mr. Sheehan for it. He prays for investigation.

I am directed to report as follows:—

That the Committee has investigated this petition with great care and patience. They have examined the petitioner and a large number of witnesses. They have also carefully read the evidence taken before the Public Accounts Committee in 1877 on the petition of Mr. Brissenden, some of which has a direct bearing on the questions before them. The difficulty of arriving at a definite conclusion has been greatly increased by the fact that no accounts, journals, or cotemporary records of any sort were kept by the trustees, Mr. Sheehan and the petitioner, Arama Karaka, or anybody else connected with the matter; and the only documentary evidence which could be obtained was a deposit receipt and some cheques produced by the Bank of New Zealand at Auckland, which, however, left the application of the money open to dispute. There is no doubt that the amount paid to Wi Apo's trust estate was the sum of £400 in cash. At the time of payment (13th May, 1874) £100 was kept back. According