

28. Did the Minister ask the Natives to concede something, also Mr. Sutton to concede something, and that they themselves (the Government) would concede something?—That was the proposal. Yes.

29. Did not the Ministers consider it necessary that they should ask Mr. Sutton to make his concession during that meeting, in the same way as they asked the Maoris?—No; Mr. Sutton was not asked during that meeting at all. The position the Ministers took up at that meeting was this: to ascertain what concession the Maoris were willing to make. They were then going to act, as it were, for the Maoris and themselves, with a view to get a concession from Mr. Sutton. I may add, in explanation, the Government were desirous of settling the matter; and it was because of that desire that they did not think it right to enter into a full discussion with Mr. Sutton there, because that most likely would have produced a dispute, which would have prevented a settlement being arrived at.

30. Who authorized the officers of the law to seize the land while the question was pending, before Mr. Sutton had made his concession?—I had nothing particularly to do with that at the time, but I can tell Major Te Wheoro exactly how it happened, from documents I had before me. I am glad to have the opportunity to do so, because I omitted it in my evidence yesterday. Mr. Sutton had obtained a decision of the Supreme Court that the land was his. He applied to the Supreme Court to put him in possession of that land. The Sheriff is an officer of the Supreme Court, not an officer of the Government—[Make that particularly plain, Mr. Carroll, if you please] It was the duty of the Sheriff to carry out the orders of the Supreme Court, which were that Mr. Sutton should obtain possession of this land. The reason he (the Sheriff) did not do that long ago was, that he did not consider he was strong enough to do it—that he had not a force sufficient to do it—and the Government refused to supply him with a special force for the purpose, and even absolutely refused to give him any advice upon the question. They told him he was an officer of the Supreme Court, as Sheriff and must act as such, without looking to the Government either for special assistance or special advice. When he finally placed Mr. Sutton in possession of the land it was as an officer of the Supreme Court, and not as an officer of the Government. I know that that is the case, and therefore state it for the information of Major Te Wheoro and the Committee. By that time the matter had passed out of my hands.

31. After the Government had received a reply from Mr. Sutton on this question, what did they tell the Maoris?—They told the Maoris they had failed to effect the compromise they desired to effect. I instructed Captain Preece to tell them—the Maoris had gone before I left Napier. I told Captain Preece to tell the Maoris the negotiations had failed. I may say also that Renata Kawepo wrote me a letter, congratulating me upon having settled the case, because they from reports had heard that we had settled it. I replied—my reply will be found in the papers—I replied that in fact we had failed. But other negotiations were continued—there were other negotiations afterwards; and the only reason I did not speak on that point was because my evidence would necessarily be secondary; and the Committee have the power to get direct evidence. I could tell more from my knowledge, but mine would not be the best evidence. There is more direct evidence.

32. *Mr. Sutton.*] I wish to ask Mr. Bryce a few questions, as to what took place between himself and me after the meeting. I should like to ask him whether, previous to that meeting, or at any time, I had intimated my desire it should be settled in the way which he proposed—that I should take Government money for it?—No, Mr. Sutton's position from the commencement has been uniformly this: The land is mine; I am entitled to be put in possession. It is the duty of the Government to put me in legal possession of it.

33. Mr. Bryce, I understood, in his yesterday's evidence, to say he offered me £1,500. My impression is that it was £10 an acre, which would be £1,630; but what I want particularly to know is this: Did I not express my surprise, not only at the size of the offer, but also at the offer itself—the form of the offer?—Surprise at the form of the offer? I suppose Mr. Sutton did, for I remember his saying he did not see why the Government should pay money at all.

34. Therefore, at any time, I was a party to no offer on the part of the Government, to my obtaining money from the Government?—Not at any time previous to the meeting; but what I understood Mr. Sutton to say at that meeting was, that if he received the value of the land, he would not object to the title passing away from him into the hands of the Government. I understood Mr. Sutton, as far as my recollection goes, and I believe it is pretty accurate on the point, to say that he valued the land at £28 an acre, but subsequently he said, I think—I am not perfectly positive, but I am nearly sure—he said he would take £4,000. But it was always so far under protest that he did not conceal his opinion that it would be wrong—that is to say, there was no claim upon the Government to pay money. In saying he would take the value of the land and part with it, he may have meant he should receive that money not from the Government, but from the Natives; that I cannot answer for.

35. Did not the negotiations extend this far: that I said I was led to believe from what took place at the first meeting with Natives, that I had seen before, that the Natives were to place a piece of land of equal value, and that the Government were either to buy it and hand it to me, or hand the money to the Natives and let the Natives hand the land to me?—No. It is impossible it could have been so; because at that meeting of the Natives they had offered, not a piece of land of equal value, but a piece of land equal in value to about £500. That will be fresh in the memory of Mr. Sutton.

36. That is quite true, so far as the meeting is concerned, but—It is the meeting you refer to.

37. Did I not write to Mr. Bryce next morning, notifying him of my final reply to his offer, in which I said that the question of price was an important one, but nothing as compared with the question of principle?—I said at the interview I had with Mr. Sutton that I had his final answer to this extent: that I had an answer which satisfied me. I had failed to effect the compromise I desired to do. I did next day, at any rate a very short time afterwards, receive a private letter from Mr. Sutton; but my recollection of that letter is that it was merely expressing his strong dissatisfaction at the course I had taken on behalf of the Government. It was a private letter.

38. *Sir G. Grey.*] Did you understand from Mr. Sutton that he was prepared to take £28 an acre for the land?—Yes; I have a very strong impression that he afterwards said he would take £4,000, but I do not feel sure, in fact, I scarcely think he expressed his willingness to take this from the Government.