

kept alive by any adjournment of the case. (3.) Again, Dr. Buller's retainer, which the Court seemed to consider conclusive of his right to ask for any order he pleased, was only signed by two Natives; and the other Natives interested, and who had applied for the rehearing, had given him no power to appear for them. Assuming, therefore, that the withdrawal of the application for rehearing had been regular in every respect, and that the statement made by Hohepa Tamamutu was false—namely, that he had signed a document which apparently had come from the Native Minister, not knowing its purport—in my opinion the proceedings of the Native Land Court were without legal warrant.

But I must now refer to what was happening amongst the Natives. That they never freely consented to withdrawal will, I think, be apparent. On the 3rd November, 1880, Heperi Pikirangi and several others wrote a letter to Judge Fenton, of which the following is a copy as translated:—

FRIEND,—

3rd November, 1880.

Salutations to you. This is a greeting to you on account of the good way in which you administer the law; also to inform you of the reason of our being too late for the first hearing of Owhaoko. When the *Kahiti* reached us we commenced to catch our horses, and came. When we arrived the investigation was over. Owhaoko was below some other lands in the *Kahiti*, and Renata had it placed before them, with the intention that it should be over on our arrival. We then waited till the Court was opened; and the Judge would not consent. We then sent claims to the Government and to the Chief Judge, and our application was granted. The *Kahiti* for the hearing of that land came here, and we came on account of that *Kahiti*. Renata had it stopped. I waited for the Court to have it adjourned to Taupo. We went to that Court, and Renata had it stopped. On account of this *Kahiti* he sent Mr. Buller to Taupo to work mischief among the people of that place. He wrote the names of absent persons to his letter (asking) that the Court should not be opened. When they came here they caught Te Rehu and asked him to sign his name, but he would not consent; he was paid £5. There are other words that I cannot write.

HEPERI PIKIRANGI, and others.

To Mr. Fenton, Chief Judge, Native Land Court.

All that is minuted on this is a note by Mr. Dickey that "the rehearing had been withdrawn." I am not aware of any reply having been given by Judge Fenton to this letter. A telegram dated the 11th November, 1880, was sent to Mr. Bryce:—

Taupo, 11/11/80.

WE request that you will remove our names from the document withdrawing the Owhaoko case from Court. We now wish the hearing to go on. This lawyer, Dr. Buller, cajoled us to sign our names to the (draft) document you gave him. Friend the Minister, let the title to Owhaoko be reheard at Napier. We, the persons who signed Dr. Buller's document, agree to it.

HOHEPA TAMAMUTU.

On this Mr. Bryce minutes,—

I do not understand this at all. I gave Dr. Buller no draft document for signature. The telegram had better be repeated to the Chief Judge; and add that I do not understand it.—JOHN BRYCE, 11/11/80.

This telegram was repeated to the Chief Judge. The Chief Judge took no notice of this telegram, and sent no reply to the Native Office. The Natives who forwarded the telegram to Mr. Bryce received no reply to their communication. On the 10th November, 1880, a letter was sent from Rawiri Kahia to the Native Minister, which seems to have arrived on the 17th November, 1880. The following is a translation of the letter:—

FRIEND,—

Hatepe, Taupo, 10th November, 1880.

Salutations. This is a word of explanation to you with reference to the report that has reached me to the effect that I was one of the persons who wished to stop the Court investigating the title to the Owhaoko Block. Now, I state that I did not see my name signed to that document. It was signed secretly without my concurrence, and I ask that my name may be erased from that document stopping the operation of the Court with respect to the investigation of the title to Owhaoko. I did not wish to stop the Court. I have a surveyor in that block; therefore it is that I say that my