

Formerly there had been a disagreement between Wirihau's father and Major Kemp, and in consequence of that disagreement Major Kemp, who had the real power, had afterwards refused to go in for a subdivision or allow the land to be sold. But when Hunia died, and his sons became interested, then Major Kemp was willing to enter into negotiations for the sale.

501. As a matter of fact, he did make application for the subdivision?—Yes; having stated this opinion to the Minister, he thought it was a favourable time to do something to encourage us to do what we could in the way of assisting the Government towards acquiring the land, and he introduced us to Mr. Lewis forthwith.

502. And the result was to address Mr. Lewis with this letter of the 21st May, 1886?—Yes. I may say that Mr. Ballance at that time was more favourable in his expressions towards the claims of the company than he had been at the former interviews. He recognised that the company had done its work well. The railway was then about completed to run right through, and he had been over it a short time previous to that, and, from his observations, he gave the company credit for the work they had done in performance of their contract. He expressed the opinion that it was a great thing for the colony—the line being open—and he was much more favourable than he was generally anticipated to be.

503. Afterwards you had another interview with him on the 9th November. After you wrote to Mr. Lewis nothing came of it?—Nothing, except that I gave him maps and details: so there was something came of it. Mr. Lewis invited me to get Major Kemp down to Wellington to see what could be done. He did not give me a written authority, as he said it was not proper that he should do so; but, on the understanding that the company was assisting, he recommended me to get Major Kemp down. He was then in Wanganui, and I got him down shortly afterwards. He remained about town for three weeks or a month, and he was during that time anxious to make the application, and the overtures for the purchase were entered into.

504. The result was that Major Kemp made application for a subdivision about two months afterwards?—Yes.

505. And sold to the Government a block of land?—Yes.

506. And the subdivision of the block took place?—Yes, in about November or December. It was postponed, as has already been stated, in consequence of Major Kemp's illness. A sitting of the Court was called together immediately afterwards.

507. Mr. Macdonald has told us that it was postponed from time to time in consequence of Major Kemp's illness?—Yes.

508. What I want to know is this: Did you and the members of the deputation understand that if the purchase of these Native lands was completed within the five years the land would go towards the allocation of the company?—We said we expected that, but there was no direct commitment of the Minister. He did not say that the Government would agree to it, but he thought we were well entitled to receive our deficiency because of the manner in which we had carried out the contract. But he did not express himself definitely upon that point until afterwards.

509. That is what I asked: what I understand is that the company gave assistance to the Government, on the expectation that the allocation would be supplemented in consequence?—Decidedly. The inference on the minds of the chairman and myself was that if we assisted in the way I have described, by making the block available for sale, that the company were likely to have the deficiency made up. We were not told so, but that was the inference. The acquiescence of the Government and my being introduced to Mr. Lewis, and being invited through him to bring Major Kemp down, and do all that I could through my influence with Mr. Macdonald to get Major Kemp to apply for subdivision, led me to that conclusion.

510. Had you not been led to that inference would the company have taken the part they did in acquiring these lands?—We would not.

511. Then it was an inference you fairly drew from what took place?—We did.

512. You afterwards had an interview with Mr. Ballance on the 9th November, 1886, relative to the purchase of Horowhenua?—Yes.

513.—Was this memorandum made immediately afterwards?—It was.

514. And it fairly reflected what took place?—Yes.

515. Here it appears that Mr. Ballance was willing and ready to buy Horowhenua if he had the money, and that if the Treasurer would advance the money he would do it forthwith. That did take place, did it?—Yes.

516. Can you say whether or not the chairman of the company had an interview with Sir Julius Vogel in reference to it?—He had an interview the next day following that of the interview with Mr. Ballance.

517. He was then Treasurer?—Yes.

518. Did he intimate or not whether money could be obtained?—He expressed his opinion, in relation to the matter, that he thought the company's claims should be recognised, and that he was prepared to find £25,000; and, if Mr. Ballance would come down to see him at the steamer, as he was just then leaving for Christchurch, he would give him an order on the Treasury, I think it was, for that sum of money, for the purpose of purchasing Horowhenua.

519. Sir Julius Vogel distinctly stated that he would be prepared to find the money, and he was willing to recognise the claims of the company?—Yes; so it was reported to me. Then, I understood afterwards that Mr. Ballance had an interview with Sir Julius Vogel; and I had a telephone message from his department next day that nothing could be done in the way of purchasing the Horowhenua Block until Sir Julius Vogel came back from Christchurch.

520. You say that this was in your presence, the interview with Sir Julius Vogel?—No; I was not present. But the chairman reported this: that there was a distinct admission by Sir Julius Vogel of his recognition of the rights of the company. I may say, in corroboration of that, that when Sir Julius Vogel returned from Christchurch I was requested by the chairman to wait upon him and ask whether he was prepared to find the money for the purchase of Horowhenua. I did wait upon