

THURSDAY, 24TH JULY, 1890. (MR. W. D. STEWART, Chairman.)

KARERE OMAHURU cross-examined.

1368. *Mr. Bell.*] You say you think that a committee ought to receive the rents?—Yes.

1369. Would that be a committee of chiefs?—Yes.

1370. Would you have any women on the committee?—No.

1371. Nor any children?—No.

1372. Well, then, a committee of chiefs would receive the rent and divide it as they thought right?—The chiefs would consider what would be a fair division, and make it accordingly.

1373. And they would keep what they thought was fair for themselves?—I mean straightforward chiefs—honest chiefs.

1374. They would keep for themselves out of the money what they thought was fair?—Yes.

1375. I asked him yesterday whether Mr. Rennell had made a division of the shares in Ruaotemoko me Okahu?—I said I did not know about Mr. Rennell's subdivision.

1376. Yes; but you have received rent, you told us, for the last five years?—I remember receiving a sum of money—£8—from Mr. Rennell last May. I think that was the last.

1377. Have you not received your rents regularly during the last five years from Mr. Rennell?—No, I have not received it regularly.

1378. Have you received it during each year?—Other people received it clandestinely. Other people have been in the habit of drawing my money without my knowledge or consent.

1379. And you have not signed receipts?—I signed a receipt for £20, paid me by Mr. Mackay; and I signed another receipt for £8, paid me by Mr. Rennell.

1380. Are those the only receipts you signed?—Yes.

1381. Then other Maoris have received your rents, have they?—Yes, that is so.

1382. Are you sure you are in the grant of Ruaotemoko?—Yes.

1383. Quite sure?—I was one of those who granted the old lease to Cowan, but I did not know anything about an underhand lease which has since been made.

1384. I am not asking you about the lease, but are you a grantee of Ruaotemoko? He told us he was, and I want to see if such is the case?—My name might not be in the grant.

1385. But I understood you to tell us it was?—If you will refer to the old lease, you will find I gave that lease under the name of Te Huru.

1386. It is quite true you signed the old lease, but that was before any grant was issued—before any ascertainment of the title of the land?—I do not know anything about the Crown grant.

1387. Now, I want to know this: Do you think you are entitled to receive rent for Ruaotemoko?—My wife, my brother-in-law, and myself are the real owners of that land.

1388. Then you think you and your brother-in-law would be entitled to the greater part of the rent?—Yes; but it should be paid to the whole of the people who own the land.

1389. Yes; but you tell me you and your brother-in-law are real owners of the land?—My brother-in-law and myself and my wife are some of the real owners of this land.

1390. Then you think you are entitled to a share of the rent of Ruaotemo?—Of course, under the old lease. If the old lease was upheld, I should receive a share of the rent.

1391. Then you think you are entitled to receive rent now?—It is right I should have a share of the money.

1392. Could you claim a large share of the rent?—That is a matter which should rest with the committee, because I say that the dividing of the rent should be given to the committee.

1393. But you would expect to be a member of the committee, would you not?—Yes.

1394. I want your views, as a member of the possible committee, as to what share of the rent you ought to get—you and your brother-in-law and wife together?—I am not saying the land should be leased. I want the leasing of this land to come to an end.

1395. That is not the question. The land, you tell us, has been leased under an old lease, and the division of the rent ought to be left to the committee. I want to know, if he says he would be a member of the committee, what share of the rent should be given to yourself, your wife, and your brother-in-law?—Which money do you allude to?

1396. The rent under the old lease?—Do you mean right down to the present time?

1397. Yes?—I want to get the land back, but the people have said that all the rent-money shall be paid to Mr. Sinclair.

1398. I want you to answer this question: You want the rent under the old lease to be paid, and for the committee to divide it. You will be a member of the committee according to your own plan, and what part of the rent do you think ought to be kept for yourself, your wife, and your brother?—That is a matter which will have to be settled by the whole tribe. It is not for me to say what shall be paid to three of us.

1399. Are you on good terms with your people—with the rest of the tribe?—There is a trouble between us.

1400. Do you think the rest of the tribe would agree to your receiving the rent?—There is a trouble with one of my hapus. I will draw my own share.

1401. Do you think the rest of the people would agree to your being one of the persons to receive the rents?—Yes, they would.

1402. Do your people complain that the rents of Ruaotemoko and Okahu have not been paid?—Mr. Rennell knows that some of the rents have not been paid.

1403. By whom?—The land has since been handed over by Mr. Rennell to another hapu, and they are now getting the rent.

1404. The land has passed—that is to say, that Ruaotemoko has been granted to the persons who have been ascertained to be the true owners?—The land has been stolen.

1405. Stolen by whom? By the other hapu?—The dishonest Natives who went and made representations to Mr. Rennell.