

1654. Is that included in the lease No. 39?—Yes, it is included in that lease.

1655. The 330 acres is included in the lease?—The 330 acres is included in the 672 acres in confirmed lease No. 39.

1656. *Mr. Sinclair.*] Is it the general wish of the Natives to get the control of their own lands down there?—It is not as far as the majority of the Waitotara Natives are concerned.

1657. Are they prepared to leave it in the hands of the Public Trustee?—I believe a considerable majority are.

1658. *Mr. Rennell.*] Mr. Williams gave evidence before the Committee a few days ago, and his idea was that three Natives should be appointed or elected a committee to receive the rents and to distribute them: do you think that would work?—Three Natives for any particular district?

1659. Yes; to receive the rents and to distribute them?—What district?

1660. The whole district of the Waitotara?—No; I am satisfied that would not meet the views of the Natives in that way.

1661. Do you think the Waitotara Natives would submit to the dictation of three Natives?—No.

1662. Or the Natives of one grant submit to the dictation of the Natives of another?—Natives, as a rule, would not agree to anything like that.

1663. There are two Native petitions before the Committee this session: do you think the number of petitions would be increased if such a committee were formed?—I think there would be dissension afterwards.

1664. Some doubt has been thrown on the fairness of my division of interest: would you speak, from your own knowledge, of your own part of the district. Do you remember my going to visit the Natives of your district?—I remember your being down.

1665. Do you think I consulted the representative Natives?—Yes; all the leading men.

1666. Do you think, when the Assessor went with me, that the leading men were present then?—Yes; the leading men were all present on that occasion, except those residing at Parihaka.

1667. Are not a number of the Natives unwilling to listen to anything as to selling or letting of Native lands, or anything else?—We have a great number that way.

1668. Do you think, if the Native Land Court sat in the district, any of my divisions would be altered—generally, I mean?—I hardly think there would be much alteration in the acreage.

1669. Can you tell me why some of the Natives refuse to take their rents?—In your hands, do you mean?

1670. Yes?—On account of bringing in this thirty years' lease. A great many of them have a fear of committing themselves in any way.

1671. Because some of the Natives before the Committee have said that was not the reason. I want to bring that out. You served the surrender notices in the first place, and many of them were in your district?—A good number of them.

1672. Did I, at the same time, supply you with the Act of 1887, and the regulations under the Act, in Maori?—Yes.

1673. Did I not give you a number for distribution if required?—A number of the regulations? Yes.

1674. Previous to this did I not send the Act and regulations, in Maori, to a number of the Natives of your district?—Yes.

1675. You say, Mr. Fisher, that the Natives did not avoid service: do you mean by that to say that the Natives you were acquainted with did not avoid service, or the Natives generally?—I was speaking of the Waitotara Natives.

1676. Those you are particularly acquainted with?—Yes.

1677. Did you have any difficulty in serving in your own district?—No; but north of the Waitotara I had a difficulty. That is what I said before.

1678. Were you there threatened with violence by any women you served?—More in joke than anything else; but I have always done what I had to do. For instance, I was serving notices on one occasion in Messrs. Gowers' lease at Taranaki-iti, and after serving the notices the women—some three or four women—set on me, and tackled me with bits of stick. When I got as far as the gate I served another person in a dray, and a woman jumped up in the dray with a horsewhip, and commenced to lay it about me a little.

1679. Do you remember a man named Komene?—Yes.

1680. Do you remember serving him with a notice when on the top of his house?—That was the person I had a job to get hold of. Twice or three times he ran away. I then went to his place and served it on his son.

1681. He did avoid service?—Yes.

1682. *Mr. Bell.*] Your service of these notices was principally on Natives south of the Waitotara?—South of Patea.

1683. Did you find them pretty tractable?—All the Natives I am acquainted with in the southern part.

1684. Did you have any experience of serving north of Patea?—Yes; I served some north of Patea.

1685. Did you have any difficulty there?—I can say I have had no difficulty with the Waitotara Natives. It is only the Waitotara Natives I have had to do with—only the people I am thoroughly acquainted with—and I had no difficulty in serving them.

1686. They did not try to get away from you?—No.

1687. Did not you avoid telling the Natives what you had in your pocket?—I got into the whares, and got into conversation with them, and served them with the notices.

1688. If they had known you were there with the notices in your pocket, would you have found them in their whares?—If they had known I was coming they would not have stopped there.