

627. Can you not talk and understand English?—I know some sentences in English; I do not understand the English language.

628. Can you not read and write it?—I can read and write Maori.

629. Can you not read an English book?—No; I cannot manage it.

630. You cannot understand it?—No.

631. Do you mean to say you did not understand the English notice that you got?—I did not understand a word in the notice I received.

632. Did you try to?—I took it to a European, and asked him to inform me what it contained.

633. Did he tell you?—Yes; he told me it was to go before the Court to be held at Hawera on the 17th.

634. Then, you went to a European, and he told you what was in it?—I went to a European, and he told me that I would have to appear before the Court at Hawera on the 17th; but that European did not tell me any further information that it contained.

635. You did not ask him?—The European was named Coffey.

636. Can he talk Maori?—Yes, well; very well. I asked him about it, but he ran away, for some women had got sticks in their hands to hammer him with.

637. Then, they flew at the gentleman who was giving notice to the people?—I did not strike him, nor offer to strike him; but I asked him to explain what the notice was, and he bolted away.

638. And the women after him with sticks?—They merely held up their sticks in their hands, and away he ran.

639. You were at the meeting at Hukatere?—Yes.

640. Do you remember when the meeting was finished?—Yes.

641. You remember Mr. Rennell producing a number of notices?—Yes.

642. What did you do?—We did not understand what the notices contained, but he told us that we would have to appoint an arbitrator. I told Mr. Rennell that we did not want to renew the leases, and therefore there was no object in our appointing an arbitrator.

643. Did you go to get copies?—He just threw some copies inside the house. He scattered them outside in the front yard.

644. Who scattered them? I want you, Ngarangi, to be particular about this, and to answer me carefully?—I am telling the truth; I was there present. I was one of the spokesmen at the meeting.

645. Did they not all run away from the meeting in order to avoid getting the notices?—I did not say that the Natives ran away. After we finished our meeting some of us returned to our own homes.

646. This is a serious matter. I am trying to test your accuracy on other points by this. Now, is it not a fact that the Natives at that meeting, all of them, ran away from the meeting in order to avoid service of the notices; and did not you advise them to do so?—No; I did nothing of the kind.

647. Do you say that the Natives did nothing of the kind?—I merely acted as spokesman for the whole of the people. I told Rennell that the people did not approve of the arbitration.

648. I ask you again, did not the Natives run away from that meeting for the purpose of avoiding the service of the notices upon them?—I have stated that some people belonging to the place remained there; others that had not homes there went away. I do not say that they ran away.

649. You say they did not run away from the meeting?—Yes.

650. How old are you?—I could not tell you how old I am.

651. You are a half-caste?—Yes.

652. Cannot you tell me when you were born—in what year?—I could not tell you, because my father was killed during a fight with the Hauhaus.

653. Where was the fight?—In Patea. My father went on behalf of the Government to take a message of peace to the pa. It was during General Cameron's expedition. I was quite an infant at the time.

654. You were quite an infant, were you?—Yes; but I could walk about.

655. Were you one or two years old?—I could not say whether I was two years old, or whether I was more or less.

656. Do you know when the Natives arranged with Ross: what year that was?—I know the year of the first agreement with Blake. It was either the year of 1874 or 1875.

657. What year was it you had the agreement with Ross about the 50 acres—when you first agreed with him?—We did not make any agreement; when we appeared before the arbitrators, we then saw the agreement.

658. It was not brought before him?—No.

659. It was brought before Mr. Mackay?—No; Mr. Mackay never came there. I heard that Mr. Mackay was at Hawera, or somewhere else, and then went off on his own track.

660. You say you took a leading part in the arrangement with Ross?—No; I said I had nothing to do with making the agreement, for I never knew what the acreage was that I could have made an agreement upon.

661. You admit that it was Taurua that made the agreement?—The objection I made was this: I told Ross that I did not know that Taurua had made an agreement at all. I did not believe that Taurua had made any agreement. I thought that Ross made it himself.

662. When Taurua was alive, would he have allowed you to have anything to do with this land?—Yes; Taurua was alive in 1887, and he allowed me to bring that petition in connection with the leases.

663. When did Taurua die?—I think it was in the year 1888.

664. Are you one of the persons named in Taurua's will?—No.

665. You do not succeed to any of Taurua's interest?—No; I have no interest in it at all.