

781. Both of them, or either of them : give us the particulars of what occurred ?—Some years ago Turner asked me if I and my tribe would renew the lease. He said, if we were willing to lease the land, he would give us £100 as a bonus for the renewal of the lease, irrespective of the increased rent.

782. Was any rent mentioned then : you have mentioned that the rent should be increased ?—He said he would be prepared to give us an increased rent, amounting to 4s. or 5s. an acre, and a bonus of £100.

783. Was that an increase upon the previous rent ?—He said he would give us 4s. or 5s. an acre.

784. What was the rent he was paying under the old lease ?—Under the old lease he was paying 3s. an acre.

785. What is the rent he is paying now ?—Under the old lease he was paying 3s. an acre. He is paying 4s. for the last period.

786. *Mr. Peacock.*] At the time he offered 4s., how far was it from the period at which 4s. would have been charged ?—Under the old lease he was to give us 3s. for the first ten years, 4s. for the remaining five years. At the time he offered us this increased rent he had not begun to pay the 4s. per acre.

787. Was it near the time ?—It was not near the time.

788. *Mr. Levi.*] When was the lease made ?—The lease was made in 1876.

789. What were the terms offered you by George Pearce ?—George Pearce offered to take the land from us for a second term at such rent as we should agree upon mutually.

790. Was any rent mentioned ?—No.

791. How many years ago was this ?—A few years ago ; not very long ago.

792. Have you had offers from any other people for this land ?—Yes, we have.

793. Will you tell us what they were ?—I can mention the names of Europeans that came to me or to people of my tribe. There was an elderly man called Charles Symes.

794. What did he offer ?—He said if we would give him Otoia Reserve on lease he could afford to pay us 5s. or 6s. an acre.

795. When was this ?—Last year.

796. Any one else ?—There was a European called Hunter, who asked us to let him have the Otoia Block when Turner's lease ran out. He offered us 6s. an acre. He made this offer several times during the past two or three years.

797. Did you get notice to appoint an arbitrator on these leases—any document telling you and your tribe to appoint arbitrators in reference to these new leases ?—I was absent in the North, visiting my friends the Ngapuhi, and a notice was left at my house.

798. *Mr. Parata.*] How long were you absent ?—I was absent in the north for three months. I found it when I came back, waiting my arrival ; but it was in English, and I did not know what was the purport of it.

799. Did you ask any one to interpret it ?—No, I did not.

800. Why did you not ?—There was no European-speaking Maori at my settlement.

801. *Mr. Levi.*] Had the arbitration proceedings been finished before you came back ?—About the time of my return an Arbitration Court was held at Hawera or Normanby, but I did not attend it. Afterwards one was held at Patea, and I attended that.

802. What did you do there ?—I objected, at very great length, to granting the new leases. I stood up in Court and objected at very great length.

803. Did you know what the Arbitration Court was sitting for ?—A European called Coffey, who speaks Maori, told me that the object of this Court was to grant renewals of leases of all our land. A great number of us attended the Court and protested against the renewal of the leases. We did not wish to be hurried. We wanted to consider the matter over, and come to a decision among ourselves before the second leases should be granted. My evidence will be seen in the records of that Court.

804. Did you give evidence there ?—I gave evidence in Court ; perhaps it was not written down. Probably it was ; but I told the Court that Europeans and Maoris should be treated alike—that there should be only one law.

805. Did you give evidence as to the value of the land ?—The Court asked me what I valued the land at at Otoia.

806. Did you tell them ?—I told the Court that the land was very rich and valuable, and that it was probably worth £8 or £10 an acre.

807. Did they ask you what a fair rent would be, or what you would let it for ?—The Court simply asked me if I was willing to lease the land. It did not ask me what I thought would be a fair rent.

808. *Mr. Peacock.*] Did you say that you were willing to lease ?—I did not. I told the Court I did not wish to lease.

809. *Dr. Fitchett.*] What did you understand the object of the Court to be ?—We were informed that the function of the Arbitration Court was to grant renewals of leases for our lands ; so we all went there.

810. I want to know if you clearly understood that the leases were already granted, and that the only business to be done by the Court was to fix the rent and terms of leases ?—I was not aware that renewals had been granted. I heard it rested with the Arbitration Court as to whether the leases were to be renewed and the terms on which they were to be granted. Some Europeans who spoke Maori advised us to go there and object if we thought fit.

811. *Mr. Sinclair.*] Have you been at any of the large meetings held at Hawera ?—Yes.

812. Did you act as chairman ?—Yes.

813. Can you say, from the tone of the meetings, whether there is a general feeling of dis-