

SATURDAY, 21ST MARCH, 1891.

Commission resumed.

James Rickus testified on behalf of the Waimatamate people as to the insufficiency of the land owned by the people there. The people were chiefly half-castes, and had to earn a living by working at anything they could obtain work at. Some of the half-castes got a share in the reserves in 1868, but many others were not so fortunate. The land they possessed was altogether insufficient for their wants even if it had been good land, which it was not. They could only obtain desultory employment. The people strove to adapt themselves to European customs, but found it difficult to do so. Jack Loper was an industrious man, but could not support his family, and there were others like him. J. Crocome had derived no land from his Maori relatives, although he was well descended on that side. He earned about £2 per week, and out of that he had to pay 10s. for rent, the rest went to maintain his family. At Temuka some of the people had 30 acres, others 20, others had less, and some none at all. They had to procure work to maintain themselves at shearing, harvesting, digging potatoes, weeding turnips or any other work. The young people who had grown up had no land to live on. Kiti Kahu, a Temuka resident, could not obtain a living off her land.

Henare te Maire pointed out that all their *mahinga kai* were lost. Another cause of their poverty was the insufficiency of the land. Some of the Waihao people are fairly well off, but others have very little. The land, if let, would fetch about 3s. per acre; the Punaomaru land fetched from 1s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per acre, but the character of the land varied, and a great deal of it had been damaged by the river.

James Rickus: Some of the half-caste land was let at 4s. per acre. The people had let their land because the areas were too small to live on. Slodden had tried to farm a block of 42 acres of this land, but could not get a living off it: became bankrupt, and had his goods and effects seized to pay the tradesmen. I have about 54 acres, and only derive a rental of £14 per annum from it. Owing to a number of my Maori relatives not being provided with land it has been a serious loss to me.

Jenny Gibbs (Harper) has only 12 acres, but cannot get a living on it. The land is let for 5s. an acre, but £3 per annum is all I receive. This year, owing to the drought, the Waihao land only produced about 8 bushels per acre. In some cases those who have no land are assisted through their relatives allowing them to work on their's.

Rawiri te Maire corroborated the statements made by former speakers as to the inferior character of the land. This class of land was called *onekaha* by the Natives, and would not produce a crop during a dry season. It was only land in name, and was unserviceable for Maori cultivation. The Punaomaru was very inferior land. At the Korotuaheka (Waitaki) there was a little good land, but most of the useful portion had been swept away by the rivers. A European had tried to farm part of the land at a rental of 2s. 6d. per acre, but had been compelled to abandon it.

Hare Kahu read a letter from the people of Kaikoura about their certificates. Some had been sent, but others were not ready, and Mr. Bridson had informed them that they could not be prepared until the land had been divided.

Hone Korehe Kahu drew attention to the *rauiri* at Ohapi (Orari) being situated in a different place to where the Natives supposed it to be—the place where it had been surveyed by Mr. Mathias. The place where the *rauiri* is situated belongs to the Bank of New Zealand, and contains about 45 acres. The section would suit them if it could be acquired.

Henare Kokoro says that Ohapi, at the place owned by the bank, was their old fishing-place. The Orari River was not so good a fishing-place for *piharau*. The tide ascends that river, and it requires still water to place their nets in.

Hoani Korehe Kahu pointed out that it was desirable to reserve the Waitarakao Lagoon for the Natives. The lagoon has broken a fresh channel out to sea now, and Europeans go there and kill the eels, but do not use them. This lake is a good fishing-place for eels during the season. The Europeans go there on Thursday afternoons, and destroy a large number of eels. This has become a common practice, and is looked upon as sport. The eels are thrown out on the bank, and left there to die.

Owing to having arranged with Mr. Baker, Chief Surveyor, to meet him at the Waipopo Reserve to adjust the boundary, further proceedings were postponed till Monday, the 23rd instant.

MONDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1891.

Commission resumed. Occupied obtaining lists of residents, and other particulars. Proceedings adjourned till the 24th instant.

TUESDAY, 24TH MARCH, 1891.

Commission resumed.

Henare Mauhara alluded to the return of the Hiki—viz., to the mouth of the Waitaki, the people who had gone inland with Te Maihara to Omarama, and to the support given by Raniera Matenga to their cause, and suggested that something should be done for him.

The remainder of the lists of names submitted read and confirmed.

Old Ruapuke list read out, and names challenged.

Hare Kahu and others spoke about the subdivision of the land at Temuka belonging to their family. Recommended that they should decide on a scheme of partition, and then apply to the Court to confirm it.

Engaged adjusting the location of the several owners in the Temuka and other sections which had got complicated through the Natives making alterations to suit themselves when the parcels were surveyed.

Proceedings adjourned till the 25th instant, to enable appointment to be kept with Mr. Baker re the Waipopo boundary. Went with Mr. Baker, Chief Surveyor, to the Waipopo Reserve to