

changes that took place by the action of the earthquake. Was told by the people that the sales of Turakirae, Turanganui, Kahutara, and Tauherenikau were made before the earthquake. I can point out on the ground the places along the boundary of high-water mark from my own knowledge; others I can point out from description. In some places the distance is considerable between the old and new high-water mark. The excessive flooding of the lake we called Hinurangi; these floods used to cover all the land for a considerable distance, extending as far as Martinborough. These floods were caused by heavy rains. There were also smaller floods caused by heavy rains; the seasons that these floods happened was when the rata and kohai were in bloom and also the flax. The Hinurangi flood was caused by the heavy rains. This kind of flood used to burst open the lake if closed. If the lake was closed in the month of January, the accumulation of the water in the lake would flood all the low-lying country as far inland as Ngapaiaaka. The lake after reaching this point would burst out at the mouth in the course of a day or so. There are two kinds of floods in the lake; one is caused by the heavy rains, and the other is caused by the mouth of the river being closed. The summer floods are caused by the closing of the lake in January and on to March. The lake closes at other times, but it does not flood so frequently now since the Europeans have been allowed to open it. The Europeans used to object to the lake being left unopened, and petitioned Parliament about it. Cannot say when the Europeans first decided that the lake should be opened, but think it was about 1862. The Europeans used to pay the Natives to be allowed to open the lake. The origin of this was through Mr. McLean telling the Natives—so I heard—that if any Europeans attempted to open the lake that they should pay from £50 to £100. The Pakehas used to make their own terms, but if they wanted to open at certain times that were suitable for fishing eels—viz., from January to March—the Natives would not consent because they obtain several kinds of eels at that time; also flounders and other fish. The importance of the lake to the Natives was the fish that was obtainable—such as eels, flounders, white-bait, and kokopu. They also procured ducks and paradise-ducks. These are the description of food we used to procure from December to May. The hao, te heko, and kokoputuna description of eels could not be caught until the lake was closed, and then these were obtainable only at the mouth; the other kind could be got at any time. As the flood-water from the lake ascended the creeks, the Natives placed their baskets in these creeks; but, on the water rising above a certain level, the hinakis were of no service. After this the system followed was to make dams to catch them. The Natives only go now to catch eels within the line of the old high-water mark. While they were fishing for eels they did not use other food except birds and fern-root. Large quantities of the kind called te hao and kapakopako were dried and stored for several years, two and three years together. The whitebait and kokopu were also dried, and kept for several years. Fern-root and korau were also dried for the winter months. It was owing to the advantages alluded to that the Natives did not desire to dispose of the lake and the fishing rights pertaining to it. At the time the sales were made, the Natives were unacquainted with the use of sheep and cattle as food. The hapus who need to procure eels from the lake were: Ngatihineraumoa, Rakaiwakairi, Ngatirakairangi, Ngatihemingi, Ngatihinetauria, Ngatimuretu, Ngaitukoko, Ngaithehangarakau, Ngaitahu, Ngaitaneroa, Hamua, Ngatimoe, Ngatimahu, and the other hapus at a distance used to receive presents of dried eels from the hapus in the Lower Valley. Used to send presents also to Napier and to Natives in the Wellington District. I know of some places on the west side that my uncle Rawiri used to fish at. Te Awa Kokoputuna is now dry, and so is Mangapatiki, where the Natives used to eel. Have seen other hapus fishing on that side of the lake at Te Orepu, beyond Kaupekahoumia. After the earthquake a great many of the old fishing-places were dried up and rendered useless. I know the position of the high-water mark in many places. Another place that was famous for eels was at Pounui. There was a pa there called Kakaimakatea. The high-water mark in that locality was at Taupahi and on to Te Rae o te Hiha. I heard of the sale of the Takeke (Puata) Block from Te Manihera Rangitakaiwaho. The negotiations were commenced at Napier. The sale was to the Government. It was in the Turanganui Block, but was not sold. The completion of the sale was made here. I conducted the Wairarapa Moana case for the Natives in the Land Court and Mr. Gill acted for the Government. The plan on the certificate does not correspond with the boundaries of the land that we claimed. The Court stated that it had no authority to issue a title for the land extending to high-water mark, and would deal with the lake only. The Natives desired to withdraw their claims on finding that the land inland of the lake could not be dealt with, but owing to Paraone Pahoro allowing his claim to stand the others were forced in to the Court. At the time Hiko and others sold their rights to the Government; the other Natives petitioned against the sale in 1876. The Parliamentary Committee, who dealt with the petition, considered that the petitioners had a grievance. After Sir George Grey and Mr. Sheehan met the Natives at Papawai, and suggested that they should lay down a basis of operation on which the lake question might be settled. We requested Mr. Sheehan to send a surveyor to fix the position of the high-water mark, but nothing was done. Mr. Ballance came afterwards, when he was Native Minister, to Wairarapa to see the Natives, and suggested to them that they should come to some terms in the matter; and afterwards Mr. Bunny, senior, was sent to arrange with the Natives. Mr. Ballance suggested that the Natives should surrender the lake to the Government for a certain area of dry land; another proposal was to sell the lake to the Government, certain fishing reserves to be set apart for the Natives, and the right of fishing reserved to them only; another was to lease the lake to the Government; another was to give full control to the Government to open the lake, and the money paid to Hiko and others would be cancelled. None of these offers were accepted, because the Government would not consent to have the land surveyed up to high-water mark. In Mr. Mitchelson's time we went to Wellington to see the Government to request that some action be taken to settle the matter by referring it to a Court. The cause of this was that a great deal of trouble existed through the River Board interfering with the lake. The persons appointed to interview the Minister with the Natives were Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Carroll, and Mr. Menteath, self, Piripi