

158. You know all the Native settlements from Wairoa to Waipiro?—Yes.

159. Now, on all the company's lands along the coast, are there not hundreds of Maoris settled on these very lands, with their cultivations and dwellings on them?—Yes.

160. *The Chairman.*] On the company's lands?—Yes.

161. *Mr. Rees.*] The Maoris would be, in the first place, anxious to get their homesteads and cultivations made reserves for them; that would be the first thing they would ask, would it not?—Yes.

162. In the second place, they would desire to get something, if possible, after their homesteads and cultivations were secured—some portions of the lands for themselves?—Yes.

163. Then, you would be content still to let a portion of the land go in order to secure the remainder?—Yes.

164. And Europeans, you think, would be likely to take up and pay a fair price either for purchase or lease of these portions if they were available, being outside the Maori homesteads and cultivations?—Yes; Europeans would be very glad to have these portions.

165. Is not the land of a first-class character, so far as the soil is concerned?—Yes; they are fat, rich lands; but of course they are no use in their present state, on account of the unhappy position of the conflicting titles.

FRIDAY, 31ST JULY, 1891.

HEMI WAAKA in attendance and cross-examined by Mr. Rees.

166. *Mr. Rees.*] Were you a grantee of the Pakowhai land?—I was not, but my father was a grantee. My mother was also a grantee.

167. How many owners were there in the Crown grant?—I think there were about twenty-nine.

168. How many out of the twenty-nine had sold?—I cannot say.

169. In respect of the £3,000 from Johnson, I want to ask you whether you know that either Wi Pere or myself ever received one sixpence of that money?—I do not know, because no account was ever furnished.

170. Do you remember, a little while from the time of the agreement being made with Johnson, Mr. De Latour and myself calling a meeting of the Muriwai Natives in order that we might come there with the accounts, and the Natives declining to attend that meeting, yourself among the number?—I do not know anything about that meeting. Had such a meeting been called, or had I known of such a meeting, I would gladly have gone to it, for it was my great desire to get the accounts. Another thing I was anxious to obtain was copy of the covenant agreed to for giving us the management of the land, and also copy of the agreement which we had signed. These I was most anxious to get, and copies of other documents.

171. Did you ever ask me for any such documents?—I did.

172. When?—In your office at Gisborne.

173. When?—Before the year 1882.

174. But what documents do you mean? State distinctly what documents you asked me for, as also what documents you wished me to give you?—The covenant which provided for handing back the land to the Natives; also a copy of the document signed by the Natives when they handed the land over to you and Wi Pere; also a copy of the agreement made with Johnson—that is, the agreement relating to the £3,000.

175. Who was the interpreter?—Edward Harris.

176. Are you not aware that a large amount of money was spent—first of all, by myself and Wi Pere; secondly, by the company—in regard to other lands of the Muriwai Natives, belonging to yourself among others?—I do not know that moneys were so spent. I explained to Mr. Mitchelson when he visited Gisborne that we had no idea how you and Wi Pere had expended the money. I had said as much to the committee previously.

177. You state in your evidence given before the Committee that the £3,000 was to be placed in the bank at interest—that that was a part of the arrangement. When was that said?—When the arrangement was made about purchasing Johnson's interest for £40,000.

178. Who said it?—You told us yourself.

179. Who was present? But first I would like this witness to be sworn, or I shall give evidence myself. This is a serious matter.

*The Chairman:* I shall consider what power the Committee has to swear witnesses.

*Witness:* This was said in a publichouse at Muriwai.

180. *Mr. Rees.*] Who was the interpreter?—I do not know who the interpreter was. Perhaps it was an interpreter from Auckland. I do not know the interpreter's name. You yourself told us that we would get 6 per cent. for the money.

181. In relation to this £3,000, do you know who received it from Johnson?—I cannot say that anybody received it but yourself, for there was no other person that had authority from us. You were acting for us at the time.

182. Are you not aware that the company took over the lands and received the greater part of the money from Johnson, with the consent of the Muriwai Natives?—I do not know if such was the case. The company appeared on the scene some time afterwards, not at the time when you and Wi Pere were trustees. There had been no company formed when the agreements relating to this land were entered into.

183. Did you not go through the accounts with Mr. De Latour in his office in 1888, before Wi Pere and myself went Home—in Mr. De Latour's, the company's office?—We did not; but about the time that you and Wi Pere went Home we asked for accounts, but they were not given to us. I asked for the accounts.

184. Do you mean to say you did not go through the accounts with Mr. De Latour in his office