

*"School Reserves.*

"As to educational reserves, he was very sorry to hear them say they did not want schools, because such a thing would condemn their children to inferior positions. If faith had not been kept with them in putting up schools, he would see it was done.

*"The Dog-tax.*

"As to the dog-tax, he would let the County Councils know that their collectors were regarded as *taniwhas* by the Maoris. Perhaps it would suffice to print notices of the tax in Maori and English, and send collectors who understood Maori. He would prefer to see less dogs and more pickaninnies about Maori pas.

*"The Committee System.*

"The request as to surveys and dealing with the land he took to mean that they preferred combined dealing in these matters, through a committee elected by themselves, instead of individual dealing. In this they were consistent with the East Coast Natives. He could not give a definite answer until he had heard the opinions of Natives elsewhere. It might be that the intended legislation on this matter would have to be optional, so as to allow choice between the two systems.

*"No Natives to be Landless*

"The Government were determined that there should be no landless Natives in the colony, and those in the South Island who had no lands were now to have reserves granted them. If the Waikato Natives without land approached Parliament by petition, like relief might be afforded them. He could not agree to a proposal that there should be no surveys. The title to every acre of Native land in the colony must be ascertained. The Native committees could facilitate this work, and thus save expenses and litigation.

*"Loans to Natives.*

"As to the last question, regarding the prevention of loans, it would be a good thing if no credit was given to either Maoris or Europeans. The Bill introduced last session to take away power to recover debts under £20 would probably be reintroduced next session. The Premier concluded a three hours' speech by expressing satisfaction at having met the Natives at Hukanui, and by saying that he felt confident of finding a way to assist them, but that depended on their remaining a law-abiding people.

"At Tamahana's request the Premier promised to have a report of his speech translated in Maori, printed and circulated amongst the Natives. Mr Seddon also said that if the Natives would send delegates to Wellington before or during the session, in order to represent their views to the Government while Native legislation was being prepared, the Government would charge the expenses to the Civil List.

"The proceedings closed at 5 o'clock, having lasted upwards of five hours. The result is considered eminently satisfactory by both Maoris and pakehas.

"The Premier, Mr Carroll, and party, accompanied by several Native chiefs, arrived at Ngaruawahia at 9.30. A messenger was sent across the Waikato River at once to Tawhiao's settlement, a mile and a half distant, and returned at 11.30 p.m., reporting that Tawhiao was not there."

NGARUAWAHIA.

While here a deputation consisting of Wi Patene and Hone Patene waited on the Premier, requesting that Sections 65 and 69 should be reserved, so as to secure the interests of those beneficially interested. It appears the original trustees are dead, and the trust originally intended cannot be continued.

Wi Patene said,—We wish to be relieved in regard to this trust. We have suffered in consequence. We do not receive any proceeds from the land. The original trustees are dead. We want a law passed by Parliament to get the title to this block investigated—some power whereby the Court can investigate these two sections, and ascertain who the owners are, that all may participate therein irrespective of any trust or restriction. The whole thing is explained in the letter to the Minister of Native Affairs. We wish the land brought under the operation of the law which affects the reserves in the Whakatane district. There certain lands were investigated by the Commissioner and awarded to certain persons in trust for the tribe. The trustees have since died. Power was given by special legislation for the Court to operate on those lands, so that the people may be found who are entitled thereto. We wish that law to be extended to these same blocks of which I am speaking. Aparima Patene, son of Wiremu Patene, who was one of the trustees, made representations and was appointed successor to his father. This is against the wish of the people, and what we want is that the trust, if any, affecting that block should be annulled and the beneficiaries determined. We have made representations to the Government, and in reply have been informed on more than one occasion that the Court had power, under certain sections which were quoted in such replies, to take the matter into its consideration and perform what we wanted, but up to the present time we have been unable to achieve our purpose.

The Minister: How long ago was that? Have you got any correspondence with you?

Wi Patene: I had the reply from the Government to which I have referred, but Judge Gudgeon asked me to deposit the letter with him, and he would see into the matter.

The Minister: How long ago is that?

Wi Patene: Last year when he was here in Ngaruawahia. The purport of the letter of the Government to us, in reply to our communication, was that the Government considered there were provisions in the new Act whereby the Court could deal with the case, but they found when looking at the law that such provisions referred only to reserves in the Whakatane district, there