

to return a portion of the Mauku Block owned by him. The acreage he was to give out of the Mauku Block was to be equal to what they gave out of the Te Punga Block. Since then the area out of the Mauku Block had been surveyed, and it had been found that the area was not equal to that which they gave to Sir Frederick Whitaker out of the Te Punga Block. That was the grievance—the shortage of the area out of the Moukau Block.

The Minister: The Government cannot interfere in the matter. If faith has not been kept with you, what has the Government got to do with it?

Mr Graham: I would explain that this is a matter which really concerned the late Sir Frederick Whitaker. The cause was an error in the survey of the Mauku Block, and was no fault of Sir Frederick Whitaker or anybody else. It was presumed by all parties to contain so many thousand acres, but when it was resurveyed it was found there had been an error in the original survey. The Crown grant to Sir Frederick Whitaker was for 12,000, but when it was resurveyed there was an error in which the area did not pan out.

The Minister: The position, I take it, is this. There had been short measurement through a wrong survey. There is a guarantee fund, he can make a claim upon it to be reimbursed, but he should apply to the trustees of Sir Frederick Whitaker.

Mr Graham: I understand he can appeal to them to give him what they bargained to give him in exchange.

Wini Kerei: The only reason I brought the matter before you was because my piece was larger than what I got back.

MERCER.

"On arriving at Mercer, at 10.55, Mr Seddon received a telegram from Ngaruawahia informing him that half an hour after he left Tawhiao arrived by Te Awamutu train. The Premier telegraphed in reply that his engagements would not admit of his returning to Ngaruawahia, but that if Tawhiao desired to see him he could come on to Auckland. Our train waited at Mercer the arrival of Te Awamutu train, so that had Tawhiao continued his journey he must have overtaken us there.

"At Mercer we met Kerei Kaihau, who had been released on bail the previous day, and had come up to Mercer with the evident intention of intercepting the Premier on the way. He had been pointed out to Mr. Seddon, and therefore when Kaihau boldly advanced and extended his hand to greet the Premier, the latter, prepared for him, placed his own hand behind his back, and said, 'No, your hand is soiled, I decline to recognise wrongdoers. Kaihau looked crestfallen at this rebuff, and turned rather sheepishly away.

"There was not much at Mercer to engage our attention. Amongst its half-dozen buildings was a dilapidated wooden structure fronting the railway-station, bearing in chalk the inscription, 'Mercer Skating-rink. Fun for thousands! No flies on this place!' Evidently there had been far more flies on hand than skaters, for the building was sinking into melancholy ruin."

AUCKLAND.

The Opuatia Affair

As a matter of fact, the people who got up the agitation here and pulled up the survey-pegs were not the owners of the land at all, but were merely living there on sufferance, as the following interview between Hori Kukutai, the real owner, and the Premier will show. This chief came all the way to Auckland with the Premier for the purpose of thoroughly setting the matter at rest once and for all.

Hori Kukutai said,—Sir, I will not delay you by going right away back to the origin of this particular matter—

The Premier: Before hearing you at all, I want to know from you whether what this man Kerei Kaihau has been doing was done with your sanction and consent.

Hori Kukutai: That doing was his own, I tried to stop him. I have nothing whatever to do with it.

The Premier: I am very much pleased to hear you say that.

Hori Kukutai: At the commencement of this Kerei Kaihau trouble at Opuatia, it arose through some Native cattle mixing with some European cattle. Then some of my people were allowed to act under the orders of Kerei Kaihau. This led to a large meeting. I then stood forth to prevent Kerei Kaihau from carrying the matter any further, as it began to become serious. I succeeded in restraining Kerei Kaihau and turning him away, and that trouble ended. The next trouble that occurred was in reference to the road through the land we handed over at Opuatia for Tawhiao and his people to live upon. That was when Tawhiao came over from the lands of Rewi and Wahanui. Rewi and Wahanui had their lands surveyed and leased, and there was no land upon which Tawhiao could remain. That was the reason why we gave that land to Tawhiao to live upon,—because he had no land at all, he and his people, and that is how it came about that Tawhiao's name became identified with Opuatia: but any authority that might be attached to the fact of Tawhiao locating there was since put aside by our putting that land through the Court and bringing it under survey. Tawhiao's decree that there should be no surveys or land-laws was not given effect to. Now, when the Government applied to me for permission to take the road through the ground, I consented. What is there wrong in a road? It is beneficial both to Natives and Europeans. Now, this is my application to you, the Premier, and it is for you to say whether you will give effect to my application or not: that is a matter for your heart. I want this road formed, let the Government take this road through. I do not want the Government to pay compensation for it; all I ask is that they fence it on both sides of Sections 10 and 11. Sections 10 and 11 belong to me. I want the Government to keep authority over that road, and not to hand it over to the Road Board. Let the Road Board be here or there on either side of Sections 10 and 11. There are seventeen owners in No. 11, and twenty in No. 10.