

mittee of last year, and I desire that any further amendments which it is proper should be made may be now included, if they were not included, in the amendments passed by the Papawai *hui*. I do not ask that all the amendments drawn up by the Papawai *hui* should be added to the Premier's original Bill. Now, the East Coast people are desirous that the Board Bill should be passed with reference to the East Coast alone, and the reason why the East Coast people ask that this Board Bill should be passed for their district only is because that Bill met with such strenuous opposition last year from the Natives of the West Coast district. Therefore I do not now consider it necessary to suggest or frame any further amendments than those already arrived at by the East Coast people and submitted to the Committee. It simply remains for the Committee to make its selection of the provisions it may consider the most advisable and suitable and embody them in that Bill, seeing that the East Coast people are satisfied it would be for their good and benefit if the Premier's Bill be passed. Now, I will shorten my remarks. I will now refer to the present days. This Committee and the Government have called upon the Maori members to express their opinions with a view to placing the Government in possession of such information as will enable them to draw up a Bill which will be applicable to the whole of the Island. Now I will proceed to give expression to my views. The first matter I shall touch upon will be the principal provision of the Board Bill introduced by the Premier last year—that is, that all purchases of Native lands in New Zealand shall cease. That is the first matter I desire to see accomplished, and I want such a hard-and-fast and absolute provision made that it will be impossible for any subsequent Government to reopen the question of purchases—that it will never, in future, be competent for any Government to purchase Native land. I say that in the Bill this provision reserving all the balance of Maori lands for the Maoris from this out and for ever should be embodied, in commemoration of the long time that Queen Victoria has been upon the Throne of her forefathers, and in commemoration of the fact that she has now been fifty-eight years reigning over the Maori people of New Zealand—because the Premier's Board Bill was drawn up at the direct command of the Queen that legislation should be passed for the benefit of the Maori people. This Board Bill was prayed for by the chiefs of New Zealand in the congratulatory address presented to the Queen on the occasion of her attaining the sixtieth year of her reign. Therefore I do not want such a measure passed as will merely provide that the Maori lands should be reserved from sale temporarily, which would afford an opportunity of another subsequent Premier upsetting or repealing such provision, because the purchase of Native land is always made a strong point in the policy of any Government. Every Premier knows that by advocating the purchase of the Native land he curries favour with the European population, who like to see that done; but if the step I advocate is taken, in commemoration of the length of the Queen's reign—I mean the reservation of the land—then the Maoris would be satisfied. If that is done, then these vermin will fall off from the Maori people once and for all. I describe the European population of this country as the vermin who suck the blood of the Maori people. If what I say should be done, is done—if the balance of Maori land remaining is reserved to them, then they will secure to themselves four million acres, or thereabouts, of land that now remains to them. Now, Europeans cannot tell me that they are not like *kutu* sucking our life's blood. The second matter on which I will speak is, I advocate that a Board should be constituted to deal with Maori lands. But, to revert back to my previous subject, I say that the moment this Bill becomes law—the Bill putting the needed stop to all purchases of Maori lands—the moment it becomes law it should immediately operate upon all Native lands in this Island. Then, the next step necessary will be the appointment or constitution of a Board to administer the Maori lands—the Board to be assisted in its operations by Block Committees. If two owners of a block of land, or even one owner, desires to place his land under the operation of the Board it should be competent for him to do so, and to operate with the Board in that behalf. Large blocks must be submitted to the control of the Board by the Block Committee, the land in each case to be placed under the control of the Board by the owners of the land. The owners of the blocks should have the right to submit them to the Board and instruct the Board as to the area which they are willing should be leased, and the area which they desire shall be retained for their own occupation and cultivation. Then, when the land is placed in the hands of the Board it will be the duty of the Board to administer that land to the best advantage to the owners thereof; and I say that none of the lands in the East Coast district should be allowed to be alienated by lease either by individual owners or by the owners in common of any such block of land. I say, if a single individual or a number of individuals or a hapu owning any land are allowed to make private arrangements by leasing such land, that it will simply again result in the evil leases of which we have had experience in times past; but I believe that if two or three or four, as the case may be, of the owners of a block of land wish that it should be leased—go to the Board and inform the Board of their desire that the land should be leased or otherwise dealt with—then, having placed the Board in possession of all the necessary information, it simply remains for the Board to give its sanction, and to carry out the wishes of the owners, and I have no doubt that that will obviate any further trouble in connection with Maori leases. But, as to farming operations, the Maori people are themselves entirely competent to manage all matters in connection with farming operations, and if anything should crop up that they feel themselves incompetent to deal with, then let them submit that matter to the Board for the Board to administer. But I do not wish that the Board should be given the power to allocate the portions of the land retained by the owners for any particular purposes, such as kaingas, or lands for cultivation, or sites for churches or other buildings: I say that all that should be done by the owners themselves. It should be for the owners to tell the Board what part of the land they propose to lease, and what part they propose to retain for any particular specified purpose, and then, having informed the Board of their wishes, it will be the duty of the Board to see that their wishes are consistently carried out. Now, the authority overshadowing the Board will be the Government and the Ministers composing such Government, whose duty it will be to pro-