

for sale, not retaining a single acre, and with it the dispute. It is far easier to apportion the money than the land. We all consent to this, and will agree to nothing else, and you take this proposal to the Ngatiarukawhas." The Reverend Mr. Taylor, who was present, and who has been for a long while most zealous in his endeavours to arrange the matter, agreed with John Williams that it was hopeless to insist upon their agreeing to arbitration. In the evening I accordingly laid their proposal before the Rangitanes and Ngatiarukawhas. They seemed to feel that the Ngatiapas, in making such an offer, had stolen a march upon them, but they would neither themselves sell nor allow the Ngatiapas to sell. Arbitration had first been proposed to them by the Government, and the Government were therefore bound to see it carried out. After explaining that just in the same way as I could not force them to sell, so I could not compel the Ngatiapas to accept arbitration, I urged them to consider whether there was any other mode of adjusting their differences. A day or two after my arrival at Wanganui, the natives there requested me to attend a meeting on the same subject at Putiki, on Thursday the 21st. I found all the principal chiefs of Wanganui, Wangaehu, and Turakina present at it. The Rev. Mr. Taylor kindly interpreted for me. After they had heard my report of what had occurred at Rangitikei, Hori Kingi, and the whole of them, repudiated arbitration, and insisted on the block being handed over to the Queen. They were all evidently prepared to support the Ngatiapas in case they were attacked. Some of them having pressed me at once to make a payment of £500, I told them I should give no answer to their offer to hand over the land till I returned to Rangitikei, but that under no circumstances would a single farthing be paid to either of the three tribes on account of the land till the dispute was settled. Before the meeting (minutes of which, taken by J. Williams, I append) broke up, they signed a letter handing the land over.

When I returned to Rangitikei on the 24th, I learned that the Rangitanes and Ngatiarukawas had had a war dance at Ihakara's pa, in which 200 took part, including Ihakara, Epiha Taitimu, Te Hohia, and Hori-kerei-te-Manawa (all Queen's assessors), and that great excitement existed. This determined me to meet the Ngatiapas first, and declare the course the Government would take. I accordingly went on the following day (Monday) to Awahoa, where the Ngatiapas have two pas within a few hundred yards of each other, one being on the bank of the river, the other on a small hill a little distance from the river; both are double pallisaded, with rifle pits, &c. The union jack was flying, with a red war flag underneath. All the chiefs spoke, the purport of their speeches being the same as at the meetings at Pukiti and Parawhenua, viz., that they would never consent to arbitration, but that they gave up the whole of the lands, together with the quarrel, to the Government, and that they also surrendered their arms as a proof of their sincerity, and of their determination to abstain from all acts of violence. They then laid before me half a dozen guns (including a very good rifle) several cartouche boxes, boxes of caps, and two tomahawks, and the red war flag, saying, "We now surrender into your hands our lands, our pas, and our arms, and we wait your answer." I then said, "There must be no misunderstanding as to what you offer and I accept on the part of the Government. I have carefully forbore expressing any opinion upon the merits of the question as to who is right or who is wrong in this dispute. I don't know whether you have a right to the whole or any portion of these lands which you now offer me. Neither do I know whether the Rangitanes and Ngatiarukawas are entitled to the whole or any portion of the block. Neither tribe, until its interests have been ascertained, is in a position to hand over the lands in dispute to the Government, and I therefore tell you distinctly that I will not accept the lands. I will not buy a Waitara. All you can offer and all I can accept is the interest which you may be found to have in these lands. Do you clearly understand what I say?" They were evidently disappointed, and remained silent, consulting, however, among themselves. I repeated two or three times what I had just stated. Their intention in their offer to hand over the lands was simply to have their title to them confirmed, as it were, by the Government, and thus to make the Government the principal in the quarrel. At last Governor Hunia said, "Your meaning is perfectly clear. You will only accept whatever interest we may have in the lands." "Yes. I will not accept the land, but only whatever interest you may hereafter be proved to possess in it." Governor Hunia then put the offer, thus explained and modified, to the meeting in regular form, and it was carried by acclamation. Then came the question of the arms. They said, in giving them, they did so as a token that they gave up all intention of fighting, and as a sign that they placed themselves under the protection of the Queen. I stated that before accepting them I must have a distinct understanding that in future they would obey the orders of the Government in the matter of the quarrel, and that I certainly should at once require them to return to the other side of the river, leaving on the disputed land only a sufficient number of their tribe to look after their cultivations. To this they all readily assented. I then accepted one double-barelled gun and a cartouche-box full (returning the others) as a pledge on the part of the Government that as long as they adhered to what they had promised, they should, if attacked by the Rangitanes and Ngatiarukawas, receive from the Government precisely the same protection as the Pakchahs would in similar circumstances. The meeting, which lasted some five or six hours, terminated with the Maoris giving several rounds of hearty hurrahs. The next day (Tuesday, 26th) I met the opposite party, and after minutely relating all that had taken place since I last saw them, and especially explaining what I had accepted from the Ngatiapas, and the pledges I had given them on behalf of the Government, I referred to their war dance, declaring that after the warnings I had given them I could only regard it as a challenge on the part of the whole body to the Ngatiapas to fight, and a defiance of the Queen's Government; that the conduct of the four assessors (who had taken part in it), men sworn to preserve the peace, was utterly disgraceful, and that the Queen's assessors who indulged in such practices would be dismissed.

Tamihana te Rauparaha and Matini te Whiwhi, who during my absence at Wanganui had been exerting themselves to the utmost to effect some compromise, both urged the acceptance of the Ngatiapas' proposal. Ihakara and Hoani Meihana were the chief spokesmen. They entered at considerable length into the history of the question, and ended by expressing the determination of the two tribes not themselves to sell the block, nor to allow the Ngatiapas to sell any portion of it; but they were still willing to submit to arbitration. Ihakara pleaded the gross insults heaped upon them from time immemorial by the Ngatiapas in justification of the war dance. Upon his saying that he was glad to hear that the Ngatiapas had handed over their interests to me, for he could now go over every nook and corner of the block and would take all the rents, I at once told him that the Government could not consent to either party receiving any portion of