

lington with that amount on the 26th November, and after transacting some Trust Commission business at Masterton, met the Natives at Greytown, on the 5th December, where the chief, Manihera Te Rangitakaiwaho, who had been directed to assist me, had collected the various chiefs of the sellers. Mr. Wardell, B.M., kindly presided. I found that certain Europeans had been exercising a pernicious influence with the Natives, in misrepresenting the object and extent of the deductions that had been made from the gross proceeds. The Natives found that the amount I had with me (£596 3s. 9d.) was very small in comparison with the sum of £2,000 paid to them in 1870; and as land had risen in value, population was coming in, and the place prospering, they could not understand how the amount could be so small. Their counsellors had pointed out these things, but had not told how the income must necessarily be a decreasing one, as the balance of unsold land became annually less, or how the high prices ruling were on private, not Government, land sales. Mistrusting, then, to some extent the accounts, a Committee had been organized to scrutinize my figures in regard to areas sold and moneys paid. The Committee consisted chiefly of members of the old Hau-Hau party, and had, as their spokesman, a man who had been active a short time since with Henare Matua at Hawke's Bay and elsewhere. I was not sorry at their determination to attack the accounts vigorously, as I felt assured that the eventual result would be a better acquaintance with the subject than the younger Natives at present had, and a clearing away of some causes of dissatisfaction.

I found it convenient to prepare a debtor and creditor account, block by block, treating each purchase as a separate transaction. The Natives did not at first understand this method, several of the chiefs being interested in a plurality of blocks, and desiring to be paid upon them collectively. The inferior Natives, who were only interested in one block, however, saw the advantage of distinct accounts, and now all desire that the accounts may be rendered to them in such manner in the future.

Turanganui and Turakirae.

These two blocks are clubbed together because upon them, in common, certain advances had been made—sets-off in the account of the 5 per cents.—payable to the Natives of the Lower Valley.

The accumulation of "Koha" on these blocks to 30th September, 1873, together with £77 10s., proceeds of sale of machinery, amounted to £856 16s. 7½d., against which there were sets-off as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Payments to Raniera	78	0	0
Ditto for purchase of mill and dressing machine	300	0	0
Ditto by Mr. Kemp... ..	450	0	0
Total	£828	0	0
Balance	£28	10	7½

There was also a charge of £150 against Turanganui in the early accounts, but not in the more recent. The sum had been given to Raniera, and used by him in paying his debts, without the tribe deriving benefit therefrom. There was considerable opposition to any advance for this mill being charged as against "Koha." The mill, they said, had never been of service to the people; it had lain in Bethune and Hunter's store, they averred, until liable to £40 as a charge for storage, and was sold at a price below its proper value. The Upper Valley Natives maintained that Raniera had appropriated the proceeds on the eventual sale of the machinery. It was, however, no business of theirs, and I repressed the interference; they were, moreover, wrong. The mill, it appeared, had been sold in Wellington to the Hon. H. Russell, M.L.C., and Mr. John Russell was in possession of the sum of £77 10s., the net proceeds.

In respect to the Turakirae Block, Manihera and Wi Kingi claimed "Koha" for Taita, Mangaroa, and Pakuratahi, stating that the purchase extended over those lands, and even to the source of a stream falling to the West Coast. They produced Mr. J. McKenzie, who stated that at a meeting in 1853, at Turanganui, he heard Sir George Grey tell the selling Natives that the 5 per cents. should extend over those lands. I resisted this, stating that although their claim to certain land at the Upper Hutt, previously bought of Ngatitama and Ngatiawa, might have been extinguished by the purchases and payments made in 1853, yet it never could have been intended that 5 per cents. could be paid for the Hutt, which had been sold by the New Zealand Company long previously. On obtaining a copy of the deed from Wellington, it was found that they were in error, the Rimutaka Range being the boundary.

Tuhitarata.

This is one of the Lower Valley blocks. On account of Manihera and his brother Eruera being amongst the sellers, and their having had nothing to do in the matter of the mill advance to Raniera, it was determined to charge that advance to the debit of Turakirae and Turanganui only.

The total accumulations of "Koha" to 30th September, 1873, amounted to £265 4s. 2d.; the payments on account to £200; balance, £65 4s. 2d.; which sum I paid, giving a copy in Maori of the account current.

Wharekaka and Puhangina.

On this purchase the accumulations of 5 per cents. amounted to £566 12s. 3d., and advances to £255, leaving a balance of £311 12s. 3d. The "Committee," unable to question anything on the (Government) credit side of the account, attacked the debtor side, and employed a surveyor to check the areas stated to have been sold, and on which the calculations were based, with the area known to be sold on the ground. This occupied three days, and at the termination of that time we were informed that "the difference found was too slight to be of any account;" the money was then taken, and receipts signed in Maori and English, a marginal plan being drawn on each receipt, to prevent the possibility of any future misapprehension as to locality.