

referred to with which we have had to contend, land matters at present throughout the whole of our district, as far as our operations are concerned, are standing upon a most satisfactory basis; and now that the Arawas have discovered that we unflinchingly adhere to the principles of truth and justice, and that their threats are either treated with indifference or met by sound argument, their feelings have become somewhat mollified, and they profess to be desirous of aiding the Government scheme, which, indeed, does not surprise us, as they are sufficiently intelligent to see that such a course will be advantageous to themselves.

Although we looked upon the great meeting held in March last at Maketu as the outcome of ungovernable cupidity on the part of the leading chiefs who advocated that movement, still it was a satisfactory mode of laying bare the utter baselessness on which extortionate demands were made, and evidencing before an impartial tribunal of both races the complete groundlessness of their accumulated grievances.

It will be remembered perhaps that we intimated in our last general report the probability of our success in respect to purchasing the block of land at Maketu, known as Te Puke, in which case our operations would be extended to Maketu flats, known as Te Papanui, Paengaroa, &c. We have to state that the proposed line of action we then ventured to suggest was carried out by us. We treated with the Waitaha and Tapuika tribes, to whom it was fully known the land really belongs; and although the "toa" element raised its crest, our determined indifference towards the "toa" on the grounds of justice so thoroughly convinced them of the untenableness of their position and the fictitiousness of their claims, that they agreed to confine their demands to a few hundred acres of worthless sandy soil near the sea coast, which includes Te Tumu, the famous battle ground, where the Ngaiterangi were worsted. Having succeeded in obtaining the assent and signatures of the resident Natives at Maketu of the Waitaha and Tapuika tribes, we proceeded to Auckland and Coromandel peninsula, where a number of the same tribes resided, whose signatures were obtained to our deeds, and who warmly repudiated any claim whatever to the lands of their ancestors made by the "toa," stating that the Ngatiwhakaue and others, claiming as "toa," put forward these fictitious claims for the purpose of extorting money, taking advantage of the ignorance of the Pakehas as regards these Maori questions. With these sayings and other arguments of our own, showing the fallacies of the "toa" claims, the whole element suddenly collapsed, and we were told by them to go on with the ancestral claimants, but that as an act of grace they, the "toa," hoped not to be overlooked.

After the settlement, as far as could be accomplished, of Te Puke, Te Papanui and Paengaroa blocks referred to above, we proceeded to Rotorua, and held an open conference with all the tribes in that locality in relation to the purchase of 20,000 acres of wooded land, known as Te Rotohokahoka block, and after a careful investigation as to the nature of the multitudinous claims, we paid as deposits the sum of £500 thereon; subsequently we held a series of meetings at Te Wairoa with Tuhourangi on the Rotohokahoka purchase, and on the leases of Paeroa, Tumunui, Rotomahana, and other places. We succeeded in arguing down the opposition of the body of Tuhourangi chiefs, who call themselves the "Putaiiki," and of obtaining their consent to the purchase of Rotohokahoka, and to the leases in question. The chiefs of Tuhourangi, Te Rangihueua, and others whose claims to the Koutu Block at Ohinemutu, on which the Armed Constabulary, in command of Sub-Inspector Gascoine, are at present located, agreed to lease their interest in the block, and we accordingly paid to them a deposit, securing at the same time their signatures to our deed. At the same meeting the most violent opposition was raised by all present to the claims of Henare Te Pukuatua as regards Matakana lands, Tumunui, Kapenga, and other places, on which lands it was suggested the advance made to Henare by the Government of £250 should rest. Some of Henare's own relatives, who were present, suggested that he should give to Government as an equivalent lands at Maketu, if he had any there, which they said was questionable. All our attempts to settle the above money question having signally failed, we moved on to Ohinemutu, where we held meeting after meeting on the subject of the Koutu lease; but in consequence of the hostile attitude assumed by the chief Temuera Te Amohau and his adherents, we deemed it wise to relinquish for the time being further actual negotiations. It should be stated, however, that immediately after some of the party broke away from Temuera, sanctioning the lease by affixing their signatures thereto, and taking a small deposit. Among those who signed were Henare Te Pukuatua, his wife Nataria, Paratomeo, Te Puke, Te Wharekino, Te Upokotareoa, Pahiriko, and Te Poroa. Others of the Ngatiwhakaue expressed their desire to sign the deed, but their demands being objectionable on the score of exorbitancy, we refused to entertain their propositions. The question of the Parekarangi lease having been mooted at the same time, a general meeting was convened on the subject, the result of which was the obtaining of a number of signatures to our lease, and the payment of £15 deposit to parties who had previously opposed the transaction.

Prior to the matters detailed above, it is necessary to remark that we paid a visit to the Arawa chiefs residing at Ohiwa, with whom originated the idea of leasing the Koutu block to the Government; they also sanctioned the sale of the Puke block, Te Papanui, and other places at Maketu, and those connected with either Waitaha or Tapuika received small payments in extinguishment of their claims. We also obtained here the signatures necessary to complete the title to the military award blocks of Ngatikereru, Ngatirangiteaorere, and Ngatienukukopako. The subject of the Mangorewa lands claimed by the Ngatirangiwehehi tribe, was also a subject of discussion, as to whether any portion should be sold or leased to Government. It transpired that the members of the tribe generally had signed a paper transferring all power and authority to their chief Mita Hikairo, of the Native Lands Court Office, Auckland, who was to act on his own judgment as far as these lands are concerned. We sought an interview with Hikairo on the occasion of our visit to Auckland in October, 1874, and he gave us to understand that until he obtained Crown grants for the lands in question, he would not be inclined to treat either with Government or private parties. He however withdrew all opposition to the purchase of the Rotahokahoka block in which he was known to have an interest. In connection with the subject of Rotahokahoka, we may add that, in consequence of our action relative to the purchase of that