

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE MATTERS IN RAGLAN DISTRICT

(REPORT FROM MR. R. S. BUSH, R.M., RELATING TO).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Mr. R. S. BUSH to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Raglan, 28th August, 1879.

I have the honor to report, for your information, that I proceeded to Matakotako, Aotea, on the 22nd instant, for the purpose of being present at a meeting held there on that date. Nearly all the principal chiefs from Waipa, Aotea, Kawhia, and Raglan were present. Te Ngakau was also there. The meeting appears to have been called by the Ngatipoarua (who had attended the late sittings of the Native Land Court at Cambridge) with a similar object to the meeting which the Natives held at Cambridge which ended in their forwarding a petition to His Excellency the Governor. The question discussed at the meeting was the advisability of doing away with the Native Land Court. Nothing, however, was determined upon, except that the Maori member for the Western Maori Electoral District be requested to take the question in hand when Parliament assembles. One of the speakers apparently went a little further than the meeting intended, by asking, "Kei a wai te ora, kerate Kawana rarei, kei a Tawhiao rarei?" meaning, which of the two could best devise such a scheme with regard to Native lands as would meet with their approval. Te Ngakau replied to this question as follows: "You are now beginning to discuss what I have been calling upon you to do for the last seven years, during which time none of you would come forward to help me in laying out such plans as would satisfactorily arrange what you now complain of. Let me tell you, 'Kaire he iranga inaianei ia te Kawana, kaire he iranga ia Tawhiao, kei whea te wahi hei turanga mo tina ora'—This is the reason why I say, neither the Governor nor Tawhiao can do you any good now with respect to your lands, which are all gone. You are too late by seven years."

This speech of Te Ngakau's terminated the discussion, and the Kupapa Natives then commenced to discuss the question as to who they should return to represent them in Parliament for the Western Maori Electoral District. I do not think the originators of this meeting, who were the sellers of this district, really meant a word they said, simply because they have little or no land left which is likely to be adjudicated upon by the Native Land Court.

Hakopa Kotuku, one of the Assessors here, states that the idea was introduced to his people by Major Kemp, of Wanganui. I fancy he must be mistaken.

Judging from the little interest displayed by the conveners of the meeting in the subject, I could not but think it was a pretext to get all the Kawhia and Aotea Hauhaus together for the purpose of ascertaining whether they would assist them in returning a Waikato chief to the Assembly on this occasion. I am inclined to think many Hauhaus will on this occasion record their votes; hitherto they have carefully kept aloof.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

R. S. BUSH, R.M.

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1879.