

Native Land Court at Cambridge, and appeared in Court in support of his own claim to a block of land abutting on the Piako side of the Patetere Block.

The Cambridge Court had lasted for a considerable time, and the Natives had exhausted both their food and money. It was under these circumstances that I agreed, after conferring with Rewi, to advance the sum of £1,000 against the block—to be arranged for afterwards, when matters came up for final settlement. The Natives might have obtained this amount—perhaps more—from the private speculators who were present; but Rewi explained that it would complicate matters much less if the Government paid the money. I discussed the question with him at considerable length on numerous occasions between his attendance at the Court and his final return from Auckland to Waikato with His Excellency the Governor. Rewi took a perfectly business-like view of the matter, and said that he regarded the bulk of the lands comprised in the block as practically gone; that he himself would offer no opposition, and only desired that, before putting the lands through the Court, the boundary on the Hauhau side should be laid down in such a way as to prevent the possibility of collision between the races or between the Natives themselves: and it was arranged that he and I together should, during this present summer, convene a meeting of the Natives at some central place, and, having discussed the matter with them, proceed in person to fix the boundary of the land on the Hauhau side.

The Waotu meeting, now about to be held, is the first part of our programme. On the part of the Government, we had made provision in the Native Land Bill, introduced into the House in the first session of last year, to meet the cases of the European negotiators; power being taken to refer all such claims to a Native Land Court for equitable adjustment.

You will find the case of the European speculators very fully put by myself in a telegram to Sir George Grey sent from Auckland about June of last year.

I have gone thus fully into the circumstances of the case for the following reasons: I am about to commence practice in the Waikato, and have been asked by a number of Europeans concerned to undertake completion of their outstanding negotiations. I have agreed to do so, subject to one condition—that I shall not be called upon to do anything contrary to the declared policy of the Government in regard to these lands; and it is with a view to ascertain how far I may proceed with the business in the interests of these Europeans that I now address you upon the subject. As I have already mentioned to you, I do not think that any serious difficulty will arise in the completion of survey or the passing of the lands through the Court. It appears to me that, protected as it is by the Proclamation over the lands, the Crown can suffer no injury from the investigation of the title to the block, either as a whole or in parts. Whether the Crown determines to proceed with the purchase of the block or a part of it, or to retire from negotiations altogether, such investigation of title will be necessary. But, at the same time, it would have an important effect on the position of Native matters in the Waikato if the work of survey and investigation can be carried out without trouble or disturbance. I may add that it is my intention to proceed to the Waikato at once, for the purpose of attending the Waotu meeting, and also to see Rewi on the subject. If he is so disposed, I consider it would be exceedingly well worth your while to carry out with him the programme as fixed between him and myself, by taking steps to settle the boundary of the block on the side next to what is termed the King country.

I have, &c.,

JOHN SHEEHAN.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

No. 74.

The Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER to Mr. J. SHEEHAN.

SIR,— Native Minister's Office, Wellington, 12th January, 1880.
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, in reference to the Patetere Block of land in the Waikato District.

I have perused with interest your *résumé* of the transactions connected with that block, and have also read the telegram from yourself to Sir G. Grey on the subject.

With regard to expressing now the intentions of the Government in reference to proceeding with the purchase, I am placed somewhat in a difficulty; for I have promised a number of Natives, as well as some Europeans, not to arrive at a determination until after the close of the meeting now being held in the Waikato to consider questions relating thereto. Still, I think I may say, without any breach of the understanding, that, should means be devised for completely securing a refund or other equivalent of the expenditure already incurred, the anxiety of the Government to proceed with the purchase would not be great.

I have, &c.,

JOHN BRYCE.

John Sheehan, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington.

No. 75.

Cambridge, 15th January, 1880.

HON. THE NATIVE MINISTER, Wellington.—We, the undersigned, have the honor to request that you will instruct the Chief Surveyor to authorize the survey of the Mangakaretu Block, as the same is gazetted and advertised by the Native Land Court, and to accept and forward the survey of the portion already completed to the Native Land Court at Cambridge for adjudication.—F. D. RICH, W. C. L. WILLIAMS, A. B. WALKER, W. MOON, G. WALKER, G. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 76.

Government Buildings, 16th January, 1880.

(Telegram.)
F. D. RICH, Esq., Cambridge.—No. 96.—*Re* Mangakaretu. The Native Minister directs me to inform you that he believes that it will be more convenient and in the interests of the public to allow this matter to stand over until the whole of the cases in the Patetere Block can be taken together.—P. SHERIDAN (for Under-Secretary).

3—G. 1.