

162. For how much did you sell the leased part?—£3,000.

163. What was the area of that?—3,410 acres, I think.

164. Do you remember that you said in your evidence in 1879 that this 3,400 acres was first-class land?—I do not think in 1879 I had ever been over the land. There is a great deal of it first-class land. At the present moment I do not know the exact boundaries of the Oamaru Block, and the Rahuaru Block that is adjoining. At the present time that property is in the market, and I hear that the owners expect to get £17 an acre. It will be sold in October.

165. What do you value the 163 acres at?—£4,000. I have refused two offers of £3,500 for it. Both offers were from very responsible men. One offered half cash, and the remainder on mortgage of the property at 8 per cent. interest; and the other offer was for a mortgage upon another property. Both offers were perfectly good.

166. In 1879, when you were examined, you gave in a paper in connection with the land-tax. It was valued in that at £3,000?—Yes; I think it was, so far as I can remember.

167. Are you aware Government got a valuation made of it in August, 1880?—I heard Government had had a valuation made. I do not know that I heard it very officially. I may say I am privately aware of it. I am also informed the valuation was £20 an acre. I am not certain whether that is correct or not.

168. Twenty-one pounds an acre?—It was somewhere about July or August last, I believe.

169. Do you think that too low a valuation, then?—I have been offered more for it by two gentlemen as well acquainted with it as any one in Hawke's Bay: one owns the adjoining land, and the other gentleman is the present leaseholder of land in the neighbourhood.

170. There is a wire fence upon the land?—There are two, I think.

171. Who put that up?—I did not. I suppose the Natives did—one fence, and probably the Bank of Australasia the other. Out of 163 acres there was about 130, I think or perhaps 120, enclosed in a fence along the road.

172. Have you any idea of the value of the fence?—I have not. It was not worth much. I have had to pull it nearly all down and re-erect it. It is almost all new fence there.

173. When you took possession of this land were you resisted? You went to take final possession, and did get possession: were you resisted?—No; there were only three or four people there—one old man, and, I think, all the rest were women.

174. Have you been interfered with since?—No; they have been pleading here *in formâ pauperis* that they have got no other land. They find now they have a block of 1,500 acres good land, which is three miles away, upon which most of them are living.

175. After you had got possession, you had a conversation with Tareha?—Tareha sent a messenger to me, the same night I think, asking me to see him next day at Waiohiki.

176. You met him?—I met him. Tareha said, "I am not going into what has led to this. Of course we have always held we were right, and you have always said you were. The Court said you were right. We are prepared to submit to the orders of the Court. But what I want to talk about is these two things: I want to talk to you about, in the first place, Wharerangi." I said, "Yes. What about Wharerangi?" He replied, "We understood, some months ago, you would have no objection to put Wharerangi in place of Ngatihira. You would appoint some one to say what Wharerangi is worth, and we would appoint some one; and that you would pay the difference. Are you prepared to stand to that offer now?" I said, "Yes; if the grantees of Wharerangi wish it. All I want Oamaru for is for what it is worth, and I have no objection to make an exchange even now."

177. But did he say anything about this land—about getting possession again of Oamaru?—Only upon that basis. He said, "I will see my people, and will get the grantees all together to-night. We will have a meeting and will let you know." He said, "Another thing I want to speak to you about, that is, the corn—the crops." Of course the crops were not ripe in December. There were maize, oats, barley, wheat, potatoes—and altogether there were, I should think, about seventy or eighty acres in crop. He said, "What about the crops?" "Well," I said, "in the meantime, your people will not go upon the land in the way of ownership. They have been on the land since and threatened to turn my men off." He said, "Yes, but I have told them to withdraw and go away." I said, "Well, you can take the whole of the crops. I will instruct my men to allow the Natives to obtain the crops without being restrained. I only stipulate you shall take the crops when they are ready to take off." He expressed his consent, and performed his part of the bargain rigidly, and I performed mine. The only thing I stipulated was that I should have full possession of the land in March, in order to get it ploughed. He said, "I will meet you again to-morrow or next day, in Napier." I met him next day, in town, and he said he had called the Wharerangi people together and had a meeting, after I left, the night before, and he was now authorized by the tribe to say he could deal with Wharerangi upon the terms that had been suggested before. He said, "Mr. Donnelly is not here. He is in Taupo. I will wait for a few days, possibly a week, and will then give the name of the man to act for us and decide the price of the land. We will appoint a man after I have consulted with Mr. Donnelly." I do not know that I heard anything more about it after.

178. If they were all so anxious to change, how is it it fell through?—I do not know at all. I believe it fell through. I am under the impression that Paora Torotoro did give his consent to a certain extent—I have no correspondence with him at all; that was from what I had heard—and that he subsequently withdrew it. I did not pursue the matter further.

179. Did Tareha at the interview say anything about Taupo, or men coming to the district having given his people any advice to re-enter?—I do not think he did. I heard something about it, but not from Tareha.

180. Did he give you to understand at that interview that the reason you were not opposed in taking possession was that, trusting to the offer of the Government, they had allowed you to take possession quietly?—No, he did not say anything of that sort at all. He said the Natives had received letters from the Government to the effect that all arrangements with me were off, and that they would have to be settled with me direct. I think it was Tareha told me that. It was somebody in connection with it told me so.