

Booth to Patea. Here he would have taken up his abode, and came into the town for the purpose, but was deterred by finding that Mr. Booth was temporarily absent, and by a story which he had been told that he was going to be taken prisoner, and that if any murders were committed by his people he would be shot. Before he could again communicate personally with Mr. Booth, our disasters at Ngutu-o-te-Manu and Turuturumokai occurred. Titokowaru swept the coast of our defensive forces, destroyed the homesteads on fifty miles of country, and swept all before him almost into the town of Wanganui. On his way down, he reached Taurua's pa (Hukatere) by night, took him prisoner, and forcibly carried him off with the war party, with which he had no choice but to remain—though it is stated on good authority that he never took any part whatever in the hostilities which followed. When Titokowaru, after several weeks occupation at Tauranga-ika, near Wanganui, retreated, and fell back on the Ngatimaru country on the Upper Waitara River, Taurua and the Pakakohi remained in their own district, and were pursued up the Patea River by Major Noake with a mixed force of European and native Volunteers, accompanied by Mr. Booth. Seeing him, Taurua sent for him with a flag of truce, and the same day induced the whole of his tribe and a number of Ngaruru who were with him to surrender and give up their arms. They were, to the number of upwards of 200, including Taurua, taken to Wellington, tried by the Supreme Court, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, which they underwent at Dunedin. When this term had expired, they were brought back to their own country by the Government, and then placed on reserves, the boundaries, subdivisions, and ownership of which have, however, never till now been correctly ascertained. The conduct of the tribe has, since their restoration, been good, and Taurua has personally rendered many services to and exhibited the most friendly feelings to the Government and Europeans generally.

The Commissioner found the hapus West of the Patea River sufficiently provided for, though the boundaries and subdivisions of their reserves were not properly defined; and their readjustment gave a good deal of work for the surveyors of the Commission. Still less had been done to define and allot the reserves between the Patea and Whenuakura, and there remained the question already referred to of extension in favor of Taurua.

These facts will sufficiently explain the grounds on which the Commissioner has recommended an additional grant of 1,062 acres to be made in favor of Taurua and his heirs personally. It has not, however, been done without receiving a concession of considerable value in return. Numerous eelweirs have been erected and maintained, probably for centuries, by the natives, across the Patea River, rendering it unnavigable except by the very smallest canoes and (as is said to have been estimated by Sir John Code) diminishing the scour of the current to an extent which may affect the water on the bar by a depth of one or two feet and otherwise injuring the channel of the river. Taurua and others of the tribe asserted most positively that at the time of their being restored to their country Sir D. McLean expressly promised that they should retain the use of their eelweirs—a statement which the Commissioner has no reason to doubt. The Commissioner, while adjusting these cases, received a requisition on the subject from a large number of settlers residing at Patea and the neighbourhood, some of whom own land up the river, which is seriously affected by the obstruction of the weirs. In his negotiations with Taurua he therefore made it a condition of the proposed extension that the whole of these weirs should be removed. The great value which natives invariably attach to their eel fisheries and the important character of those in question rendered it a difficult task to persuade Taurua to come to terms, and it was not till after several months delay and the exercise of much tact by Major Parris, that he was at last induced to do so, yielding, however, finally with a good grace. There is no doubt that from a pecuniary aspect—to say nothing of the feelings of attachment which natives always display towards this species of property—the sacrifice, on his part, was a very considerable one, as the removal of the weirs was a considerable advantage to the Government.

The Commissioner found that the Hukatere Pa, which has for a period long before the war and continuously since been occupied by Taurua, personally, and is the principal home of him and his people, had (it is presumed by some oversight) not been included in the reserve of 2,000 acres allotted to him by Sir D. McLean; but, on the contrary, had been surveyed as a separate section of eighteen acres, including the pa and adjacent native cultivations, and is understood to have been regarded, or at least intended, by the Survey Department to be a Ferry Reserve. The Commissioner can find no trace, however, of its ever having been legally set apart for any such purpose; it has never been so appropriated in fact and is never likely to be required. A road to the river of a chain wide has been reserved across it by the Commissioner; and as there is a corresponding Government reserve on the other side of the river there is every convenience for the establishment of a ferry, should one ever be required. The pa is a very good one, containing several unusually good buildings; and it would be a great wrong to take it from Taurua. The Commissioner begs, therefore, respectfully, to recommend that it be granted to him and his people, and has forwarded a separate grant for the purpose.

There is also another piece of land which, in the Commissioner's opinion, ought to be included in Taurua's reserve. It is a section of 70 acres, numbered 94 on the plan of the district. It is one of a class commonly known as "Major Heaphy's Reserves," because set apart by that officer, when Commissioner of Native Reserves, with six others, amounting altogether to 500 acres, by instructions from Sir Donald McLean, Native Minister, apparently for no definite purpose. [G.—2., 1880: Evidence, Q. 1171; Appendix B., page 30.] These reserves, immediately after they were made, were leased to Europeans by direction of the same Minister; and among them the one under notice has passed into the hands of Messrs. Arundell and Ross (who are also tenants of the Otautu Reserve, by a lease from Taurua). They have by a deed dated 14th February, 1881, assigned the lease of section 94 to Taurua. From its position, in contact with the Otautu Reserve on the one side, and Hukatere Pa on the other side, it is of course of great value to Taurua. He is extremely anxious to have it included in his reserves, and the Commissioner has promised him to recommend that it should be done if possible. There seems no real difficulty in doing it. The Commissioner is satisfied that