

has been for him to confine his attention to the towns, and if the Natives wished to see him they had to go to him; and he was always too much engaged to give his attention to the Maoris, so we invited you to come here to see us. I think that, now there is a new Minister who has taken office with the new year, he should go round amongst the Maoris and explain his views and his policy to them. I do not blame any particular Minister; perhaps the Maoris have been somewhat to blame themselves hitherto. I will not occupy the time of the meeting at any great length; I will allow others to bring the subjects before you. I will simply say that a number of Maoris who intended to be present here to-day have been unable to come, owing to a large slip in the river, which has prevented their coming.

*Paori Kurimate* said: Major Kemp having opened the meeting, I will now bring before you the subjects for the meeting. First of all, there is the exterior boundary of the property of the Wanganui people; they are boundaries of our ancestors, and have descended to us, and our desire is that the Parliament will confirm to us the land within these boundaries. You, however, will be aware of these boundaries, because they were made known to you by the Committee in 1880; they are given in the schedule to this document. The second subject is, that we wish the Native Committee to be confined to the Wanganui District only. Third, we have agreed to allow a steamer to be put on the Wanganui River; this will be dealt with by the Committees. Fourth, the Committees will also deal with surveys of land belonging to the people. Fifth, the sales by the people of their lands will also be dealt with by the Committees. Sixth, the leases intended to be executed by the people are to be dealt with by the Committees. Seventh, the Committees are also to deal with the question of railway where it goes through land held under Maori title. Eighth, the Committees are to deal with the question of surveys within the boundaries of their tribes. These are the principal subjects, and the earnest request of the people is that these matters that have been brought before you to-day should be sanctioned by Parliament. [The schedule of the boundaries was then read over, and Paori resumed his place.]

*Mr. Ballance* said: Friends of Wanganui, I have to repeat to you once again the great pleasure it has given me to meet you here on this occasion. Major Kemp has referred to the fact that I am the first Native Minister who has accepted an invitation to visit the people of the Wanganui River. I think the practice is a good one, and I hope it will be repeated, and that in future Native Ministers will visit the people of Wanganui at their various settlements; they will then be able to ascertain the real wants and wishes and interests of the people, for I recognize how impossible it is for the people to assemble in the large towns, away from their different settlements, to wait upon Ministers. It has therefore given me special pleasure to be here to meet you on this occasion, and I should just like to say to you that the Premier of the colony would himself have liked to have been here with me, but the pressure of business prevented him. Mr. Stout takes as keen an interest in the welfare of the Native race as I do myself, or as keen an interest as any man in the colony. I should like to say this, too, for the Government, as a whole, that they are exceedingly anxious to establish good relations with the whole of the Native people. The Government feel that this can only be done by meeting the people and taking them into their confidence, for we feel that no one is so capable of understanding what is best for the people as the people themselves. It may be necessary, and is necessary, that in the enactment of laws for their welfare they should receive the assistance of Government, and the Government can often come to their assistance in administering the laws. We wish the people to understand that when laws are made they are not made for one race, but made for the people as a whole. I was exceedingly pleased to hear the sentiments expressed by Major Kemp with regard to the disposal of Native land, the more so as those sentiments are my own and have long been so. It is necessary that the land should be administered and disposed of for the benefit of the people, the owners of the land. The monopoly of the land is an injury to the people of both races, though it will benefit a few; but the laws are not made for the few but for all. The question, therefore, of supreme importance is how to get the land disposed of, that the greatest number of people may live by it and on it. Population brings prosperity, it is true, as Major Kemp has said, and the largest population means the greatest prosperity; but there is one essential condition, and that is that the land shall not be held by the few; for in some countries we find that there is a large population, and the land is held by a few persons, the consequence being inevitable—a large proportion of the people are pauperized. Now, I should like to say, with regard to our own views upon the land question, that we desire that the people themselves should join with the Government in administering their lands for the welfare of both races. Before I have done I will show you, I think, how this can be accomplished. Now, there has been brought before me to-day a number of subjects—eight subjects—which seem to occupy the first place in your attention. The first refers to the external boundaries of the Wanganui District, and the second refers to the appointment of Native Committees—that is to say, that the Native Committee of Wanganui should be confined to the Wanganui District. I take it that these are one subject, not two, and that, when the district has been defined, the Committee shall confine its attention and its duties to that district. I agree with what Paori has said about having the boundaries of the district revised; nothing has appeared to my mind more absurd than the fact that some of the members of this Committee are living at Otaki. What connection have the people of Otaki with you in the disposal of your lands and the regulation of your affairs? It is right, therefore, that the boundaries of the district should be revised, and I have the power under the law to make the necessary revision. I shall have the new district established, therefore, on my return to Wellington; but I should like to say further with regard to it. I will first send you up a map containing the proposed boundaries of this district, and I shall let you settle the lines among yourselves, because you might have to make some revision. The great thing is to have only those in the district who are of one mind with regard to the disposal of their lands. As to the power to be given to the Native Committees, that is a very large question, and is a question that will have to be very carefully considered by the Government. I think the Committees may do a great deal of good in the ascertainment of title to land: and here I would like to say one thing with regard to the Native