

310. Did you consider at any part of this meeting the amendments suggested in the Bill by Wi Pere?—Yes, we did.

311. You say you saw the amendments that Wahanui proposed?—Yes.

312. Was your attention called to one of those proposals—namely, that he would have the provisions of this Act “not to apply to land within the boundaries proclaimed by the Alienation Act of 1884”?—I think that Wahanui had that clause put in to meet his own district.

313. No doubt; but this is what I want to know: Wahanui stated yesterday that he agreed with the proposed amendments of Wi Pere, but would add certain amendments of his own. Now, this is one of the proposed amendments. I want to know whether you approve of that particular amendment?—I approve of the whole of the amendments as proposed by Wahanui.

314. Do I understand you to mean that you desire that one part of the Maori people in future should be governed by the Bill and that the other part should not be governed by it?—I cannot make any objection to the proposal of Wahanui.

*The Interpreter:* He says, literally, I am not strong enough to object to that proposal of Wahanui's.

315. *Colonel Trimble.*] But do you approve of it?—Wahanui is the best judge; and if Wahanui thinks that it will meet the requirements of the case, he is the best judge.

316. *Mr. Wi Pere.*] Was it the Maori that passed that law of the ten men in the grant?—No; it was not.

317. Was not that law passed in order to bring evil on the Maori people?—It has brought evil upon the Maoris.

318. And is that the reason why the Natives come here to direct attention to this Bill?—Yes.

319. Do you know whether the former law placed restrictions on the action of the ten persons?—I do not know.

320. Did not the law place absolute control in the hands of these ten people?—Yes.

321. Did Europeans go to the Natives and deceive them, and say that it was a very good Act, and that they should take advantage of it?—Yes.

322. Afterwards, when the Crown grants were issued containing the ten names, was it then that the Maoris became aware that it was a bad law?—Yes.

323. Is it not understood that one of the duties of the Committee is simply to carry out the wishes of the people?—Yes.

324. Have not both Wahanui and yourself stated that you would not hand over land to the Native Land Court because its work is bad?—Yes, I have said so; we have said so.

325. If the administration of the Native Land Court were approved of would you give your land to be dealt with by the Court?—Yes.

326. Would it not do for the Native Committees appointed under the Act of 1883 to subdivide the land?—Yes; it would be a good arrangement for the Native Committees appointed in 1883 to subdivide the land.

327. Is not the object of your coming here to see us that you may get our assistance in helping you to make amendments and correct this Bill brought in by the Government?—Yes.

328. Do you approve of the question put by Mr. Ormond, and say with him that if the objectionable clauses are retained in this Bill trouble will come upon the Natives?—Yes.

329. Do you wish that we, the members of this Committee, should assist you in correcting the clauses objected to?—Yes.

330. Do you consider that, if it is provided that the Committees for the various blocks of land should only carry out the wishes of the owners, there will be no abuse of their power?—Yes.

331. Seeing that the real power would remain in the hands of the owners, do you think that the Committee, once appointed, would abuse their power?—No.

332. Do you not think that the position of the Committee would be something the same as the relation between a European and his labourer, and that the labourer would carry out the wishes of his master?—Yes.

333. Have not the past evils been caused by the fact that no restrictions were provided giving power to the owners of land?—Yes; the owners had not sufficient voice in the matter.

334. I will now ask you a question about Wahanui's amendments: do you not think it would be a good idea for you to go to Wahanui and get him to strike out the objectionable clauses he spoke of?—Yes; he said he would do so.

335. And if Wahanui insists upon his own amendments being taken altogether, would it not be a good plan to leave him to settle with the Committee about them?—Yes.

TUESDAY, 25TH AUGUST, 1885.

HIKAWERA'S examination continued.

336. *Mr. Hakuene.*] What are your ideas with respect to this Bill before the Committee? I am not now referring to the amendments, but asking you about the Bill itself?—Some of the provisions of the Bill we accept in their entirety, others we propose to alter by the amendments which we have submitted to the Committee.

337. What do you think about the provisions of the Bill which prevent Natives selling to Europeans?—I know a great number of Natives from whom Europeans got their Crown grant, paying for it in rum, sugar, and other things.

338. I ask you again, what is your opinion about that particular clause?—I approve of the Native having power to sell to the European, providing it is the unanimous wish of the owners of the land; and (2) that the negotiations be carried on through the Committee and the Board.

339. What are your ideas with regard to that clause which says that the Natives are to sell to