

off the encumbrances, but the other Maori you speak of has to look to the Board to assist him?—No, what I say is this: that those of my lands which are in that position should not come under the Board, but that my other lands which are not in that position should come under the Board. If the Board is willing to take over all my liabilities I am quite willing to hand them all over. Not only my encumbrances and liabilities, but also my sources of income, and everything else. What I mean by that is, all my encumbered lands and all my unencumbered lands. My unencumbered lands would come under that provision of the Act which would prohibit any further purchase. I should be delighted to see the Board take over all my liabilities at, say, 3 per cent.—because I am paying 8 and 9 per cent.—or even at 3½ or 4 per cent. Why, I have been paying interest at the rate of 10 per cent. at the commencement, but it has now gradually come down to 8, 7, and as low as 6½ per cent. in some cases.

13. Very well, now, do you think that it will be a proper or possible proceeding to take away the privileges that are held under Crown grants, or other titles already issued in New Zealand?—How could it be done? This is not superseding the authority of the Crown grant. It is simply showing that the Crown grant and all still remains the property of Wi Pere, that Wi Pere has the right to hand the land over to the Board if he sees fit. Then the Board will stand in the same relation to me as my hands do now to my body. I, myself, will still continue to be the body, but the Board will be the hands to carry out what I am now doing, so as to enable us to take advantage of the privileges which Europeans endeavour to reserve to themselves. The pakehas are a poverty-stricken people. Suppose a pakeha has only £100 in his pocket, he goes to Maoris and says, lease me such and such a place—perhaps he gets 10,000 acres of the land. These people lease the land to him, and he only originally has £100, with which he pays his agents and his legal expenses and all other costs in connection with the transaction. The deed passes, and he becomes the owner of the land under a deed of lease—he becomes the lessee of the land. Then this European may go and sell his lease, and, although he has only gone to the preliminary expense of £100, he may get £2,000 by selling his lease to some other pakeha.

14. That is a very much longer reply than I wish for to my question.—But you are asking me to disclose the misdemeanours of the pakehas, and I am doing so. All those things should be put a stop to. Now, supposing this European who has leased this land for £100 does not want to sell his lease, but raises money—he raises a loan on the security of the lease from some other pakeha, and buys sheep and cattle to stock the land, pays for fencing and so forth, and he begins to grow up into a big man. In a few years he has £2,000 or £3,000—profit that he has made out of this land; then he begins to purchase the interests of the Crown grantees—purchasing their interests with the money that he has worked out of their own lands. He then eventually develops into the position of being a rangatira over the Maoris who have placed him in a position of independence; but, all the time, he would never so far demean himself as to bring the Maori owners into his house to eat at his own table. Oh, no; he would send them away to the kitchen to have their meals there. Therefore, I say that we want a Board constituted to put a stop to these proceedings on the part of this kind of people.

15. I do not think you can understand my question. I say that there are various descriptions of Crown grants. There is a certain kind of title which is called a land-transfer title. Now, a land-transfer title, as I understand it, is a title of such description that no law in New Zealand can shake it, and do you say that all such titles as that are to be done away with?—No. I say that all such lands as that should be specifically mentioned, and kept out of the operations of the Bill. You will find in the Bill provision made to keep the thermal-springs district from the operations of the Board, or lands purchased by Maoris from Europeans. If you have land of that description, it is for you to say so.

16. Well, now with regard to putting a stop to all further land-purchases by the Crown, is not this advocated: because the Maoris are suffering injury under the present system of land-purchases?—Yes; they suffer under the Crown land-purchase system, and also under the private European system of purchase. They suffer in this way: The Europeans have already acquired 60,000,000 acres of land, 4,000,000 acres only remaining the property of the Maoris, and the 4,000,000 acres that remain the property of the Maoris are lands that are inaccessible and in ungetatable places—in a manner, so to speak, where the sun does not shine.

17. Yes; but, then, remember that there are no purchases by private pakehas now?—What do you say that for? There are. They still continue to purchase, and they still continue to lease.

18. Oh, yes, but that is only in the case of certain descriptions of land where it is competent for them to do so?—Well, I have said that if there are any blocks of land only partly purchased, let the part acquired by purchase be cut off from the unsold portion which will come under the provisions of the Act, and if the owners of the land want to complete the sale to the pakeha let them do it, but do it at once.

19. Well, now, as you say that the reason why it is sought that a stop should be put by the Government to all further purchases of *papatupu* lands—large areas still held by Maoris the title to which is as yet uninvestigated; if that is the reason, do you not think it would be well that provision should be made to that effect in the new Bill which it is proposed to draft?—Yes, that is one of the principal causes of our trouble. That provision should be passed this year.

20. I think I heard you say that this Board Bill had been prayed for by the Maoris, who presented a congratulatory address to the Queen. Now, I think you must be making a mistake in saying that. I have no recollection of it. Was there any mention made whatever in that congratulatory address of such a thing as a Board Bill?—Yes, there was something in the address which was equivalent to that, and this is what the Queen's reply was: She said, "Tell Wi Pere and his fellow-chiefs with regard to what they have said about the lands, that it is a matter which must be for the consideration of my Ministers"; and she gave her instructions to her Ministers.