

Now, this is what the Minister has done : This is the measure that the Minister has framed with a view to carrying out the instructions that he has received from her. I say that this matter is contained in the address to the Queen. I think it says something to this effect : That the balance of the land remaining in the hands of the Maoris should be brought under the Lands for Settlement Act. However, here is the address :—

“Petition to Her Majesty the Queen.—To our Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria.—This our address is an expression of the love and loyalty we, your aboriginal race of New Zealand, entertain toward your Most Gracious Majesty, our mother and protector, as arranged and agreed by us in the Treaty of Waitangi. Greetings to you, for by the grace of God He has prolonged your days to reign and occupy the Throne of your ancestors. We therefore, your loyal children (subjects), are always impressed, and pray that your days may be further prolonged by our Father in Heaven. On the occasion of your accession to the Throne New Zealand was your first infant colony. We therefore pray you, our Most Gracious Majesty, to favour us, your Maori race living in these isles under your sovereignty, that as a memento of your anniversary and prolonged, dignified, and most beneficent reign over us we humbly beseech you to grant us, your Maori subjects of New Zealand, full rights and powers to reserve for ever the surviving portions of our lands, to serve us, your Maori people, as a mother would her children, to be as a succour to us for ever and ever. For we recognise that from the beginning of the colonisation of this colony up to the present, more than sixty million of acres of our lands have passed into the hands of private persons and the Crown ; the area, therefore, of our surviving lands which we, your Maori subjects, still retain at present number five million acres, more or less. We, your Maori subjects, desire therefore to retain and utilise our surviving land ourselves, and any portions that we may not be able to cultivate we are willing and shall be pleased to lease for the purposes of settlement and development of the colony. We, however, have no desire to see our surviving lands pass from our hands, for we all recognise that this shall and will be our only succour to keep us and our heirs together for ever. This, however, our wish, desire, and request, can only be given effect to by passing such legislation prohibiting for ever the sale of our surviving lands to the Crown and private persons. All the causes which brought about our troubles of the past on account of the misunderstandings between both races have ceased, and now in its place reigns peace and quietness equivalent to the state of the many countries and people now living under your Majesty's most beneficent reign. Sufficient ; and long may Her Majesty survive, and may God protect you and all the Royal Family, your Ministers, and Administrators.—God save the Queen !”

21. Very well, then, I take the reply from the witness to mean this : that there is no mention whatever made in this address to the Queen of any Board Bill ; but that the Government itself are the people who first brought forward the idea.

22. *Hon. Mr. Carroll.*] The Board Bill is not the Queen's ; it is the Government's?—Yes, but this is what the Government did by direction of the Queen, that the Government should consider the matters contained in the congratulatory address presented to her by the Natives.

23. *Mr. Kaihau.*] You say that you want the control and administration of all Native lands given to the Board?—Yes, of such lands as are given to it by the owners—such lands as are not given to the, no.

24. Well, do you understand what power and authority it is proposed by the Bill to vest in that Board?—Well, leasing is what they should most generally go in for, in my opinion. Secondly, let them make farms for the Maoris themselves, and then the other provisions in the thing will be that the lands shall be cut up into small areas—I mean to say, supposing a block of land contains 10,000 acres, cut it up into, say, four subdivisions, so that they can put the leases up to auction to the Europeans. That is what they are to do.

25. Then, you do not think this : that the Government is directly responsible for all the ills and disabilities that the Maoris have suffered up to the present, and that if you constitute this Board under Government authority—I do not say this Government, but all Governments—that you will be opening up a further means whereby the Maoris will be made to suffer?—No, because the Board will be directed by the law as to the direction in which they shall act. If they do not do so they will end in finding themselves in gaol. And if the Chairman of the Board has been guilty of any misdemeanour his property can be seized. How is the Board to sell if sales of land are stopped? The only thing that they can do would be to steal the money. Well, if they did that they would bring themselves at once under the hand of the law—they cannot get away from it. They will eat the bread of sorrow and gnash their teeth.

26. Well, you say if the Board acts in that direction it will find itself in gaol—that, of course, means the Government also—because the Government are to be the mana over the Board. Are you going to put the Board in gaol for doing what you have given it power to do—are you going to put it in gaol?—Am I to reply to that? I did not give them any authority to steal the money. I gave them the authority to make money for me, but did not give them authority to make it easier for them to steal. I say if they do that they will end in eating the bread of sorrow.

27. Well, where is the money to come from—money for the necessary administration of the Board?—That is provided for in the Bill.

28. But where is it to be derived from?—There are many ways to that end. Supposing the Board had leased a piece of land for £120. Say the Board had leased a portion of the land belonging to my hapu for the sum of £120 per year, they would have the power to borrow £4,000. The £120 would pay interest on the £4,000, and the £4,000 could be devoted to improving the land, and it will be competent for the Government to vote a sum of money to defray the expense of the Board.

29. Then I understand that the land would be the security for the money to be borrowed in the manner that you have said?—No ; I say that the income and profit derived from the land would be the security.