

bad, and this caused many of the Ngatiraukawa not to come to Otaki, and there were other attractions. I had more than one meeting, because the Ngatiraukawa could not come all at once; and whenever one or two new members came along I had to repeat the explanation of the scheme.

69. Do you think this scheme which has been put before the Commissioners represents the wishes of the Natives?—At one of the meetings I explained the scheme. The first thing objected to by those present was that in the first paragraph. They objected to having the Porirua reserves transferred from the present trustees to the Public Trustee. They gave their reasons, which were pretty strong, and I could not persuade them from it, and I noted their objection to submit to Mr. Stafford. He agreed to have it erased. Then the Natives suggested, instead of there being two governing bodies for Porirua and Otaki, the two reserves should be administered by a Board. Their wish in this direction was complied with. In regard to the construction of the Board under the original scheme, they were all members of the Civil Service. The Natives said, "Why should we not have a voice in the control? Are we not the proper persons, as descendants of the donors?" And they suggested that the Ngatitooa and Ngatiraukawa should have representation on the Board, and it was altered accordingly. The selection would be by popular vote. The other matter objected to by the Natives was that in regard to the selection of children. They said, "The Ngatitooa and Ngatiraukawa ought to have precedence over all." That was not in the original scheme, but it was included. These were the main features objected to by the gathering of those Ngatiraukawa I could get together.

70. In these discussions was the religious question made the subject of particular discussion?—No, it was not; but among other questions they did touch on it by saying, "The Ngatiraukawa do not belong only to the Church of England, we have members of the Roman Catholic Church also among the tribe," and in regard to the Ngatitooa, at Porirua, they said, "We have Ngatitooa belonging to the Mormon sect." Therefore, they said, "We must allow all the children of members of other religions to take advantage of the education to be imparted in this school."

71. Was the question forced on them of having no religions taught?—No; so far as I can tell, this scheme does virtually represent the wishes of Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitooas. I firmly believe it is really the wish of those people. But there is still a strong desire to really get hold of the land since an opening has been afforded for discussion and the expression of opinions.

72. Have you expressed your own ideas to them on this point?—Very forcibly. I have always been telling them that this matter is not a new thing; that several attempts have been made, and that the Natives on every occasion have failed to get the land back. And I have said that this Commission is not only not charged with the function of inquiring into this aspect of the question, but I know the Government is against the land being given back; and, speaking as a member of the House, I know that members of Parliament are entirely against it.

73. Then the real thing was to get a scheme of education they would agree to?—That was the main object.

74. In regard to the necessities of this district, have you any information as to the number of Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitooa children living between Porirua and Rangitikei?—In round numbers, the number of Ngatiraukawa might be put down at six hundred. In regard to Porirua and Waikanae, including Ngatiawa children, I would put the number down at not less than one hundred.

75. (To Mr. Quick): This is excluding foreign tribes; but the foreign tribes would be entitled to the teaching under the scheme. There is no Native school managed by the Education Department within that district.

76. *Mr. Stafford.*] Can you tell how many Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitooa children are attending the public schools within the limit referred to?—I have not been able to obtain exact information in regard to that; but I have asked members of the Ngatiraukawa to obtain from the teacher at every centre the names of such children, and it is our intention to submit them to the Commission later on.

77. Can you understand the objection of the Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitooa to sending their children to the Wairarapa school if the Whitireia funds are spent there?—As a Maori myself, I can fully understand the feelings of the Natives in regard to this matter. Before giving my knowledge in regard to it, I might state that it is quite true what previous Native speakers have said that it was not on account of the old hostilities between themselves and other tribes on the East Coast. The great desire of the Natives now is to try and remove from their memory all past hostilities. But the main cause of the objection arises from their knowledge that their elders gave these lands for a specific purpose—viz., for a school for the advantage of descendants and people of the donors. The Maori custom on the point is this; it is not right and proper (and no chief or set of chiefs belonging to Ngatikahungunu or any other tribe would do it) to accept any land or goods or mats or ornaments if there have not been any causes for that generosity being bestowed upon them. They will refuse to accept benefits if there is no former cause for them between them and the people whom the benefit really belongs to. Natives will only accept benefits from another tribe or chief if there is some prior cause for them taking it. And there is a custom among the Maoris called *ohaki*. The rule governing *ohaki* is this: either during the lifetime of a chief or a number of chiefs, they give something to a member of another tribe or to a member of his own tribe. It may be land; it may be mats, or stones, or clubs. This *ohaki*, or gift, is given for a specific purpose—away from the immediate relatives of the chiefs giving the *ohaki*. The rule after the death of this chief or these chiefs is this: that none of his immediate relatives or their immediate relatives have a right to dispute or take away the property that was given as an *ohaki* before he or they died. That is *ohaki* according to the Maori giving of this land. As regards Bishop Selwyn, the Maoris would look upon his word as an *ohaki*, to be carried out in its entirety after his death; and these are the roots of the great objection the Maori feeling has in regard to the transference of the fund at Whitireia to another place. Another thing is a matter of pride. This land belonged to their elders, and the benefits, if there are any benefits, ought to be given immediately in the midst of the people