I had cautioned the Native Minister, and told him that Titokowaru had distinctly assured me that if this work was continued he would go and disturb the surveyors. (Copy of letter in my possession.) The work was persisted in, and Titokowaru's men carted the tent, equipages, and instruments of the five survey parties to the south of the Waingongoro river. There was a suspension of all operations for some time, until Titokowaru's men began ploughing settlers' lawns and fields south of Waingongoro. That brought matters to a crisis, and resulted in three distinct movements:—The increase of the Armed Constabulary at Waihi for the arrest of the aggressive ploughmen; the resumption of surveys and road-making on the plains under armed protection; and the appointment of a Royal Commission to make reserves for the natives. I went on to the staff of Colonel Roberts as interpreter, and assisted in the arrest of the ploughing prisoenrs and the subsequent large number who fenced across roads as obstruction to the advance of the constabulary. Sir William Fox and Sir Dillon Bell made the reserves of 201,000 acres Crown Granted, and 12,000 acres reserved but not then granted—the first the ones I am treating of. The only thing left was individualisation and partition, and I had it from Sir William Fox himself that that was a work of administration he should not undertake. The individualisation was carried through by Mr Rennell, the Reserves Agent, and by the Native Land Court. The incidence of the former's operations is on the shares of rent; of the latter's on the acreage of land, and was followed by partition; but the basis of both undertakings was the same—the ascertainment of the individual interest in the lands. The Native Land Court made many partitions till stopped under the Act of 1892. The natives have never ceased to clamour for partition, but that is denied them, though clearly their right by precedent. The intervention of the Public Trustee under the Act is fatal to any attempt to obtain it. I have before me a Gazette appointing a Court in 1893. It contains 196 applications for partition, and Judge Ward proceeded to adjudicate, but was stopped by an order of the Government reminding him of the Act of 1892, which forbade the Court to partition the reserves unless the native applicant first obtains a warrant from the Governor. The native does not know how to obtain such a warrant; neither do I. All partition is stopped, and in place of obtaining individual holdings and homes under their Crown Grants, all the natives have is licenses to occupy from the Public Trustee over an area which, if equally divided, would amount, as I have said, to four acres a-piece. The New Zealand Settlement Acts of 1863 and 1865 attempted to promote the settlement of Europeans on native lands confiscated, together with native reserves and military settlements. The West Coast Settlement Reserves Act, 1881, was passed specifically to settle the natives on the reserves exempted from confiscation, and the leasing to Europeans, on temporary lease, of areas not immediately required for that settlement of natives. On those lines, under the principal Act and amendments, settlement proceeded till the Act of 1892 stopped the partition and gave the lessee a perpetual right of renewal over the native reserves. And thus the primary object in making the reserves has been avoided, and the owners prevented from occupying their lands to advantage under the Queen's Crown Grant. I am informed this week by the Reserves Agent that between Oeo and Mimi, north of Waitara and Urenui there are about 30,000 acres not let to Europeans or under occupation license to natives. There are two ways of dealing with native lands. Mr Elwin proposes to compulsorily acquire the fee-simple through the Government; the Hon. the Premier proposes to settle the natives on the portion necessary, and make him instead of an incubus a useful wealth-earning farmer and settler. The "great heart of the nation" will probably decide this coming session or at the polls following. I am sorry to have introduced so prominently the personal equation, and feel inclined to anathematise my "I's," but it was necessary to show that I speak on authority. Let us consider if the peace we are enjoying is owing to the absence of provocation to natives whose chief reasons for going to war were land and women. And let us be honest and concede the rights acquired by ancestral title, the Treaty of Waitangi, the abandonment of the confiscation, and finally the Crown Grant of the Sovereign duly sealed, together with conservation of duly acquired rights of lessees. But in partition lies not only the material welfare of the natives and the destruction of communal habits, but the very life of the native people. The distribution of doles arising from rents to an idle nation means the destruction of that nation, and so would be the distribution of interest on debenutres. We don't want to make the natives pensioners of either the State or their own lands. We want to make them work what portion of the latter is not taken for European settlement, and those not farmers must be made wage-earners. When the freehold-owning native farmer works alongside a European farmer who is a leaseholder he will probably agree to grant the freehold to the latter, not because it will pay him better, but because he will see that it is the only tenure that will wring from him his uttermost effort to do justice to the land. But how can the lessee, who finds such incentive absent in his lease, expect the grantee owner to find it, in a license from his trustee, as insecure as tenure can be? I extract from the last report of the Native Health Officer his decision as regards Taranaki natives: "The Te Atiawas were once amongst the most brave, the most industrious and enterprising of the race; history tells us this. But look at them to-day. Of all the tribes now living they are the most backward and demoralised. I have had more difficulty with them than with any other people. I have had very little done in this district. There are two main causes which keep them back—first, Te Whiti-ism; second, prejudice against the pakeha. The first cause will only end when Te Whiti dies, and it will be useless to do anything radical till then, as by persecution many will fly to his banner. As soon as Te Whiti dies we must turn on the full machinery of the law. (I must not be considered as agreeing with everything said. I think the Premier has shown the better way.—R.S.T.) The second cause will never end till the land laws are adjusted on the West Coast. The making of the natives of the West Coast mere rent-receivers is one of the direct causes of all the evils now existing in this district. It has taken all individual responsbility out of them. They are absolutely lazy because they have not sufficient lands to work. The doing away with Maori landlord rights and making them irresponsible has encouraged extravagance, idleness and debauchery, till Taranaki has become a by-word amongst the tribes. (We see here who has created the environment which has made the natives all Mr Elwin pictures them, and half-castes by law are natives.—R.S.T.) The natives do not care about their homes and their persons, they do not care to improve, for there is no incentive. Their heritage has been taken away from them, and now in the abandon of despair they say, 'What is the good? The Public Trustee has eaten the heart of the melon, and we are given the rind.' They are bitter against everything European, because their lands were confiscated, and the remainder they cannot occupy without paying rent for it. The drink question is the worst in the colony. The King Country is nothing to it. Hardly a tangi passes but that large quantities are consumed by men, women and children. (There has been much improvement in this respect lately.—R.S.T.) The sights one sees are most painful, debasing, and past all description. They say matters are improving. I suppose they are, but at Parihaka these things still go on unchecked." The Health Officer concludes with 14 pressing needs, of which No. 12 is "To hasten individualisation of native lands." (P.P.H., 31, 1904.) There is another very serious grievance arising from this denial of partition to the natives. The exemption of the Europeans from payment of land tax is absolute if that individual does not own more than £500 value in land. The exemption of the native owner is positively absent. If a native owns but enough to bury him in he pays land tax. It is deducted from his rents by the Public Trustee, who hates the job. The tax is levied on the big grants and subdivisions of the Native Land Courts. Partition would do ample justice. I take the following from the report of Public Trustee to Native Affairs Committee, last year, P.P.I., 3A, 1904: "The natives have a legitimate grievance in respect of the land tax. It applies to Europeans and natives alike where lands are held in trust for several owners, but as there are few estates of large size held in trust for a great many Europeans the tax falls heavily on natives where a large grant is held in trust for many owners. In such cases the amount of land tax paid by each native is out of all proportion to his small income or interest in the reserve. This should be altered in fairness to the natives, especially if the lands are in future to pay full local rates." On the passing of the Native Rating Act of last session I attempted to get legislation passed to remedy the injustice the Public Trustee mentions. I even went so far as to petition the Governor to withhold his consent from the Rating Bill till justice had been done. But it was considered that the session was too far advanced for any more legislation to be introduced, and the Governor's consent was given. (Governor's letter before me.) Honorable members might assist the natives in this, now the natives pay full local rates. I am sure the people are with me. It appears to me that the ends of justice and the protection of European and native on these re-