

join them. On the frontpiece may be seen King Mahuta and those members of his Council who have been chosen to go to



PAFARA TE TUHI.

Wellington in support of the Bill, which Mr. Henare Kaihua is holding in his hand, and which the Maoris now claim as Mahuta's Bill. The Bill, which was drawn in 1899 by Mr. John St. Clair, Mahuta's solicitor, and approved by the Crown Law Draftsman, Dr. Fitchett, was introduced last session by the Premier, but was thrown out on second reading on the motion of Mr. Lewis, M.H.R. It provided that the Maoris, in all cases where their lands were held under perfect titles to not more than 20 natives, could, under proper protection against fraud, alienate their lands. In cases of land owned by over 20 natives, they had the option of subdividing the block, or the land could be administered through a Council of Maoris and Europeans appointed by the Governor. The principal amendments embodied by Mahuta's Council in the Bill, are in the direction of separating the Administrative functions of the Council from the Judicial.

The Local Council is to consist of one European judge and two native associates. In matters of law the decision of the European is to overrule that of the native assessors, but in Maori customs, if the two Maori members are unanimous, they are to overrule the judge, but if divided, the judge is to have a casting vote. Instead of the present cumbersome and expensive procedure of the Native Land Court, Native District or Hapu Committees are to be formed to investigate and report to the Council, if no caveat is lodged against such report, the Council is to make an order thereon. There will also be an Appellate Court consisting of the Presidents of the District Councils and an equal number of elected Maori members, who will hear appeals from the decisions of the District Councils, and regulate their procedure as nearly as possible to that of the Supreme Court of Appeal. Instead of the Native Land Court procedure, by which



HONANA MAIOHO.

numbers of Maoris are kept in country towns for months awaiting their cases being called, the District Council will hear cases in which caveats are lodged against the report of the