

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS AND SPEECHES.

4.—*Extract from Report of Mr. Parris, District Land Purchase Commissioner, dated 16th July, 1860.*R. Parris, Esq., Report,
16 July, 1860.

This land was first offered to the Government on the 8th March, 1859, before a large meeting of Natives, assembled to meet His Excellency the Governor in the Town of New Plymouth; present, His Excellency the Governor, the Native Minister, the Native Secretary and Chief Commissioner, His Honor the Superintendent, Lieut.-Colonel Murray, Rev. Mr. Whiteley, and a number of settlers. Among the Natives present were all the leading men of the Waitara, Puketapu, Ngamotu, and some of the Taranaki Tribes. After the usual salutations had been exchanged, and two or three short addresses to His Excellency the Governor, Teira rose and said, "Listen all present, both Europeans and Maories, I am going to offer the Governor my land." He then commenced to name the boundary, during which there was not the slightest interruption. Having finished, he put the question to His Excellency the Governor, whether he would consent to buy his land. There was a pause while His Excellency was consulting with the Native Minister and the Chief Commissioner, before answering the question. In the interim, a Native called Piripi got up to propose that a block of land, inland of Teira's, in which he (Piripi) has some claims, should be added to Teira's, and sold as one block. This proposal was instantly opposed by Patukakariki and several others; when another man (Hemi Kuka) got up to offer his land at Onaero, which caused some confusion; and seeing it was likely to interrupt Teira's question, I requested Hemi Kuka to sit down, which he did; Piripi was still standing, and Wm. King rose to put him down, when Teira said to him, "*E Wi, noho koe ki te whenua, maku e whakaoti te tikanga a Piripi*," (Wm. King, you sit down, I will stop Piripi.) Wm. King sat down: and Teira, addressing himself to Piripi, said, "I shall not consent for the land which I am offering, to be entangled with any other; when mine is sold, you can do as you like with yours." Quietness having been restored, Teira again put the following question to His Excellency the Governor, "Will you consent to buy my land?" His Excellency replied through the Chief Commissioner, "If the land is yours, I consent to buy it"; upon which Teira walked up to His Excellency with a Kaitakamat, and laid it down at his feet, as a token that the land had departed from him. Seeing there was no interruption, some Natives present said, "*Kua riro a Waitara*" (Waitara is gone): when Wm. King rose, and in a very disrespectful and sullen tone said, "Governor, there is no land for you," and left most abruptly and unceremoniously with his followers, without offering the slightest explanation. Previously to His Excellency's departure from the settlement, I was instructed to investigate Teira's claim carefully and cautiously, and not to do anything, or encourage any move on the part of the sellers, which would in any way be calculated to bring into hostile collision the two parties: and from time to time to report the result of my investigation. * * *

In September last, the peace negotiations having been concluded, I went to Waitara, to have an interview with William King and his people, on the subject of resuming the negotiation for Teira's land. I spent this day and many others with them, endeavouring to induce them to meet Teira's party, and discuss quietly and deliberately the claims to the block of land: but they never would consent to do it. I therefore was obliged to get information from other Natives, (and strange to say some who are now opposing the Government, Hapurona and others,) to compare with the representations of the selling party; and the information which I obtained fully corroborated the statements of the selling party. Hapurona on one occasion had a disagreement with W. King, and declared that he never would support the opposition. The land was occupied by Tamati Raru's and Rawiri Raupongo's people, before the Ngatiawa migration to the South, and their Pa was at Pukekohatu on the land; whilst William King and his people were living on the North side of the river, and had their Pa at Manukorihi. On returning from the South, in 1848, they asked permission of Teira and his father to be allowed to build their Pa on the South side, which question had been submitted to a Committee who had decided that the South side was preferable to the North, in case of an invasion from Waikato. Since their return from the South, none of the land sold by Teira and party has ever been cultivated by William King's people.

Having been authorised to pay an instalment for the land, I appointed the 29th November for that purpose, and gave William King a week's notice of my intention to do so. On the 28th he came to Town with about thirty followers, all armed; on hearing they were at the Kauwau Pa, I went to them, and prevailed on William King to remain until the following day, and supplied them with food for that purpose: and on the 29th they met Teira's party, before His Honor the Superintendent, Lieut.-Colonel Murray, Rev. Mr. Whiteley, and other authorities of the place: when he distinctly admitted, in answer to a question put to him by myself, that the land was Teira's and his supporters, but that he would not allow them to sell it.

On payment of the instalment of the 29th November last, I read over the boundary of the block of land, in the presence of William King and his party, to which was appended the following, as instructions from His Excellency the Governor:

"If any other person can prove that he owns any part of the land within the boundaries above described, his claim will be respected, and he will be allowed to *retain* or *sell* the same as he may think proper."

No definite claim was ever preferred, at this or any other time, and the only position they have ever taken is the arbitrary one of assuming the right to oppose the sale of any land, even by the rightful owners.

Rawiri Raupongo, an extensive claimant in the Waitara district, was frequently forcing the sale of this land upon me privately, being, as he always assured me, afraid to move publicly in the matter lest he should be served the same as Rawiri Waiau was; and the opposing party for a time had an impression that he was not a consenting party, for one of William King's principal men, Komene