

Hoani Meihana said: I also am opposed to the sale of any land on the other side of Oroua. I am willing that the whole of the disputed block should go, but our title to the other side of the River (Oroua) is disputed by no one. We must keep this as a reserve for our children, and for their children after them. We must have it partitioned, and get Crown grants for it. My determination to sell is confined to the disputed lands. All the tribes recognize our right to the land in this vicinity also (Puketotara). I shall therefore ask for a reserve here.

Kerei Te Panau and several others addressed His Honor, chiefly with reference to the impounded rents, and urged him to allow them to receive such of the payments as would not disturb the general question as to title.

Dr. Featherston replied at considerable length. He necessarily went over much old ground, and repeated a great deal of what he had said at other meetings. He stated his willingness to allow the rents to be paid, provided the whole of the people were agreed on the subject. He had not yet talked with Ihakara, nor with the Ngatiapa. They had all heard John Mason's (Meihana) opinion. While men like Mason urged him not to pay the rent, and warned him of the consequences, it would be manifestly wrong to yield the point except on very strong grounds. He could, therefore, give no final answer at present, but would consult the other chiefs and their tribes and would let them know his decision at the next general meeting. His Honor expressed his satisfaction at the manly and straightforward manner in which John Mason and Tapa had spoken, and stated his own firm conviction that before very long the whole of the Natives interested would consent to the proposed sale of the land to the Crown, and would in this way get rid of a very vexed and troublesome question. The sale of the land would benefit them in other ways, for it would soon have a large European population settled on it, and fresh avenues of trade would be opened up to them. The presence of a large number of friendly Pakeha settlers in their midst, would be as great a source of protection to the loyal Natives as to the European inhabitants on the coast. He felt sure that the sale of the block would be mutually beneficial to both Natives and Europeans. He had never sought to purchase it, but as it had been voluntarily offered to him as the Queen's Commissioner, in the first place by the Ngatiapa, and afterwards by the Ngatiraukawa and Rangitane, he intended to do as Hoani Meihana and Tapa had recommended,—“to hold it fast.” He was aware that so long as he held it fast there was no danger of any fighting. If he should let it go, it was impossible to say how soon there might be strife and contention about the ownership. Peeti had made very fair proposals about the payment of the rents, so as to prevent a renewal of ill feeling; but he was by no means sure that all concerned would agree to these proposals. He was glad to find that a better feeling was beginning to manifest itself, and he felt convinced that when the time should come for receiving and distributing the money, the tribes would meet each other in a spirit of mutual forbearance. It was hardly necessary to repeat what he had so often said, that he had made himself responsible for the rents, and that whatever might happen in the interim, they need have no fear about the ultimate payment of all the arrears. He was willing to give the people every opportunity of discussing the important question now before them, and it was for this object he had been attending the various meetings on the coast. He was quite willing to wait patiently till every member of each tribe had consented to the terms of sale; but as the people were beginning to manifest impatience about the rents, his own decided opinion was, that the sooner the whole question was settled, and price paid, the better for the district and all parties concerned in the matter. With this view, Mr. Buller would remain in the district, and would attempt to arrange the details of the purchase. He would himself visit the district again shortly, and would be prepared to meet them at any place they might name. He was not anxious to press the negotiation forward with too much haste, but was prepared to close finally with the sellers as soon as they were unanimously agreed.

His Honor's speech, which occupied more than an hour, was listened to attentively throughout.

Mr. Buller, R.M., then addressed the meeting, after which a discussion ensued which lasted during the rest of the day. It was resumed in the evening and continued to a late hour.

Superintendent's Office, Wellington,  
30th June, 1866.

I. E. FEATHERSTON.

#### Enclosure 4 in No. 6.

NOTES of a Meeting at Lower Manawatu, on the 7th and 8th December, 1865.

His Honor having arranged to hold a meeting with the Lower Manawatu Natives on the 7th December, they assembled accordingly in the Court House; but a disturbance arising shortly after the meeting had opened, owing to the supply of grog at the neighbouring public-house, His Honor immediately withdrew, and the people dispersed.

On the recommendation of several influential Natives of the district, the license of the house in question was shortly afterwards cancelled.

Ihakara (who had been present at the meeting) followed Dr. Featherston to the Accommodation House, at the mouth of the river, on the following day, and sought a further interview.

After listening to a detailed account of what had passed at the various meetings, Ihakara expressed himself strongly opposed to the payment of the rents, on the ground that it would re-open the whole question at issue between the tribes. He argued, that if His Honor should concede this point, it would be a violation of the compact mutually entered into, and that he would thenceforth consider himself liberated from his engagement to sell the land to the Crown. He declared his determination to arrange the terms as speedily as possible; and stated that, so far as he had been able to ascertain, nearly all the men of influence in the tribe were favorable to the immediate sale of the land. He thought it probable, however, that some would hold out in their opposition to the sale, and that thus the final arrangements might be considerably delayed.

At the close of this interview, Ihakara handed over to Dr. Featherston the caricature previously alluded to, and expressed a hope that the author of it would be discovered and exposed.

Superintendent's Office, Wellington,  
30th June, 1866.

I. E. FEATHERSTON.