

only lasted one week and ended for ever. Neither did the Governor's word go forth that he would take the land in payment for their sins; neither did any proclamation come to us to say that the land was taken by the Government by virtue of conquest; on the contrary, we have remained in occupation of the land up to the present time. It was not until we made application to have our titles investigated under the Native Lands Act that the Government sought out means whereby they could create difficulties about (or interfere with) our lands. The Court was first advertised to examine into our claims on the 12th September, 1866; we assembled, but to no purpose, for it did not sit. Secondly, it was advertised to sit on the 29th October of the same year; we again assembled and it did not sit. Thirdly, it was advertised for the 3rd of July, 1867; we assembled, seven hundred in number, but in vain, for again it did not sit. The Court was advertised a fourth time in this month of March, 1868, on the 9th day; we again assembled and it did not sit, for they, viz. the Government, said that if we left the matter in the hands of the Court we would come to grief, because they said the Court was theirs and that we did not apply for it (or it had not come in answer to our applications, but to do the bidding of the Government). We were then afraid, and we said the only reason why we applied for the Court was in order to get Crown Grants issued to us; consequently we became alarmed and we withdrew our lands from its jurisdiction, so that they might not be heard under this law, because of the endless and innumerable snares with which the Government have beset us for the purpose of bringing trouble upon us.

Sir, we are endeavouring to find out the reason why we and the Hauhaus are both so severely punished. The people of Taranaki, Waikato, Whakatane, Opotiki, and other places where blood was ruthlessly shed, were not so severely punished as this; those tribes committed great crimes, they both committed murders and persisted in fighting for years, but the people of this district did not commit such crimes as those people, for, behold you, there were no murders in this district, neither was there any plundering, but only the worship of the false god, and the fighting only lasted one week. Look at the enormity of the sin of Waikato in comparison with that of this people, and the land of these people was not all taken, neither were they kept in confinement or taken to another island, while, on the other hand, this people were severely punished at the first but the land was not confiscated; it was not until last year that we heard that the Government were going to take the land. Our impression is, that as the blood has long ago been dried up, what is the force of asking for land to be given now, inasmuch as the sin of the people has been long ago atoned? Suffice it we should have been unaware of the existence of a Government in this country had it not been for the fact of their (officers) making monthly visits to this place for the purpose of teasing us into making our lands over to them without any recompense.

Hearken to the word of His Excellency Sir George Grey, which he himself told us at the termination of hostilities in this district. This is what he said: "This side of this island will be spared in consideration of the strenuous endeavours of the Maori chiefs to put down evil; the other side of the island will not be spared, because the chiefs did not use their influence to put down evil." We have therefore steadfastly looked at his word (had confidence in his promise). This is what Mr. McLean said, "Bring back your relations (who had fled); for if there arise again any disturbance in this part of the country, I will take the land into my hands." Sir, behold you these doings; vengeance is being taken on us, the people who did not sin, for the great sin of the other tribes. Sir, save us and our lands, and the lands of our relations who committed crime. Give you effect to the promise of Governor Grey.

Enough, this ends. From your affectionate children under the rule of the Queen,

WI HARONGA AND OTHERS.

I certify the foregoing to be a true translation of an address and petition sent by the Natives of Poverty Bay to His Excellency Sir George F. Bowen, dated 14th March, 1868.

J. W. PREECE,  
Licensed Interpreter.

## No. 2.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. J. W. PREECE to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

Crescent Chambers,  
Shortland Street, 25th April, 1868.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward to your Excellency a petition from one thousand and ninety-seven Natives residing along the East Coast from Hicks Bay and East Cape to Poverty Bay, which they have sent up to me for that purpose.

Your Excellency will perceive that the prayer of the petition is similar to that of the one which I presented to your Excellency some little time back. I would state, for your Excellency's information, that the present petition is the result of a number of meetings which the Natives have had since the sitting of the Court, and that they inform me the names were signed, in all cases, in open *runanga*; although in some cases one man would perhaps write fifty or more names, the parties were all present, and it was done with their concurrence. The petition itself is the unanimous expression of opinion of every one on the Coast, with the exception of a chief named Henare Potao, who refused to sign it, stating as his reason that he had written to the Government for the loan of some money, and said he feared if they saw his name to the petition he would not get it.

Your Excellency will perceive that the petitioners request that the Native Lands Court should sit, and not the Land-Taking Court; in explanation of which I would state that it is impossible for the Native Lands Court to sit in that district in any other capacity than that of a Land-Taking Court, unless the East Coast Land Titles Investigation Acts be repealed. I would therefore, on behalf of the Natives of the district, request that there be no sitting of the Native Lands Court in that district until after the General Assembly shall have had an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject, and that all the correspondence on the subject, together with all the petitions of the Natives, be laid before the Legislature for that purpose.