

block, the Ngatiraukawa tribe, professing to have claims thereon, convened a meeting at Te Whetu, to which it was deemed advisable to send Mr. Young, who reported that about 170 Natives were present, some of whom were delegates from the Hauhau country, and, after three days' discussion, the Hauhau party concluded by remarking that the block of land in question must be settled by the Rotorua Natives, and by those of the Te Whetu party who had interest in the soil, and that it was a mistake to summon them (the Hauhaus) from a long distance to take part in a matter with which they had really nothing whatever to do. It should be stated that Arekatera te Puni, with whom originated the offer of the Rotohokahoka Block to Government for sale, and to whom a deposit of £150 was paid, and whose business it was to be present at the meeting referred to, to argue down the opposition, failed from fear or some other cause to appear, but Te Kepa te Marama, a chief of the Ngatienukukopako tribe, who also received a deposit of £150 on the block, manfully withstood the hostile attitude, assumed by the Ngatiraukawa in relation to the Rotahokahoka, and told them in direct terms that the Government should have the land, and that he should accompany the surveyor, and that his interests would be unceasing until the final settlement of the purchase. Te Kepa's determined standing had, Mr. Young is of opinion, the desired effect upon the opponents, and we are glad to record that some of the opposition party are now anxious to assist in the survey.

At Whakatane, we met the chiefs Rangitukehu and Tiopira, with whom we held a lengthy conference regarding lands at Rangitaiki, previously leased to Government. We arranged to convene a large meeting at their settlement Kokohinau, for the purpose of bringing together the various conflicting elements, in the hope of satisfactorily settling all the differences on the spot. At the request of Rangitukehu, the meeting has been delayed until August next. The Whakatane tribes were anxious to deal with us for the sale of certain lands claimed by them; but these lands being outside the boundary lines of our district, we referred them to Mr Wilson. At Te Awa-a-te Atua, numerous meetings were held with Wiremu Kepa te Rangipuwhe, Te Wikiriwhi Te Tuahu, Arama Karaka, and other influential chiefs, together with their people. The subjects put before the meetings were the leases of Kaingaroa and Rerewhakitū, and it was agreed that a day should be fixed by consent of Government for the investigation of title, to insure the validity of leases. It was also proposed to sell to Government the Military Award Block at Matata, claimed by the Tuhourangi, containing upwards of 4,000 acres.

Next in order is our visit to Taupo, where we were met by the chiefs Topia Turoa, Matuahu, Te Heuheu, and Paurini, accompanied by all the surrounding tribes. After a series of preliminary meetings were held at Tapuāharuru, on the leases and purchases generally, local gatherings took place at Omatangi, Opepe, and Runanga, where were offered some of the signatures of the grantees of Runanga No. 2, and Tauhara middle. We arranged also a lease of Runanga No. 1, from certain counter claimants, and completed the title of the Taharua Block. Discussions relative to the Tatua leases, east and west, Mohaka; Oruanui, and Parekarangi, we were unable to complete, being suddenly summoned by the Under-Secretary to meet the Hon. Native Minister at Maketu. Thither we proceeded, and were present at daily meetings held by Sir Donald MacLean and the main hapus of the district, for the purpose of enquiring into the nature and extent of the Arawa grievances, which we are inclined to think were of the most delusive character, and brought forward with the pure desire of extorting Government money, which to the credit of Sir Donald MacLean be it recorded, they utterly failed in obtaining. In justice to the Arawas generally, it becomes necessary to draw the line of demarcation between the two prominent sections, namely, the "anti-leasing and selling" party, and those who sell and lease. Of the former the great leading personage is Te Pokiha Taranui, more commonly called Fox, a man of indomitable pride, with very small intellect, which is, as we found, almost always devoted to self, but he makes up for mental deficiency by the adoption of schemes, irrespective of argument and reason. He carries with him a small section of the Ngatipikiao tribe, named Ngatitekakenga, who are known to possess but small influence and but very little land. The Ngatipikiao, who are with the Government in the land scheme, comprise a large majority under the old and influential chiefs, Te Puehu Taihorangi, Te Mapu, Rota Rangihoro, Te Matangi, Pita te Taretoroa, Wi Kepa, Hira, Rirituku, Eruini Te Tikao, Mita Tahoka, Hona te Hauiti and others. With this large section of the Ngatipikiao range the Waitaha, Tapuika, Ngatipakenga, Ngatimoko, Ngatituara, Ngatirangitiki Ngatihinewai, te Patuwai and others. In fact the real landholders generally throughout the Arawa country favour both selling and leasing, and it is found that the opposing party as a rule have little or no land to sell or lease. Consequently the genuine owners of the soil viewed the acts and interference of the clamorous anti-sellers with extreme bitterness. We ought perhaps to say that the conclusions we have arrived at with respect to the points mooted in this report are based upon unbiassed observations, we having full opportunity of ascertaining from time to time of judging as to the position of things, and the bearing of men, chiefs and people, on the land question, and we have always found it better never to swerve from what we consider right, and to set our faces against the system of bribes. By this simple adherence to principle we are certain that the Government have been saved many thousands of pounds, and an abiding lesson has been taught to these Arawa tribes that truth and honesty are more potent than all the low scheming they have endeavoured to bring to their aid in their land negotiations.

During our present visit to Taupo, meetings have been held at various places regarding the Mohaka Block of 47,000 acres, which was partly settled before Sir Donald MacLean at Napier, one of us being present, Te Tatua, Tauhara North, Parekarangi, and Oranui. The tone of feeling with regard to all of these places was in favour of Government, and although Henare Matua and other Hawke's Bay celebrities have their written epistles and oral messages to Taupo Natives, stirring them up to oppose any attempt on the part of Government to secure lands in this district by purchase or lease, the machinations of the Napier chiefs proved unsuccessful, and their gratuitous opinions treated with profound indifference.

We have felt it our duty to encourage, as much as possible, the desire of the Taupo tribes to educate their children, and we have impressed upon them the advisableness and necessity of setting