

We next come to the

WAIMATE PLAINS.

This is the block out of the survey of which the present difficulty has arisen. The Waimate Plains extend from about the Wahamoko Stream (the boundary of our present survey) on the north to Waingongoro on the south. It will be observed that between the southern boundary of the Opunake Block at Taungatara, and the northern boundary of the Waimate Plains Block at Wahamoko, there is a piece of land comprising about ten thousand acres. This is part of the country originally belonging to the Taranaki Tribe. It is confiscated land, unaffected by any promises excepting one to Hone Pihama of fifteen hundred acres, and another to his people of similar extent. It has not been dealt with in the present survey, because it is within the limits of the Taranaki tribal boundary, and it was not deemed prudent at present to carry the survey beyond the boundaries of the Ngatiruanui Tribe.

In regard to the Waimate Plains Block, I may state shortly the conclusions to which I have come, as follows :—

1. That the land is confiscated land.

2. That, excepting what matters are contained in the instructions to Mr. Parris and Major Brown, no promises have been made to the former owners. An impression prevailed in the minds of many people who were both well-informed and well-meaning, that promises had been made, which were being practically abrogated by the present survey. The only person in the Government service who is aware of anything which might have given rise to this belief is Mr. Parris. He states as follows :—“ At a time, I believe, prior to the issue by Sir D. McLean of his general instructions of 20th January, 1872, I made a proposal to the former owners of the Waimate Plains to the following effect: That if they would agree to concentrate all their people between the Waingongoro and Inaha Streams, and settle down there, I would give them the block of land comprised between those two natural boundaries. In discussing this proposition with them I found it necessary to consider the claims of the people living at the settlements named in the margin.* These settlements were outside the block which I proposed to give them back, but within the limits of the block which I proposed they should abandon. I went so far as to promise that I would give them a small reserve round each of these two settlements; but the offer was not accepted, and I considered the matter at an end, because they refused my terms. Other than that I know of no offer, promise, act, or circumstance which could be construed into a waiver of the Crown's rights to the whole or any portion of the block in question. Under the instructions given to me by Sir Donald McLean, I was authorized to offer to the Natives ample reserves for themselves, and as *takoha* (compensation or gratuity) a sum not exceeding 5s. an acre for such land as might be retained by Government.”

I may add that both Mr. Parris and Major Brown assure me that on no occasion have they ever made known to the Natives the instructions given to them by Sir Donald McLean, regarding them as confidential; at the same time there can be no doubt that they are now generally aware of the fact that the Government propose to give both ample reserves and money payment.

In dealing with the question the following facts should be borne in mind :—

1. That under Major Brown's instructions the *takoha* was increased for special purposes by 50 per cent.
2. That the present action of the Government in regard to reserves was very much more liberal than previous promises might have warranted, or previous dealings with confiscated lands might have led them to expect.
3. That before starting the survey I twice interviewed Titokowaru, Manaia, and their respective people, and informed them distinctly that large reserves would be made; their burial-places, cultivations, and fishing-places would be respected; and, in addition thereto, they would receive money as *takoha* from the Government, to assist them in fencing their reserves and otherwise promoting their social improvement.
4. That Manaia, one of the principal owners, and all his people, accept the situation, and are prepared to act in a friendly spirit to the Government; so, also, Pumipi and his people at Mawhitiwhiti are in favour of a settlement upon our terms. Titokowaru himself thoroughly understands the position of affairs, as is proved by these two facts—allowing the survey to go on without interruption for nearly nine months, and receiving from Major Brown, the officer in charge, on account of *takoha*, or compensation, over £500.

SOUTHERN CONFISCATION BLOCK.

Next in order I will take the country lying between the Waingongoro and Waitotara Rivers. This block, for convenience of reference, I shall call the “Southern Confiscation Block.” The Waitotara River forms the present defined boundary of the confiscated area on the extreme south. It is true that at one point the line crosses the river to the south and includes lands lying to the south of the river. Some dispute exists about this, but nothing serious, and the whole matter admits of an easy solution. Between the two rivers, Waitotara and Waingo-

* Te Kanae and Pukekohe.