

3. *The Chairman.*] What is the purport of it?—The grounds upon which his wife's claims are based.

4. *Hon. Mr. Nahe.*] Have the petitioners sent to the Government before this?—Yes; on the 3rd of June, 1878, and in 1879 two letters were received.

5. Did the Government ask the people—the Natives of Turanga—or have the Natives themselves made any inquiries respecting the petitioners' claims?—A minute was placed upon the papers to the effect that Mr. Cunningham himself is alone to blame for the position. From a subsequent paper it would appear that the Native Minister intended to see personally to the matter when in Waikato.

6. If it is found that the petitioners had claims there, and that they have been deprived of their lands in the Poverty Bay District, and if they have received no compensation whatever, would there be any steps taken to relieve them?—That is a matter for the House to decide.

7. *Mr. McMin.*] What is the general system of giving notice in cases of this sort?—The notices relating to the investigating of the titles to land are advertised and published throughout the district. The petitioners were fully aware of what was going on in Poverty Bay, but apparently did not think that the interests were of sufficient importance to necessitate their going there to attend the Court. I gather from the correspondence that it is only the fact that Mrs. Wylie has received 400 acres of land that made the petitioners look out for their interests.

8. Were the claims put in for the blocks named in the petition advertised before the Court sat?—All the information that would enable a Native to identify a block is given. This petition refers to other lands than those passed through the Native Land Court. Such, for instance, is the township of Gisborne.

9. That would not be advertised in any way?—Yes. The necessary information was widely made known.

10. That would be land included in the deed of cession. There would be no advertising with regard to that?—The claims would be heard before a Compensation Court, the sittings of which were fully advertised for a long period. If these writers had claims, these claims should have been brought before that Court, when they could have established them.

*The Chairman:* As far as I gather from the correspondence, they had a general idea that claims were being investigated in that district; but no specific claims to blocks were brought under their notice. I do not know whether that is the correct impression, but it is the one on my mind.

Mrs. KATE WYLIE sworn and examined.

12. *The Chairman.*] The Committee is desirous of obtaining your evidence on this petition. Are the petitioners related to you?—Yes; they are my younger sisters.

13. What is the nature of the petitioners' claims?—They make a claim because they are left out of lands.

14. I do not mean that. What is the nature of their claims?—Their claim to the land is identical with mine. We claim through our ancestors down to our mother's time.

15. Are you speaking now of the Town of Gisborne?—I am speaking of Gisborne, Whataupoko, and all those blocks included in the petition.

16. Have the claims of yourself and those entitled with you ever been determined by the Court?—Our claims have been investigated by the Court.

17. What was the decision of the Court with reference to your claims?—When the blocks came before the Court, the claimants stood up and asserted their claims on genealogical grounds, and my name was included amongst the owners. My sisters' names were not included. When I stood up to put in my sisters' names in these lands, the other Natives objected, as they were not living in the district, but were away in Waikato.

18. Did your sisters make any claims themselves?—To the Court?

19. Yes?—When Kaiti was going through the Court, a letter came from them to Judge Munro. Their case was then entertained, and they were included as owners.

20. Is that the only case in which they made a direct claim to have their names inserted?—That is the only piece.

21. Why did not they claim in the other cases?—Perhaps they were too young, and did not think of it. Those lands that were conducted by myself through the Court I have got my sisters included amongst the owners, such as in Puketapu. In the Arai, Ropata Whakapuhia conducted that case through the Court, and from that block they are excluded. I was the only one of us admitted.

22. Did they claim then to have their names included?—No; I do not think they knew that the lands were going through the Court at the time.

23. How old were they at that time?—One was about seventeen and the other about fifteen years of age.

24. Where were they residing at the time?—At Waikato. One was married at seventeen and the other at fifteen.

25. Did you make them acquainted with the fact that the Court was going to sit and determine claims in which they were interested?—In some of the lands I informed them. That was with regard to those that went through the Court subsequently. Those that went through the Court first I did not inform them of.

26. What notice did they take of the information?—They replied by letter, and asked me not to leave them out of the blocks.

27. Did you succeed in getting them put in?—Those lands that I got through the Court myself, I got my sisters included as owners along with myself; but they were only small pieces. Other pieces, like Whataupoko, Raharuhi Rukupo got put through the Court. He only included of us myself and my brother. In the Town of Gisborne, when it was dealt with, the result was the same.

28. With respect to these lands in which their names have been inserted, are their claims valuable?—They are only small pieces—perhaps one acre to each person.