

1877.

I have finished south of the Waingongoro, to cross that river and settle the question of the Waimate Plains.”

Appendix B,
No. 8, p. 31

Major Brown then went on under the same plan with the acquisition of two other blocks (the Waingongoro-Patea, and Moumahaki), which covered about 178,000 acres : so that, adding this area to the 185,000 acres previously acquired by Mr. Parris, about 363,000 acres situate within the boundaries of the confiscation were got under the Instructions of 1872 and 1876. This quantity, however, does not include any part of the Waimate Plains, and it is with regard to these that we have now to ask Your Excellency's attention.

VI.—THE SURVEY OF WAIMATE PLAINS.

Major Brown had devoted the two first years of his holding office mainly to the task of endeavouring to come to some arrangement with the Natives for the cession of the Waimate Plains. By the end of 1877 his plans were so far advanced that Titokowaru had become the recipient of several sums of money, paid to him expressly as *takoha* for his *mana* on these lands ; and Major Brown was himself convinced that the Natives had become familiar with and reconciled to the idea that, on the conditions contained in Sir D. McLean's instructions, the making of sufficient reserves and the payment of a reasonable *takoha*, the Plains would shortly pass into the hands of the Government.

Major Brown,
Report, 5th
December 1877.

Williams, Tele-
gram, 28th
November 1877.

Major Brown,
Report, 19th
December 1877.

Telegram,
H. T. Clarke, 3rd
December 1877.

Major Brown,
Report, 5th
December 1877.

Acting upon this conviction, Major Brown took measures with the approval of the Government, for the survey of the Plains. A survey party was organized and got ready for work by the end of November 1877. When this was known, the question was discussed at Parihaka, and Titokowaru was urged to stop the survey. He refused, “on the ground that the Natives had gained nothing by the King Movement, or by taking matters into their own hands.” At a meeting of the Ngatiruanui on the Plains, it was decided that Cape Egmont lighthouse ought not to be opposed. The survey was objected to by many ; but “Titokowaru was moderate, and only wished to know what lands were reserved for them before the surveyors crossed the Waingongoro.” Major Brown, who had been in constant communication with the tribes, was so favourably impressed with the demeanour of the Natives, that he was about to begin the work, when on the 3rd of December 1877 he received a telegram from the Under-Secretary, informing him that “the Hon. the Native Minister (Mr. Sheehan) requests that you will suspend the survey of the Waimate Plains till you are further instructed.” Immediately on receipt of this, Major Brown replied expressing his regret at the stoppage, from which he inferred that the Native Minister distrusted his judgment. “About six months ago,” he continued, “I informed the leading Natives that as soon as the summer came I should commence the survey of the Plains. In October I sent them word that I would commence in November, and I was only prevented by the want of surveyors. During the whole time there was no serious opposition.”

Major Brown,
Report, 5th
December 1878.

Major Brown,
Evidence, Q. 710.

On what ground, or by whose advice opposed to the advice of Commissioner Brown, the Government acted in stopping the survey, there is little in the official records to show. The only trace we have seen is in a minute in the margin of a curious document in the Native Office, amongst letters and telegrams relating to the survey. This document is not recorded in the usual manner, has no date of official receipt, nor any indication to show how it got into the Government offices. It is in the handwriting of Mr. R. T. Blake, who had been employed by Sir Donald McLean as an agent on the West Coast ; who (according to Major Brown) had endeavoured to excite opposition to the survey among the Natives, and whom he had bribed by the promise of £500, with the approval of the previous Ministry, to assist him ; but who, instead of helping him, is accused by Major Brown of having told the Natives, on Mr. Sheehan's authority, that he (Major Brown) was not authorized by Sir G. Grey or the Native Minister to take the survey on to the Waimate Plains. The document to which we are now referring is dated 10th November 1877, and appears to consist of copies of two telegrams addressed to Mr. Blake by Takiora Grey, then known as Mrs. Blake and who is now Mrs. Dalton. One of these telegrams, among other things not material, tells Mr. Blake that “Major Brown says the survey is to cross over to the other