

1879.

Mackay and
Blake, Report
of meeting with
Te Whiti.
Telegram, 4th
April 1879.
Appendix A,
No. 10.

and the old Government were different to the acts of Sheehan, Brown, and the new Government. Parris always came and told us his intentions before taking action." He went on: "The people might not sit down quietly and submit to the land being surveyed under their feet. You say, 'Let me and the Governor sit down on the blanket together.' The Governor will not do that; he is dragging it all away for himself." Again: "Are you authorized by the Government to offer me a part of the land, and agree for them to take the other part? It seems to me, from the way the surveys are being conducted, that you wish to take the whole of the blanket and leave me naked."

Ibid.

But what followed the next day indicated still more clearly, that even at that late hour there was yet an opening for the settlement of the question if sufficient reserves had then been offered by the Government. Mr. Mackay and Mr. Blake were on the point of leaving Parihaka for Taranaki, when Te Whiti came in person to the house where they were lodged and invited them to his own place. They accompanied him thither. "He asked if we were going to Taranaki to see Mr. Parris as to the promises he was said to have made, and also to communicate with the Government? He said, 'Do so. I do not ask you to go: [but] if you two can do any good, it is well.' Mr. Mackay replied, 'We will go, and, if there is anything of importance to communicate, we will return to see you.'" In the same telegram to Mr. Sheehan (4th April 1879), Mr. Mackay adds that "Te Whiti's countenance wore a very eager expression when he asked me if I had authority from Government to offer him a part of the land."

Hon. Mr. Shee-
han, Telegram,
5th April.
Appendix A,
No. 12.

In our own opinion, what passed between Te Whiti and Mr. Mackay amounted to an unmistakable overture from that chief to the Government, to make him a definite proposal for the settlement of the existing difficulties; and showed that he was prepared, at that time, to see those difficulties solved by a division of the land, by a "sharing of the blanket," provided only that the Governor did not "drag it all away for himself." The Government, however, did not avail themselves of the opportunity. Mr. Sheehan, it is true, replied to Mr. Mackay the day after the receipt of his telegram: "There is evidently, I think, in the speeches made by Te Whiti, a desire to discuss the question and come to some settlement. I stand to my proposals, and am prepared to recommend reserves to the extent of 25 per cent., or even a little more, over the whole area. Money compensation will be paid, only we must do our best to secure the application of it to fencing and improving the reserves. Special consideration will be shown to the chiefs." But nothing was done.

Appendix A,
Nos. 10, 11, 12,
13.

We think it right to observe that neither Mr. Mackay's telegram of his interview with Te Whiti, nor Mr. Sheehan's reply, has been laid before Parliament, though Mr. Mackay's report of the 14th April, far less interesting and of far less importance, was presented. We now lay them before Your Excellency in the Appendix to this report.

Nothing more than this telegram from Mr. Sheehan to Mr. Mackay seems to have been done towards meeting the overture made by Te Whiti; but the Government at this very time having extensively advertised the land for sale, and having only decided on the 24th of April to postpone the sale, the Natives had every reason to believe that the land would be sold without any reserves being made for them. So far, indeed, from any response being made to Te Whiti, when Mr. Mackay returned from Taranaki to Wellington in the beginning of May following, he called upon every chief of consequence—Motu, Hone Pihama, Titokowaru, Taurua, and others—but passed by Parihaka, and did not even see Te Whiti.

VII.—THE PROPOSED SALE OF THE PLAINS.

Evidence, p. 64,
et seq.

It only remains for us to relate the steps taken by the Government to sell the 16,000 acres which had been laid off when the surveyors were removed: and the facts are so clearly shown in the evidence of the Crown Lands Commissioner at New Plymouth, that we need only summarize them as briefly as possible.

By the Land Act of 1877, all confiscated lands had been constituted Crown lands, and placed under the control and administration of the local Land Boards.