

35. Do you find that opinion held by others?—I will not say that. That is my own individual opinion why cases are so lengthened.

36. I do not think I clearly explained myself. Do you think that opinion is held by others?—That is an individual opinion that I have formed myself. It is the result of my own observations.

37. *Mr. Carroll.*] They have a special Court now to deal with applications for rehearing?—Yes—a rehearing Court. They always had that. The petition goes to Parliament after the rehearing has failed, as a rule.

Mr. Carroll. There has not been a rehearing granted by Parliament since the Waipiro case, and that was reported on by a Commission in 1888. The Commissioners recommended that Parliament should pass a special Act. A rehearing now has to be applied for. The application comes before the Chief Judge, and he can either grant or dismiss the application.

38. *Mr. Rees.*] You are acting not only as interpreter, but also as agent?—Yes.

39. Can you state whether the Europeans and Natives have a full knowledge of the law in regard to dealings with Native land?—They are in an absolute state of uncertainty—confusion—in a state of chaos.

40. *Mr. Carroll.*] What do you think would be the cost per man per day for attending the Native Land Court—can you make a rough estimate?—It is a question I have never gone into. Some are more extravagant than others.

41. Say for a week?—Exclusive of fees?

42. The Native pays £1 a day for his case?—Yes; he would pay £1 a day. If an original case, he would pay £1 a day for his case while it was going on.

43. What is the average value of the land brought before the Court?—Some of the land in this district is very valuable; other, again, would not be worth more than 5s. an acre. The value of the land would be from 5s. an acre upwards. The gross value of the land would be from 5s. an acre minimum up to £10. There is very little of the £10-an-acre land.

44. *Mr. Rees.*] Can you give a rough idea as to the area of the land?—Do you mean lands through the Court not subdivided, or *papa tipus*?

45. Yes. What would the areas be?—I would not like to say from memory.

46. What is the smallest area in any one block?—I cannot remember. *Mr. Brooking* would be able to inform you.

47. Taking all the blocks on the sea-coast, how much do you think they would average per man?—There you are again. Whether they are coast-lands or lands situated inland. Some would average as much as 200 acres per man, while some would be as low as $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre. Blocks on the coast give smaller areas per man, as a rule, than lands inland.

48. *Mr. Mackay.*] When you mentioned about a Committee selected from other hapus, and the putting-in of names in the Crown grants or certificates of title, have you any knowledge of fictitious names being put in by the hapus who own the land?—I know one instance of a person who was not born at the time having the name put in, and the name went in; afterwards the person was born. That is the only instance I ever heard of. It is an old case, and took place about fifteen years ago.

49. Are there instances of strangers being put in?—Yes; that often occurs; people being put in out of *aroha*.

50. Do they not repent of this sometimes?—Yes; but as they are admitted they must get something. That is in practice, but it is not so common as it used to be.

51. Is there any desire to get those names purged?—Yes. The persons so inserted are mentioned in Court, and efforts are made to get rid of them.

52. Of course, they cannot get rid of them, being once placed on the Court-rolls?—No. The Court says as they are there they must be provided for.

53. *Mr. Rees.*] Could you make any suggestion as to any better way of dealing with Native lands, other than what at present prevails, between Europeans and Maoris?—It is a question that has given me a great deal of thought, more especially as a half-caste and an owner of land in the district. I begin to think that the time has arrived when some other system will have to be adopted—when some simpler plan, some simpler scheme, will have to be devised for carrying out all dealings in relation to Native lands. These dealings, I think, should take place through the Government. The present system is practically a failure. Parliament should make a law understandable by the people. The greatest blot on the present system, and has been for years, is that the Natives do not get the value of their land, and they are fenced in in such a way that if the Natives want to deal with their lands they cannot do it. I believe in the principle of ample reserves being made for the Natives, sufficient for their use, and that they should be allowed to utilise the balance of their land. The law at present is a bar against their utilising their lands; still the country is howling that they should be taxed.

54. *Mr. Mackay.*] The sale to private individuals has a tendency to lock up the lands?—I do not object to selling to private individuals, but, the way the law stands, it locks up the lands. It is a fallacy for Europeans to attempt to lease lands.

55. What would you suggest should be done where there is a large number of owners? How could a legal lease be got?—I think some plan should be adopted whereby the Government would act as brokers.

56. There should be some provision for binding the whole hapu?—Legislation would be required for that.

57. The Legislature would have to invent a plan that would be satisfactory to the whole people?

Mr. Rees. No doubt. What I see in the future is this: that if the lands are not used in some way something will be done—if not confiscation—it will amount to that. The Native lands will be taken away from the Natives.