

can do anything, they find the money. They have money for this and for other purposes. They would find some means of getting it. They would go to their friends and collect it.

971. Do you think, from your experience amongst the Natives, they could settle amongst themselves a great portion of these tribal and hapu boundaries?—I believe it would take them a lot of time to do it, but they would do it, especially if they knew that there was no other means of getting their lands into the market. If it was said to them, "Instead of going to the Court you will have to settle amongst yourselves how you are going to divide it: as soon as you have done that you may come to the Court," they would do it.

972. *Mr. Mackay.*] They should know it was necessary as the first operation?—Yes; and they themselves would come to a conclusion as to who were the owners. My experience of their meetings is this: The whole thing is discussed, and perhaps half a dozen men out of the whole tribe will do the whole of the talking, the others sitting round and acquiescing, but not taking very much trouble about it.

973. *Mr. Rees.*] They leave it to their natural leaders?—Yes. I have been at several of their meetings, and I have watched their proceedings. All the talk was carried on by four or five persons; the others were amusing themselves by playing with dogs and so on.

974. *Mr. Mackay.*] That is not only as regards questions of boundaries between one tribe and another?—No; questions among themselves.

975. That would be more generally as regards hapu boundaries. But there is the primary position to take up; you must begin with the boundary as between one tribe and another?—Well, so far as I know, the tribal boundaries were fixed long ago, and the difficulty is only with the intermediate boundaries.

976. In some cases they are not fixed?—Persons in different tribes intermarry with one another, and there are cases of a wife having a claim on the tribe to which her husband belonged.

977. But there is an actual tribal boundary preserved, and the wife's share will be with her tribe, and should the husband belong to another tribe his share will be with it?—I have had a good deal to do with defining tribal boundaries, and in surveying for them, and generally I got a chief from each side to accompany me upon the land and fix the boundary. They will indicate the different points—sometimes a stone and sometimes a tree—and we afterwards go and survey these. I have an idea that between here and the Uriwera country pretty well all the tribal boundaries have been defined; but the hapu boundaries are not so well defined, and there is a good deal of squabbling amongst themselves.

978. Do you think they are quite competent to settle the hapu boundaries amongst themselves?—They do it, and have been doing it for years, because, although it may be said you are going to survey the land of a certain hapu, yet they have already decided the boundary between themselves and the next hapu. In such survey-work I invariably get a chief from each side, and leave them to fight out and settle the boundary. They will come to a settlement and tell you what is the boundary. It is in this way that I have avoided disputes. So that really they are doing the thing now.

979. That is, when surveyors pursue the same course as you do?—Yes. Most of them do.

980. *Mr. Rees.*] Throwing the responsibility upon the two chiefs?—Yes. Previously to this the hapus select from among themselves the men who know the most about the boundaries for their respective hapus. Sometimes they sit and argue with each other as to the reasons why one hapu claims a little here and the other hapu a little there. I take the opportunity meanwhile to have a smoke and a look round. They, in their turn, have a long *korero*, and then at last they come and say that they have fixed up the matter.

981. Then, from your experience and knowledge, you do not think it would be difficult to get the Natives themselves to decide these questions?—I do not, but I think it would take a longer time; and that would depend upon whether they were anxious to realise upon the land. If they were it would not take long.

982. Would it be of much consequence supposing a law were passed giving them a title for the land? Because they could settle the boundaries when they chose. If you were going merely to give them whatever was derivable from the land by rental or otherwise, they would have to settle the tribal and hapu boundaries before they could have a subdivision?—If the land were going to be occupied as I surveyed it I do not think it would be necessary to cut the hapu boundaries on the ground; they might be cut up only on paper.

983. You would survey only on the ground for settlement, and on paper for division of profits?—Yes. That is, for land that is to be worked. And in that case the boundaries should be cut between the Natives and Europeans.

984. *Mr. Mackay* (pointing to a pencilled sketch).] Assume that that is a block of land, that the tribal boundary contains 18,000 acres, and that there are 300 owners belonging to four different hapus, and the hapus, of course, have set out their boundaries in such a fashion that there are 4,500 acres for each hapu. They would reserve one-third of the lot for cultivations, pas, burying-grounds, and anything else that they wished to preserve their lands for, and then they would lease or sell these 12,000 acres—two-thirds of the whole—appointing four chiefs of these hapus to act as their trustees or committee in settling everything in connection with the leasing of the land, along with the District Commissioner. Assume, also, that the moneys derived from the sale or lease of the land passed into the hands of the Commissioner, and that, after deducting a percentage for the cost of the surveys, and for laying off roads, and so on, he paid the balance to the parties or the individuals in these hapus entitled to receive the money according to the shares that had been settled for them, the Commissioner or the Board at the same time granting an indefeasible title to the lessee or the purchaser, as the case might be. What do you think of that? Would that satisfy the Natives?—I think it would. I think they would all be satisfied with it. The only difficulty I see would be in setting apart the portion for burying-places and cultivations. You might manage for cultivations, but not so easily with burying-places.