

1629. You think a special Court should be erected for dealing with such cases?—Yes.

1630. Do you think that the decision of such a tribunal should be final?—If a Court is set up for the purpose of investigating such disputes between Europeans and Maoris, I should say Let its decision be final, because it would have to deal with questions of fact. Of course, this would depend on the Court or Commission itself. If such a Commission is composed of men who are thoroughly acquainted with these matters, and who are able to bring to the investigation the necessary skill for arriving at the facts, it will be a good thing indeed.

1631. Do you think that it would satisfy the Europeans who have titles which are liable to be attacked, that the Court of first instance should be the Court of final determination?—It is very difficult for me to say, because I have not had experience at all of that class of case.

1632. We do not wish to press you. We are glad to get opinions as to anything upon which you can speak with confidence?—I have spoken of these other cases because they have come directly within my knowledge.

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NAPIER, 2ND MAY, 1891.

PAORA KAIWHATA examined.

1633. *Mr. Rees.*] What is your name and place of residence?—Paora Kaiwhata is my name, and I am a chief of the Ngatikahungunu.

1634. You are one of the old race of chiefs, are you not?—Yes. Of the old chiefs, I only am left. Tareha Moananui is gone; Hapuku is gone; Waka Kawatini is gone; Karaitiana is gone; and Renata Kawopo and Kararuria are gone. I only am left of the old chiefs of Heretaunga.

1635. Do you remember the commencement of the Native Land Court?—I do. It was after Hapuku had sold the lands to Governor Grey, and we had driven him off the Heretaunga Plains to Te Hauke. Donald McLean was here then. He was Government Commissioner and Native Minister. Fenton was the Chief Judge under the law which was made for the Native Land Court. We did not understand that law. We brought our lands into the Court—all the lands of Heretaunga. The Judges told us to go outside and choose ten men for each block of land, and that the ten would act for the people. We chose the names to be placed in the Crown grants for all the lands upon the Plains. I was in some of the grants, Karaitiana and Tareha in others. Europeans bought the lands from the ten. Since that time the Native Land Court has always sought little by little to lead the people astray. The laws were always being changed by the Parliament. We never could understand them. Of late years they have led the people into many strange ways. They have done much harm to the Maori people. The chiefs under those laws no longer ruled the tribes. The laws made us all equal—children and slaves stood in the same rank with the chiefs. The influence of that Court has been nothing but evil. The Maoris are no longer a people, by reason of the Native Land Court. A new law should be made. The people should again be allowed to act as they used to act before there was any law or any Court. The chiefs should do with the lands what the people desired them to do, and they alone should have the management. In the old days, when the land was leased and sold in the presence of the tribe, there was no disputing and no deceit such as there have been since the Court came to Heretaunga. If the Commission will get Parliament to make a new law, let it be according to the old custom of the Maoris.

1636. Can you attend at the meeting to be held at Waipawa, where the chiefs and people are to meet the Commissioners?—I cannot go to Waipawa. I am too old and feeble. Many chiefs are going there, but I shall not be there. I am old, and have not long to live; but before I join the other chiefs out of this world I should like to see a law passed which will bring back the old customs and save what remains of the people and the lands. I have heard that the Commissioners have met the tribes of Ngatiporou, Ngapuhi, Ngatimaniapoto, Ngatituwharetoa, Ngatiraukawa. I have heard that the Arawa also have sent to the Commissioners. Let their hands be strong, and their words also, to persuade the Parliament to make a good law. Destroy the Native Land Court as it now is, for its work is bad. I have come to see the Commissioners here, because I shall have no other opportunity of seeing them. My wish is that the old customs may be revived, and that the new order of things which has grown up shall be done away with. Do something also for the children of the tribes: let them be cared for. There is now no war between the Maori and the European. It is a good thing in thus sending Commissioners to the Maori people, and it is good that one of the Commissioners should be a Maori. My word to you and to the Parliament is, Be strong to make good laws for the Maori people and their lands.

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NAPIER, 4TH MAY, 1891.

Mr. FRANCIS LOGAN examined.

1637. *Mr. Rees.*] You are a barrister and solicitor practising in Napier?—Yes.

1638. How long have you been practising here?—I have been practising here for nine years now.

1639. Have you had, as a professional man, any experience in the conduct of sales of Native lands, and the completion of titles to land which has been derived under the Native Land Acts?—Yes, I have.

1640. Can you state generally whether the titles, where derived through the Native Land Acts at present existing, are satisfactory?—They are by no means satisfactory.

1641. Is it the case that there is great difficulty in completing titles under these Acts?—Very great difficulty indeed. The delay in the issue of titles under the Native Land Acts is very great indeed.

1642. And the cost?—The cost is very much more than that entailed upon one in negotiating sales and leases of property held by Europeans under Crown grant.