

to take land for road purposes. Of course, if the land were held in fee-simple, as land held by Europeans, the Government would deal with you as with the Europeans. The question is not raised by you to-day, because you have said that arrangements were made by which you ceded the land for road purposes, and this being so you are not going back on that now. The land is still available for roads. I like to hear from you expressions of that kind, because it takes me back many years to the time when first I knew the Natives, and learned of the straight-going principles of your forefathers when once their word was given it was known to be sacred, and was kept. Keep to that principle, and you will find it will be well for you, and you will raise yourselves in the estimation of the pakehas. You will be setting a good example to your children. I will now deal with what to me is a painful subject—I am sure it is painful to you—and that is regarding Pomare Kingi. Now, no one feels more than I do when I hear that one of our fellow-beings, whether Native or European, is afflicted by the most terrible thing that can happen to mankind. When a man's reason collapses it is worse than death, because it is a living death. You have my deep sympathy. But it is less painful to him than it is to you, because in many cases the memory is destroyed, and he does not know those who mourn for him. In treating with your application we must be careful. There is always the danger of further development of the disease with which he is afflicted. Serious consequences may follow, he is not a responsible being, and suddenly, without the slightest warning, may take the lives of those near and dear to him. I know a case that came under my notice in which a father had been taken out of an asylum, and appeared to be getting on all right. His wife and relatives said that he was all right, but the result was, he killed his wife and child, and he had ultimately to be replaced in the asylum. Now, in that very case I have alluded to the Government were blamed for having listened to the demands of the wife, and for having allowed him to be set at liberty. Now, I know you have spoken to-day on behalf of the friends of this unfortunate man, and on behalf of his wife and children. I know his wife is quite willing he should come here, and is willing to do all she can, but the Government are responsible, and must make inquiries in case an accident should happen such as I have mentioned. Now, I will make inquiries. I have given you my mind and the mind of the Government. The responsibility rests with us. If we find he is still dangerous to himself or to others, then we cannot liberate him. If he can be set at liberty, then you must give security for his safe-keeping. I think £50 is the bond that must be entered into, and if any persons are willing to be responsible for him, then the Government will favourably consider the question of liberating him on such terms. Now, there is another view of this question. You told me to-day that you could not afford to go and see him, he having been removed to such a distance from you. You his friends are too poor to visit him, and that is why you would like him to be here. Now, I shall be prepared to meet you in that, if satisfied I could do so out of a fund set apart for the benefit of the Natives. I am prepared, sooner than run any risk, to allow relatives to occasionally visit him. Then there would be no danger. That is the alternative, if we find it is unsafe to set him at liberty. I assure you I feel deeply for him and his friends, and for any one who is afflicted in this way. I now come to the question of the sitting of the Court. You have told me you are not in a position to attend such sittings of the Court in the town—that you have not sufficient food to keep you there, while the Court is sitting and determining your title. You have assured me that nearly all the owners of the land are in this locality. You have also assured the Government that every convenience will be granted to the Court if it is held here. Now, I desire to encourage the Natives to keep the Court away from the towns. I do not believe in their coming into the larger towns, because I know it costs them a lot of money to live there. They have to take their food with them, engage houses for their accommodation, and generally incur huge expenses in getting the land through the Court, which oftentimes leads them into serious difficulties. They acquire bad habits, they take too much *waipiro*, whilst, if at home, they would be less likely to do so. Their women are oftentimes molested when with them, and everything about town life tends to their demoralisation. I am therefore prepared to grant your request that the sitting of the Court be held here. The Government are always pleased to meet you when you are reasonable in your demands, and if you continue in that way it will be for the benefit of the two races. I will now conclude by thanking you for the way in which you have received me and the member of the Cabinet representing the Native race.

WAOMIO. (Ngapuhi Tribe, subdivided into Ngatihine and Others.)

The Premier said,—Salutations to the Native race here assembled. On behalf of the Government I express to you our very best wishes. I am sorry you were disappointed last night. I intended to have remained on my way to Kawakawa and to have met you, but, however, that is past. I am here now and am very pleased to see you. In the past, Ministers have gone to see the pakehas at their different centres, while they have not done the same with the Maoris. Now we are both one people, we are all New-Zealanders, and the Native has as much right to be consulted and advised as the pakeha. There is the one Queen, the one sovereignty, the sovereignty which your forefathers agreed to accept when the Treaty of Waitangi was signed. There is the one law, which is just as binding upon the Maori as upon the pakeha. We must all obey the law, or otherwise life and property would not be safe. So long as these laws are administered and obeyed by both races good will come. In regard to the making of laws, probably it will be to your advantage that I am here to-day. Now, I am here to-day more to listen than to speak. I will therefore listen to what you have to say. If you have any grievances, bring them before me, and any explanation you want I shall be only too happy to give. I want to ascertain the Native mind, I want to be frank. I want to let you know we are desirous of doing what is in your interest and in the interest of the colony. I have no doubt that you will, through one or two of your leaders, place several matters before me. I would therefore ask, so as to facilitate business, that there be no repetition, no two persons getting up and saying the same thing. I wish you to place your matters as shortly as you can before me. I am a good listener, and want to be your friend, therefore speak fairly, speak frankly.