

55. *Mr. Stevens.*] How many acres of level land are there—land that can be ploughed—in Kapiti?—I have some difficulty in replying to that; I could only say approximately.

56. Would any of the land grow wheat?—Yes; and many other things—beans, potatoes, cabbages, and all sorts of things.

57. But is not nearly the whole of the island mountainous, and steep, and stony on the faces?—Yes, that is perfectly true. I will illustrate it in this way: The walls of this house represent the steep parts, but when you get on to the roof that is good soil that can be worked. I was born on the island myself, and grew up there on the foods that were cultivated and produced there by my elders and parents.

58. What area do you and your family hold?—About 370 acres—there are twelve of us.

59. That 370 acres has now been represented by two spokesmen, and nobody for the rest of the land?—No. We are the owners of that 370 acres; yet our remarks apply to the whole of the island, seeing that we have been selected to represent the people generally in speaking to their desires in this question.

60. *Mr. Wi Pere.*] Would you be satisfied if the Bill were amended in this way: that this island should be reserved for you members of the Ngatitōa Tribe and the birds—would that meet your wishes? I would be willing that it be reserved in this fashion: that it be reserved to us as an inalienable possession, and that we had the sole right of disposal and management, according to Native custom, and be not interfered with.

61. Very well, you have agreed to that. Suppose that had been done—that the land had been reserved in the manner I propose—would you not then be agreeable to lease it to the Queen?—I cannot say Yes, or No, in an offhand way to a question like that. I should have to submit it to the people generally, and talk the matter over, and come to you with the general wish of the people.

62. And if you were to get land in another place in exchange for this land?—I have replied to that question already. I give the same reply now.

63. You do not want other land?—No. What I said was that we must talk the matter over. The proposal requires consideration.

64. Very well, then; there are now three proposals submitted for your consideration—either to have the island reserved for the Natives only and the birds, &c., and afterwards lease the lands to the Queen, or that equivalent land should be given to you at some other place in exchange for the island, or that compensation should be paid and funded for the benefit of the Native owners and their descendants. Do you think that, if you were given a certain time to consult over the matter together, you would arrive at a decision to-day?—I would not undertake to say Yes; but if we were given the remainder of the day we would try to come to a conclusion.

65. *Mr. Kaihau.*] If some of the owners are willing to sell their shares to the Government—when some had agreed, would not the others be likely also to agree?—All I can say to that is that I am deputed as one of the persons to come here and speak the present wish of the people. If any individual member, after having instructed me to speak as I have, changes his mind in the way you suggest, I am not responsible for his wrongful action.

66. Supposing the Bill provided that this island was to be reserved for the benefit of the Maoris—but under control of the Queen—what would you say to that if the birds, &c., were reserved under such rules as the Queen thinks fit?—The description of reserve that I should be willing to agree to is this: that the land should be restricted in such a way as to prevent every possibility of selling it to any one.

67. *Mr. Monk.*] You belittled the payment made by Brown for the land he holds. Is it not a fact that the land was given in compensation for plundering Brown's store by Te Rauparaha?—It is not as if the man was living at some other place when his goods were seized and confiscated; he was there when his goods were taken away from him.

68. That was after the Wairau massacre, was it not?—But Wairau was not a massacre. Yes; it was after the fighting at Wairau, the blame of which rests at the door of the pakeha, who instructed that the Maoris should be shot when they fought. It was in 1847 when Brown's things were seized and he was turned off.

69. At any rate, Te Rauparaha had taken as much as was thought sufficient payment for the land; he gave back what he had taken in goods?—It was afterwards that arrangements were made by all Ngatitōa generally which established Brown's position in respect of the land.

70. But it was not the tribe that had so much to say about it as what Te Rauparaha ordered?—Te Rauparaha could only control things in so far as he was permitted by the tribe. If the tribe saw fit to accept a proposition of his he would be upheld in enforcing it.

71. *Mr. Heke.*] Can you tell the Committee whether any of the Natives present are large owners in Kapiti Island?—Yes.

72. Will you name them?—Well, there is Te Whiwhi, Hemi Kuti, these two men here, Ropata Brothers, and Erinora; also Raiha Puaha.

73. Which of these holds the biggest interest in any division of Kapiti Island?—Of course, Wi Parata is also an owner. I did not wish for a moment to deny that these people have rights equal in value to ours.

74. With respect to the people you have mentioned, do they hold large interests at all, or can you give the Committee any information as to the areas held by each individual?—Speaking approximately, Te Wiwi owns about 400 acres, and Ropata Brothers hold about 400 or 500 acres.

75. What is Erinora's interest?—I think, about 250 acres.

76. And it is safe to suppose that you are opposing the Bill on behalf of yourself and these Natives present?—Yes; I oppose it on my own behalf, and on behalf of all the people assembled here.

77. *The Chairman.*] What is your share in this block of land?—Well, as a matter of fact, I