

drawn up, and these were circulated among the European settlers and residents and also among the Maoris. They were presented to the House by Mr. Field and myself, and it was on those petitions your Commission was issued by the Government. So from 1896 to the present time I have fulfilled a promise which was extracted from me by the Ngatiraukawa to support them in this matter. During this period the Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitooa, in everything they desired to present to Parliament, have always come and asked me to help them. That is the cause of my interest in this matter.

58. *Mr. Stafford.*] You have sought to find out what the Natives themselves want?—Yes.

59. What inquiries have you made?—When Mr. Field and I obtained a fairly good idea of the Government's intentions in regard to the appeals made to them on this matter, then we directed the Natives to send round books to all their settlements and to write down the names of all their children in every settlement within the Ngatiraukawa district, from Otaki to the Rangitikei. That was done. The object of doing this was to present before the Commission a list showing that there were a large number of Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitooa children wanting education. It was to do away with an impression created by a statement made by European members of the Church of England at the time when the trustees of the Whitireia Block sought Supreme Court sanction for power to divert the Whitireia funds to a school in another district. The statement in effect was this: that a school could not be built on Whitireia, because there were not a sufficient number of children. I forget the number mentioned, but I think it was stated to be not more than thirty or forty. Then, when we knew the Government did intend to bring about an inquiry, I suggested to the Natives that we must bring facts before the Commission. That is the reason why these books were circulated in two or three parts of the district.

60. What was the information sought for?—The number of Ngatiraukawa children who are not having any education at all now. It is to show that the Ngatiraukawa are not a dying tribe; and to show that the taking-away of moneys belonging to any of their reserves and spending them in another district is against the facts that we sought to bring before the Commission. [Exhibit A put in.] This is one of the books of which there are two. It shows the children of Ngatiraukawa (excluding the Muaupoko of Horowhenua, the Ngatiapa of Rangitikei, and the Rangitane) from settlements near Foxton up to near the Manawatu, giving the names, sex, age, parents, trustees, home, and district. There are 237 children. The other book which will be produced [Exhibit B] will complete the tale from Foxton to Otaki.

61. This was the first piece of information you sought to get?—Yes.

61A. During these inquiries you made, did you seek to find out what the opinions of the Natives were concerning the diversion of these trust-moneys to the Wairarapa?—I did not ask the opinions of the Ngatiraukawa and Ngatitooa, but they expressed their opinions to me—that they entirely objected. The reasons they gave were that it was entirely against the intention for which their elders gave the land to the Church of England. It was against Native custom; and expressing these opinions they said, "We will never agree that these funds should be taken away," and they asked me to help them to get them back again.

62. What do they say about their own wants on this Coast?—Their main desire was to get the lands back; and during the whole of the discussions they could not forget the fact that they must get these lands back. But, in the event of not getting the lands back, then they turn their minds to saying, "Let us urge the Government to devise some means by which the original intentions of the donors of these lands shall be given effect to."

63. There came a time when this idea of getting back the land, if not abandoned, was thought to be next door to hopeless?—Yes, when the majority of them realised that it was hopeless to ask for the land; and that being the case, they said, "We will turn our attention to bring about the spending of the money from the reserves in the midst of our own people."

64. They thought the next best thing was to try to establish a school on the West Coast?—Yes, in Otaki.

65. Did you then seek to ascertain from them what their wishes were in regard to what kind of a school it should be?—They explained the kind of school they wanted. As a sort of preliminary, they directed their speeches this way: that the education imparted to the Native children under the present system of education was not effective or sufficient. There were a large number of boys who came back from school who could speak English, their parents believing they understood it; but by experience they came to know that their speaking the English language was not sufficient to enable them to obtain work to maintain themselves. Therefore they directed their argument and statements in this way: "We want a school to impart to our children a good and effective education in English, and, in addition"—and they emphasized this—"we want our children to be taught hand work," that is, industrial knowledge, a knowledge of some trade—what is called "technical instruction" in the public schools.

66. These ideas of the Natives on the subject were put on paper?—Yes. There was a meeting of Heni and other Natives, who were asked by those who did not come down to Wellington to meet you on the matter at your office. I met the Ngatiraukawa here to discuss with them what was to be done, and I was told they were sending representatives to Wellington, and I went with them. The object of the meeting at your office was to put the ideas of the Natives on paper, so as to lay them before the Commission.

67. Was any influence used by you or myself to induce them to adopt this scheme?—There was no necessity for doing so. I received a copy of the draft scheme some few days before the Commission sat.

68. Were meetings convened of the Ngatiraukawa and others to consider the scheme as it appeared on paper?—That was my object in leaving Wellington. After the Ngatiraukawa had met you, and the scheme had been submitted to them, I decided to come with the scheme and place it before as many of the Ngatiraukawa as I could meet. This was done to the best of my ability. The weather was