

Whaingaroa, not one wheat stack was fenced; on my return to try an adjourned case, they were all surrounded by substantial fences 6 feet high.

At the conclusion of the meeting, three men were appointed to act as wardens or magistrates (kai whakariterite). They were separately proposed, and agreed to by acclamation. It is a fact worthy of remark, as evidencing the spirit of the times, that neither the son of the recently deceased chief of the tribe, nor the cousin who succeeded him in his dignity, were amongst the number selected, although they were both present in the assembly. The farming establishment at Kohanga was frequently alluded to, and hopes were expressed that an enterprise of the same sort may be undertaken by themselves, observing, however, that it would be advisable before commencing material improvements of that description, thoroughly to establish their laws and to overcome the first difficulties of initiating them.\* Throughout the whole of the deliberations there was the constant expression of an earnest hope that the Governor and the authorities would assist in the work, as "they were seeking a dark road and had none to enlighten them."

Some days afterwards a combined meeting of Whatawhata and Whaingaroa, with some individuals from Rangiriri and Kaitotehe, took place. The principal men present were Mohi, Te Reweti, Takerei, Kihirini, Paora Tirua (Kawhia) Taneti, Karaka Hiko, Heta Tarawhiti, Paratene, Tarahawaiki, Waikato, Pouaka, Enoka, William Naylor, Hakopa, Parauria, &c., &c. His Excellency will gather from the following remarks of Tarahawaiki the general tone of ideas which characterised the speeches. "In old times the Maories were very wicked, but they were independent. Then the missionaries came; they came underground; then they erected themselves, and finally took their station alongside of us, the same height, but no higher. We helped them and they helped us. They taught us the Gospel, and we now help them to preach it. We were not enslaved, and it was very good. Then the multitude of the white man came, the Governor and the magistrates. They came underground too, until they approached us; then they stood erect and spoke soft words to us, but they grew higher and higher, and now they are far higher than we are. The soft words remain, but we are sad. What is to be the end of this? Let the Governor help us to discover a plan. If we seek a path by ourselves, we shall go astray. Let the magistrates consider this, for I who speak am not a young man nor a mean person." The tribes present in a body, or represented by a few individuals, at this meeting were Ngatimahanga, Ngatiruru, Te Ngaungau, Ngatimahuta, Ngatingamuri, Ngatihourua, Ngatihine, Ngatiwhauroa. There may have been others, with which I have been unacquainted.

A subsequent meeting was arranged to be held in April at William Naylor's settlement at Whaingaroa, when all the Waipa tribes, including Ngatihaua, are to be present. Another large meeting is to be shortly held at Rangiriri, in the centre of the district of Lower Waikato; and the lamentations over Epiha at Ihumatao, about the end of April, will afford the occasion for a third, which will be largely attended.

III. I have thus briefly stated the objects which the Maories are desiring to achieve, and the plans they propose in order to effect these objects. It is not needful to refer to the causes which have operated to produce such results, as I have already adverted to them in my previous minute. And now I trust that His Excellency will allow me to place before him my views as to the course to be pursued under this phase in the aspect of native affairs.

If the details that I have given are true, the importance of the events cannot be over-estimated. It must be received as a "great fact." That a whole people should be engaged in the elaboration of one idea is sufficiently striking; and when that people is one placed by Divine Providence under our own control, with whose progress in civilization our interests are engaged, from whose advancement in material prosperity we shall derive equal benefit, on whose contentment our peaceful supremacy depends, and for *whose welfare our most sacred pledges have been recorded*, it becomes then not a matter for quiescent observation, but a point of duty as well as of interest, to come forward and offer sympathy and assistance, if the objects sought are right, and every opposition that can be effectual, if the designs entertained are wrong. It is not a small matter with the Maories whether they succeed or fail in their efforts. The moment is regarded by them as of vital interest, their first spontaneous effort to create a new civilization, the turning point of their importance as a people. A deprecatory article in the *Maori Messenger*, or a letter from the Native Department exhorting to virtue, will not suffice to banish from their imagination the idea that they have before them a *practical* good, which may be attained by a vigorous pursuit.

The doctrine of Non-interference in the internal affairs of the colored portion of the population of this country has been adopted and acted upon as not only convenient but absolutely necessary; but only, so far as I understand it, in these cases where an effectual discharge of the duty devolving upon Government, would require the intervention of an executive force. But this is not a case of remedying a wrong, or obtaining satisfaction for an insult, or redress for an injury, but touches rather the legislative function, and is simply and purely the perfecting of a scheme for establishing a machinery by whose action wrongs shall be made to cease, or be remedied by the ordinary operation of law. Surely the motto which forms the abbreviated creed of our Maori politics, is not one so recommended by its dignity, or so convenient in its results that we should resolutely maintain it, when the opportunity presents itself of acting on an honorable principle, one alike consistent with our obligations and beneficial to our interests. There are occasions in the history of nations, as of individuals, when to do nothing is not only less dignified but more dangerous than action. The motto now on our shield cannot be maintained there for ever. The time will come when it must be erased. "In politics," says Chateaubriand, "finality is impossible. It is an absolute necessity to advance along with the human intellect."

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\* "Of what use would a farm be," said one, "if our next neighbour could cover it with dock?"