

the privilege, but the right of every subject of the Queen, to lay their grievances at the foot of the Throne, and before her Parliament; and that they could state their case by petitioning both branches of the Legislature, and ask for a remedy. After some further remarks from Enoke, Hori Tupaea, and Harawira, the course recommended by me was adopted, and two forms of petition were agreed upon.

I was then called upon to explain the Native Districts Councils Bill, which I did, clause by clause, and after a general discussion, I was requested to inform the Honorable the Native Minister that they entirely agreed to its provisions.

Hori Ngatai then addressed himself to me on the subject of the political contest that had taken place during the Session of the Assembly, that they had been telegraphed and written to requesting them to support Mr. Stafford's Government. He then added that I had been sent here to advise with them, and guide them to a proper judgment in matters of perplexity, whereas I had wholly neglected them, and that they had been as sheep without a shepherd: that I was to blame for my silence; that Karaitiana had written to them telling them that which was contrary to fact, and had misled the people; he spoke of confiscated lands being returned, and other wonderful things that he and "his Government," as he called it, were going to do for the Natives; that many people in the place had their heads turned; that the restoration of the confiscated lands was a *patai*, too tempting to resist; that I was to blame for not telling them how to act under the circumstances. I replied that the Natives did not, and could not understand my position; that, as an officer of the Civil Service, I could give no advice on political questions, were I to do so, I should be severely censured, and perhaps discharged the service; that some such rule was necessary to ensure subordination, for that I and many others were the servants of the Government of the day, and were bound by the rules of the service to carry out the orders of those that the House of Representatives had placed at the head of affairs to conduct the business of the Colony. But I assured them of one thing, that should I see any Government about to take a step likely to be attended with bad results, that I should feel it my duty to state my opinions to the Government; if they disregarded what I told them, and mischievous consequences ensued, the Government alone would be responsible.

I then referred generally to the action taken by Karaitiana, that the restoration of confiscated land, especially in this district, was absolutely impossible, for most of it had been allotted to Europeans and Natives, and was held under Crown Grant. I blamed them for lending a listening ear to those who had written and telegraphed such absurd stories, for they must have known that any amount of agitation on their part could not affect the position of the Government of the day. I recommended them in future to look to results, and not to the fair promises of any one.

I addressed a few words to the Ngaiterangi chiefs, expressive of my satisfaction at meeting them again, and finding them at peace. I congratulated them on the orderly manner in which the meeting had been conducted, and the unanimity of their opinions, and said that I should have great pleasure in forwarding a favorable report to the Native Minister.

Hori Ngatai replied that he wished to take the opportunity of addressing a few words to the chiefs on the subject of drinking spirits; that he had made it a rule amongst his people that no spirits should be brought into his settlement. His principal reason was, that he would not have his school disturbed by drunken people, and he always found that it was productive of disturbance and noisy wrangling. He attributed the orderly state of the meeting to the absence of intoxicating drink. He wished the chiefs to understand that he would not allow spirits to be brought to Whareroa.

I commended Hori's example to Ngaiterangi, and hoped it would be followed everywhere.

Before I close this report, I would wish to draw your attention to the very difficult position in which officers in the Civil Service are placed with regard to Natives. In my own case, when I am appealed to for advice, on almost every subject, the Natives can hardly understand why, if I give advice in one matter, I cannot also in another, without compromising my position as a servant of the Government. I think, that in certain cases the local officers should be allowed to use a discretionary power, without being open to the charge of partizanship; for instance, I think it is extremely unwise, and ill-advised, in the supporters of any Government to endeavor to disturb the Native mind by urging them to support this or that Government, with the object of obtaining some ulterior advantage. As a rule, the Native mind is not so evenly balanced as that of the Anglo-Saxon, and is prone to take extreme and exaggerated views of things, often terminating in revolutionary tendencies. In such cases, I respectfully suggest that it is the duty of Native Officers to watch, and check all attempts made in that direction. I may be singular in my opinion, but it has been arrived at after close observation, and I believe will be found to be correct.

I have, &c.,

H. T. CLARKE,
Civil Commissioner.

The Under Secretary Native Department,
Wellington.

No. 2.

The Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER to Mr. H. T. CLARKE.

SIR,—

Whanganui, 15th January, 1873.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your most interesting and clear report of the 3rd ultimo, giving an account of your interview with the representatives of the Ngaiterangi tribe, and I have to tender you my thanks for the judicious manner in which you have acted, under circumstances which placed you in what you considered a difficult position.

With regard to the latter portion of your letter, I agree with you that it may frequently occur that an officer of the Native Department may find himself in a situation where it is incumbent for him to act in a manner which would be incompatible with duty in another branch of the Civil Service. In such cases, reliance must be placed upon the discretion and prudence of the officer.