

Rewi, on the other hand, has just returned from Whanganui, where he had been to convey Te Ngairo, Tawhiao's youngest son. I rather suspect his errand was to initiate the people of that district into the new form of religion.

Tawhiao's visits this year to Kawhia have been more frequent and of longer duration than heretofore; his last stay there extended over two months, which I construe into a tacit acquiescence on his part to your wish to have the next interview at Kawhia. I came to this conclusion in consequence of his ever and anon recurring to your meeting of last year, and asking where you were, and when you were coming to Auckland. Upon my telling him on one occasion at Aotea, when he asked me where you were, that the papers made you leave Wellington for Auckland, he replied, "Ka koa ahau,"—I am glad. During his late visits to Kawhia and Aotea settlements, he kept me with him for eight days, moving from place to place, and it was not until he mounted his horse at Motakotako to return to Torea, that I was able to get home. Judging from his conversation and demeanour during this period, it is easy to perceive that he is most anxious to meet you.

Subsequently I saw him at Aotea on the 7th and 8th ultimo, when he told me that he was going inland to Hikurangi, and that he would return in a week or two. I replied, "I will also go and see Ngatihaua during your absence." He answered: "There are two roads, that one and this; you can, if you desire, travel this to Hikurangi; perhaps you prefer the other. Why not go with us?" I made an indefinite reply, but ultimately resolved to travel to Alexandra by the Kawhia route, which I did, accompanied by Hone te One. We left Tawhiao at Kauri undergoing a tapuing process, which prevented his being visible to every one; hence our not seeing him. An account of this journey having been already furnished, together with my views as to the bringing of the "rakau o te mate" of Tawhiao's daughter here, there is no necessity for me to introduce these subjects here.

Tapihana continues to make strong speeches in favour of peace, assuring me every time I see him that he was glad to think that he was again likely to be the friend and companion of Europeans, who were Potatau's parents and guardians, and that I was to be sure and visit them frequently; concluding by telling me to inform you that although he had many chiefs standing between him and the object he most desired, yet the time was not far distant when everything would be arranged in accordance with what passed between you and him on board the "Luna" at Kawhia; that would be the ending. This chief speaks in this strain publicly; and I am given to understand by Hone te One that he is simply expounding the views of Tawhiao, speaking as his mouthpiece.

Trusting that I shall not appear egotistical when I state that both Tawhiao and Tapihana cannot have enough of my companionship when we are together, on which occasions their actions and conversation are of the most friendly nature; if this be other than a token of friendship, I must say they are clever masters of duplicity. The latter makes no secret of his sentiments; tells every European he comes across the same thing that he tells me; he does this openly before every one. In fact, according to himself, he cannot see too much of Pakehas.

Judging from the friendly manner in which the Kawhia and Aotea Natives have received me on all occasions, I am bound to conclude that, so far as they are concerned, they desire to establish friendly relations with the Europeans; and when it comes to be considered that my official visits to these for many years jealously-guarded localities have been made at the request of the resident Natives, coupled with the fact of my being told to travel from Kawhia to Waipa by Tawhiao himself, over a road which has been closed to similar traffic for several years, this conclusion is strengthened.

I believe that your determination not to force on a war in consequence of the Waikato murders has shown to the Natives that you do not desire to punish the whole race for the acts of individuals. It is this that has set men of rank and thought considering their position, which has made Tawhiao, Tapihana, and other chiefs endeavour to bring the people to a better mode of thought and action—the new religion apparently being commenced with this object.

The Winiata murder has somewhat marred the views of these chiefs. There are so many extraordinary stories in circulation anent this man, that it is difficult to know which to believe. I am beginning to doubt whether Tawhiao has yet expressed an opinion as to this man's appearance at Te Kuiti. It is strange that he has never alluded to this person once in my hearing or to me. Of course the object of his relatives is to circulate stories of Tawhiao's screening him, in the hope that this may make him do it (on the principle of giving a dog a bad name). Tawhiao last Tuesday was at Te Kauri.

The Natives who are not related to Winiata generally condemn his retention.

A meeting is now being held at Hikurangi, at which it is said the subject of Winiata's detention will be discussed. A great many Natives from Aotea and Kawhia have gone to it. Winiata himself is said to be somewhere between Te Waotu and Te Uira.

Public Works.

No public works have been performed by the Natives in this district during the past year.

Crops.

The Natives living at Whaingaroa were most unfortunate with their potato crops, the heavy floods which occurred last November destroying some, while other plantations were carried away and buried in land slips, and others again had the seed washed out of the ground by the heavy rains.

The grain crops, I am sorry, were of no extent this season, but the kumeras appear pretty fair. At Kawhia and Aotea the inhabitants suffered very little from the flood. There were one or two small patches of cultivations destroyed by land slips.

The crop of potatoes at Torea is a very prolific one, and there are also one or two good maize plantations. I anticipate the local tribes will make a demand on the Government for food this winter; and if I may be permitted, I would suggest that they be employed in improving the Waipa road, which sadly requires repairing. This would not only be beneficial to the district, but would be a ready means of feeding these Natives through the coming winter.