

the rising, rapidly returned to it, and those rigidly excluded from the district south of the Waingongoro sought a refuge among them.

11. This reoccupation of the country took place with the tacit, or more than tacit, permission of successive Governments; and it was generally understood, and indeed officially recorded by Sir D. McLean, that the confiscation of lands between the Waingongoro and Stoney River had been abandoned by the Government, even if no actual announcement that this was so were made to the Natives. That it was determined to restore it to the Native owners we are expressly told by Sir G. Grey, but whether that intention was directly or indirectly made known to those whom it concerned must remain uncertain.

12. Between 1872 and 1875, 185,000 acres of land between the Waingongoro and Waitotara were purchased from the Natives,—an apparent recognition of their title,—whilst every year which passed without a grant of the special reserves promised by the Proclamation of 1865 naturally deepened the impression that the Government had waived all claim to any part of the district. Still, the confiscation was never formally removed, and the Natives were informed by Major Brown in 1876 that “the Government possessed a right to do what they pleased within the confiscated boundaries,” an announcement which the terms of the Proclamation of 1865 would hardly appear to justify.

13. In 1877, and before any arrangement had been effected as to the relative interests of the Government and the Natives in the land, it was determined to survey and sell a portion of this district. The Royal Commissioners are clearly of opinion that no difficulties would have arisen in the attainment of these objects had the Natives been previously consulted, and ample reserves assigned to those entitled to anticipate them. This precaution however was not taken, and it is clear that great uneasiness existed in the minds of the Natives as to the intentions and claims of the Government, as to which it appears, from the report of the Royal Commissioners, that they were left in complete uncertainty. They knew that no steps had been taken to carry out the promises of 1865, and that the Government had hitherto acquiesced in their undisturbed occupation of the whole district in question. But they were also aware that no formal abandonment of the confiscation had taken place, and that there were those who maintained that every acre of the land, including even that inhabited by Natives who had been uniformly loyal, was in truth the property of the Crown, and might be resumed by it at pleasure. The act of the surveyors employed, in taking a road-line for apparently insufficient reasons through a large fenced enclosure belonging to the chief Titokowaru in March, 1879, without his leave and in spite of his objection, appears to have augmented the alarm of the Natives, and to have caused very great uneasiness as to the intentions of the Government, and especially to the chief Te Whiti, whose action and authority have so largely affected the events with reference to which I shall now have to write. It therefore becomes necessary to give some account of the character and position of this remarkable man.

14. Te Whiti, though himself a chief, is not one of the highest rank, and owes his power mainly to his individual qualities. He was one of those who had declined to take part against the Government in 1865, though many, if not most, of his tribe then did so. In 1868 he successfully used his already large influence to keep back those who were under its authority from joining the outbreak under Titokowaru, during the whole continuance of which he and his people remained quiet at Parihaka. The next ten years witnessed the rapid growth and development of his influence. Educated by a Lutheran missionary, and deeply versed in the Scriptures, he has, nevertheless, whilst professing not to have abandoned the Christian faith, preached a vague and mystical religion, of which he is himself the prophet. Eloquent and subtle, and animated by an unquestionably earnest patriotism, he has for many years exercised a powerful, and, for the most part, beneficial, sway over the hearts and lives, not only of his own tribe, but of a large section of the Maori population. Where his influence extends, drunkenness is unknown, industry is exacted, and peace sedulously inculcated.

15. The Natives, say the Royal Commissioners, “had every reason to believe that the land would be sold without any reserves being made for them;” and it is clear that Te Whiti shared this belief, and would have been far from unwilling to

Second Report,
pp. xvii., xx., xxi.
Sir D. McLean's
minute, 20th De-
cember, 1871.
Telegram, Grey to
Sheehan, June 13,
1879.

Brown, Report,
9th January,
1877.

Second Report,
pp. xxvi., xxvii.,
xxviii.

Second Report,
p. xxx.