

this: this Government does not make presents of this kind. I think a spirit of independence should be cultivated amongst the people, and that when they want these things they should pay for them, the same as the Europeans have to do. We want to guard against the people becoming a race of beggars, for nothing is more degrading to a people than to be continually asking alms and assistance. Now assistance has been asked—that the Government shall give the Natives some fencing-wire, if they will supply the labour. The Government assists Europeans to make the roads, and therefore should assist the Natives. I think, therefore, that you have made a very proper request and a very liberal offer. This is a public work, and you offer to do a portion of it if the Government will do the remainder. I therefore accept your offer, and the Government will contribute the wire. With respect to arms and ammunition, the restrictions at the present time are not severe. Any respectable Native can, by applying to the Resident Magistrate, obtain as much ammunition as he pleases for shooting birds. The restrictions do not apply to respectable Natives, but only to those of bad character; and I suppose we are agreed that there are bad characters amongst the Natives as there are amongst the Europeans; but if any respectable man wants a gun all he has to do is to ask the Resident Magistrate for permission to buy one. Now, with regard to the request that has been made that the name of Ihaka Ngapaura should be placed in a block of land, I am sorry to say that the law does not permit that to be done. The list of names has been finally made up and cannot now be altered; but I recognize that there has been some mistake in excluding the name of Ihaka from the list of names, and I would make this suggestion and convey it in the nature of a recommendation, that the people themselves combine together to give Ihaka a piece of land. You have got the land amongst you, and nothing is easier than to arrange that Ihaka shall have a portion of it. A request has been made that Te Ngae shall be made a polling-place in future for Maori elections. I am told that there are sixty residents there. That shall be done. You have referred to a grant of land made to the missionaries many years ago, and you say that, since that land has been leased and is paying rent, it should be restored to the original owners, and taken away from the missionaries. You assume that it is not now used for religious purposes, but that is hardly correct; the rents are used by the missionaries for religious purposes, I presume. The land must have been originally given by the Native chiefs, otherwise it could not have been given into the possession of the missionaries, and I am told that it is now held under Crown grant. Now, you know that a Crown grant cannot be disturbed. Their title is complete, and cannot be disturbed now. My advice to you, therefore, is to let the missionaries remain undisturbed in the land. You have asked that a public pound shall be established at Te Ngae. The Act that was passed last session gives to the local bodies the power of erecting pounds; but it also gives to the Natives the right of suing for trespass. If the European cattle trespass upon your grounds and destroy your crops, you have the right of suing them in the Magistrate's Court. You have also the further right under the Act to make a pound on your own land. But you are required in a certain time to drive the cattle to some pound at a distance. The Impounding Act of last session was a very important Act—important to both races—and I am consequently having a translation made of it into Maori, when I intend to circulate it amongst the people of the colony. Now you have asked for a letter-box at Te Ngae, and you propose that a Committee shall be appointed to take charge of the letters. The coach passes Te Ngae, and therefore I think there will be no difficulty in arranging the matter, and I shall bring it before the Postmaster-General on my return to Wellington, and ask him to grant your request. Now a subject of great importance has been brought before me. (I think I have answered the fifteen subjects, and I hope you are all satisfied.) Te Kiri has referred to the ancestor of the Maori people, a stone image. I cannot understand how a stone image can be your ancestor; but I am told that it was brought in the first Maori canoe to New Zealand, and that it is highly prized by the Arawa people, more especially by the people of Mokoia. Now that stone image has been somewhat desecrated: it has actually been placed for safe custody in a police cell, and I should like to assist you to have your ancestor restored to the Island of Mokoia, where it remained for five hundred years. But I have one little difficulty to surmount. You sold the image to the European, and got the money. The European says that this ancestor of yours is his own, and he thinks so much of the ancient progenitor of the Maori race that he is determined to stick to it. What am I to do in such a case as that? He says that no money will buy it back again. Now, I may say this, if you can only arrange with the pakeha to get the image back again, I will undertake to have it restored to Mokoia, for I freely admit that this is a more proper place for your ancestor than a police cell. If you will only assist me I am ready to do what I possibly can to have the image once more restored. Can I say any more? It is for you to advise the remedy, and I will assist you in applying it. I have been asked to appoint a Native Assessor, and I am informed that a Native Assessor has lately died—an important chief amongst you. That is a reasonable request, and I will have it done. Assessors are not now paid by the Government, except when they perform some duty. We recognize that it is a position of trust and confidence, the same as a Justice of the Peace amongst the Europeans. We wish to make it a position of honour, so that the best man in the tribe will be appointed an Assessor. If you will select one from among yourselves, and send me his name, I will have the appointment made. I am not so sure about the policeman. If you are going to exclude drink from amongst you, there will be no necessity for the appointment of a policeman. No matter what people say, the Arawa are not thieves, but people often become thieves through drink; if, therefore, you are going to give up drink, there will be no necessity for the policeman. We will wait and see the result of that effort before the appointment is made. You have referred to your doctor, and I understood from that reference that you do not wish an European physician to be appointed amongst you, but that your doctor was in your hot spring. Was I right in placing that interpretation on your words? [Yes.] Well, the Government are prepared to assist you in repairing this spring, but I am not sure that we can keep back the lake. Water finds its level, and I am afraid that when the lake rises the spring will rise too. However, we will do what we can to assist you in the matter. Now I would like to tell you what the Government are doing on the mainland with regard to medical assistance. Under the agreement for handing over the Township of Ohinemutu, it has been arranged