

who have passed away—following in the footsteps of those who are no longer amongst us. Governments have come and Governments have passed away, and in this way have our parents and our parents' parents passed away from off the face of the earth, and so it will go on. We are now searching out in these days, endeavouring to ascertain the proper path whereby we may proceed. Hence it is that the power of the land is exerted now in the earnest endeavour that good may be achieved, and therefore it is that the Premier, who is also Native Minister, accompanies me that he may visit the children of the soil. It would not be so satisfactory if you were merely communicating with the Premier by telegraph or letter. It is infinitely better that you should see him and he see you face to face, that he may see the land itself, and the survivors of the race who are occupying it. The Native race is not able to suppress the growing desire of the more powerful race, the Europeans. The European race is the dominant race in this island at the present time, they are passing some very great laws in the great Assembly House of the colony, and whatever the Native race may do, even though they appoint their own Parliament, and go away into corners and endeavour to pass legislation for themselves, they cannot detach themselves from the ruling forces at work in the colony. The salvation of the Native race will be to become united and work as one with the Europeans, and give their attention to dealing with the lands in the best and most profitable way, and for the benefit of all parties concerned. In my opinion the Native race should give in their strict adherence to the Government, and the Government would be to them as a father unto his children, and by that means the Native race will gain advantages. If the Maori race remain as an orphan, as one who has lost its parent, there will be no guiding influence, one tribe will go in one direction and one in another, and no good will come of it, but, I say, let the Natives work in a consolidated manner. You are possessed of vast areas of land, and what are you doing with it? There is a great deal of talk about it, but what good is being produced from it? The land is lying idle, nothing is being done. The land is as a mother to us all. Just compare what you do with your lands and what the Europeans do with theirs. If the European possesses a single acre he renders it productive, but you who have thousands of acres allow your land to remain unproductive and useless, your land passes away from you and then you raise your voice and clamour loudly. I think you should deal with your lands in conformity with the Act passed last session. Keep as much as you can utilise for yourselves, and the surplus lands which you cannot utilise, pass them over to the Government, and they will deal with them so that they will become profitable to you. The Act I refer to lays down distinctly how your best interests can be conserved. That is a matter which my friend the Premier will refer to presently. An innovation introduced by the present Government in the transfer of land will prove to your benefit. It is that, by selling the land to the Government, the owners can draw interest on the purchase-money, and by this means every year the accruing interest of this money would be drawn, while the principal would remain intact. By this means the Natives are assured of a regular income in case of misfortune befalling them, for they still have the annual interest on the purchase-money coming to them. This is a new feature in the policy of the present Government, and it is for the tribes now to benefit from the advantages that system offers. You all complained that the laws passed acted injuriously towards you. Supposing I were to say to you, "What law should we have?" could you answer it? We know the evils of the past, it is for us now to determine what remedies should be adopted to correct those errors. Sir Donald McLean has passed away, he who was as a parent to you. Since his time many troubles have arisen. We wish now to bring back to life the good understanding that formerly existed. Let the Government be again your parent, so that you may work together. My friend the Premier is not a Minister against the Native race, he is a Minister who is desirous of looking after the very best interests of the Natives. He is head of Native affairs in this colony, he is at the summit. I have spoken to you only in a general way. The Premier himself will presently address you. I will speak of the Premier as I have seen him, and this I assert, that whatever he says he will do he will stick to. In addressing him there is no occasion to beat about the bush or go in a roundabout way to give effect to your utterances. Speak straight-out, and he will speak straight-out to you. I will say another word to you—the land owned by the Natives not yet adjudicated upon cannot be allowed to remain in that state, the titles must be ascertained, the law must be brought into operation, so that the owners may be determined, and individual interests known and ascertained, once that is done, you are then free to utilise the land. I do not wish to take up any more of your time. I have only just touched upon the headings of things. There is one who will speak after me who will probably deal more fully with these matters. In conclusion, I wish to thank you for the kind reception you have given us to-day. I am glad to have the pleasure of meeting those who supported me in my former contest, when representing the Eastern Maori District on two distinct occasions, at the general elections, and returned me as their representative in Parliament. In this more recent contest I decided to represent a European constituency, and it was with this object that we the Natives should pull together with the European races, not to retrace our steps and go back to the old Maori ways, which do not now fit in, and, furthermore, I felt that in representing a European constituency I would be able to do justice to my fellow-countrymen the Natives, as well as the Europeans. With regard to the request made about going to Poro Poro, my friend the Premier will speak in reference to that. The distance from here to Poro Poro is short, and there should be no difficulty in the people of Poro Poro coming here to Whakatane. However, the question of moving about is of small importance. The Premier will think over it by-and-by.

The Premier I was so very pleased with the song of welcome with which you greeted me that I would like to have it in my ears before I commence to speak.

Tamati Waaka here repeated the song of welcome.

At the conclusion the Premier said,—I thank you very kindly indeed. I desire to express to all here of the Native race the very great pleasure indeed that I feel in being with them to-day. It is to me all the more pleasant because the way in which they have spoken to me shows that they