

1856.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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USE OF ARDENT SPIRITS BY NATIVES.

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*Transmitted to the House April 29, 1856, and ordered to be printed.*

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THOMAS GORE BROWNE,  
Governor.

*Message No. 9.*

The Governor transmits to the House of Representatives the accompanying copies of letters, together with their translation, from the Waikato Native Tribes, addressed to the Governor and the General Assembly, praying the enactment of a law for the prevention of the sale of spirits to the Natives.

Government House,  
Auckland, 29th 1856.

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TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE ASSEMBLY.

FRIEND THE GOVERNOR,—Salutations to you, the father of all the tribes in New Zealand. Father, be you loving to us, and cause to be removed from us this death of misery, that is to say, the spirits.

This is our word to you—do not let any intoxicating drinks come to this land, to Waipa, but let it be kept there [*i. e.*, Auckland] at the inns. Let the Maori law, which has been assented to by all the chiefs of this place and Waikato, be sacred, namely, that the Natives be not allowed to drink spirits.

If the Natives persist in drinking spirits, let them pay for their offence; and if they have no payment, let him [the singular number “ia” is often used to denote a tribe or people] be sent to Hobart Town, there to die.

Friend the Governor, let the law be of an enlightened nature; let it be based upon the principles of the Gospel that God may be glorified in this land, for we have been saved by the Gospel from error and numerous calamities.

If we had done evil to the Europeans, it would be right for them to deceive us. Bear in mind those Natives who disregard this law; be not undecided (in regard to punishing those who break the law) whether they are Europeans or Natives.

God claims the Maori people, and claims the Europeans; and the Maori people are the subjects of the Queen, as are also the Europeans the Queen’s subjects, therefore let there be one principle of action in all things.

Let us be instructed in good things, in good principles. Some of our actions have become good, because we have been instructed by the Word of God.

This is our word to you, O Father, let this drink be done away with; that is to say, this death, for it is not food, but death.

Our calamities in former times were like those brought about by the indulgence in spirits, we were bewitched or maddened with our own passions; but those evils have passed away by the Word of God, and they are being given back to us by intoxicating drinks.

This is the worst thing hitherto brought to New Zealand.

Friend,