

Rev. T. Buddle

9 Oct. 1850.

495. Was the Maori King movement in your opinion the expression of a desire on the part of the Natives for self-government?—Most decidedly it was.

496. And that desire under proper directions would not have been antagonistic to the interests of the two races?—Quite the reverse in my opinion.

497. Was there then in your opinion any danger in giving direction to the desire for self-government under judicious management?—None whatever.

498. That is as regards the interests of the two races; now do you think there was any danger as between the various sections of the Waikato tribes, assuming always judicious management?—I believe that had the leading Chiefs been enlisted in the project the various hapu's would have gradually come into it.

499. Then in your opinion the movement in the Native mind at that time towards some plan of self-government would, if well managed, have tended to promote peace instead of to provoke collision?—I believe it would have preserved peaceful relations between those Tribes and the Government.

500. You have heard Mr. Hobbs' letter read; do you generally concur in it?—Most heartily.

501. *Mr. Domett.*] Will you refer to a passage in your pamphlet at page 41, viz.; speaking of the great Waikato meeting on the 25th May 1860, you say: "Wiremu Nera evidently felt greatly disappointed that the Lower Waikatos were throwing themselves so decidedly in'o the movement. It was expected that they would throw the weight of their influence into the opposite scale and he was relying upon them for support"?—I should state that in consequence of their being abandoned at that time they were being gradually absorbed by the King party.

502. *Mr. Williamson.*] How long were you acquainted with Potatau?—Nearly from the time of my coming into the country.

503. Did you know him to be a Chief of great influence?—I think he was one of the most influential chiefs in the country.

504. Was his influence local or was it general?—General throughout New Zealand.

505. Did he continue to possess this influence to the time of his death notwithstanding his advanced years?—He did.

506. How long have you known Wiremu Nera Te Awaitaia?—For 20 years. I resided at Whaingaroa (Nera's residence) about nine months.

507. Did you reside at Waipa?—I did.

508. Was Wiremu Nera a Chief of much influence?—Second to none but Potatau in Waikato; he was, in fact, Potatau's fighting general in all the old wars; when he embraced Christianity, Potatau said, "I have lost my right hand."

509. Supposing that either of these Chiefs had objected to Mr. Fenton's proceedings, and stated their objections to the Government, do you think it would have been wise in the Government to have overlooked those objections and allowed Mr. Fenton to proceed?—By no means.

510. Do you consider it would have been possible to have removed their objections (if made) by perseverance in judicious management?—I think so, either by instructions to Mr. Fenton or by superseding him.

511. Mr. Fenton says, in a note (page 9) "Wiremu, chief of Whaingaroa, expressed his readiness to settle the greater part of his tribe near Whatawhata on the Waipa, if I thought it advisable, proposing to sell land and raise money to commence a farm like the one at Kohanga: but the residents here do not place any faith in this Maori." From what you know of the residents of Whaingaroa, do you consider that this statement was correct?—From what I know of Wiremu Nera's character and the estimation in which he is held at Whaingaroa, I should say that statement was incorrect.

512. *Mr. Heale.*] As it was, the mistake having been made of not sufficiently conciliating the old Chiefs, and a certain amount of agitation having arisen therefrom, do you think that that was advancing to a point which threatened collision between the Natives themselves?—I never heard anything that would have led me to form that conclusion.

513. Then you think that, although Mr. Fenton's proceedings created a more marked demarcation of the parties, no immediate danger was to be apprehended therefrom?—I never heard of any.

514. At all events, not any such as to demand a cessation of such an attempt, but only a modification of it?—Certainly not an abandonment of the plans that had been attempted.

515. Has not that cessation strengthened the King party, and greatly discouraged the loyal Natives?—Undoubtedly.

516. *Mr. Domett.*] You alluded to the consideration of the younger Chiefs for the older ones; has not this diminished to some extent of late years?—I am not prepared to say it has diminished to any extent; the old Chiefs are still regarded with great respect.

517. Then at all events it had not so diminished as to admit of the co-operation of the old chiefs not being necessary?—I think the result of Mr. Fenton's administration is an answer to that.

518. You disapprove of the abandonment of the attempt to introduce Civil Institutions; but may not a temporary suspension of the more active proceedings have been considered useful?—I believe it to have been mischievous, to have lost us the hold we had on the Waikato District, discouraged the Natives who were disposed to support the Government, and estranged them from us.