

these tribes others who might be partially or wholly disaffected. I pointed out the advantage of having representatives of different tribes in the District Runanga, which would possess a jurisdiction in cases of dispute about land; this was admitted. I found also, both here and generally throughout the district, that the proposed constitution of the District Runanga did not appear to meet the wishes of the Natives, the same exceptions being invariably taken to it whenever the question was discussed. There is reason to fear that a Runanga consisting only of men chosen from among the Assessors would not possess the confidence of the people, who would not consider themselves properly represented in an Assembly so constituted. As, however, in the instructions under which I was acting, I found the District Runanga described as composed of "Resident Magistrates, Chiefs and Assessors," I met the objection by explaining what I conceived to be the intention of the Government, and suggested that under the head of "Chiefs," persons might be selected by the tribes or local Runangas to represent them in the District Runanga. With reference to local Runangas, I pointed out that no provision for their constitution appeared in the scheme as set forth in the Government document; yet, as I understood it to be the wish of the Government that the Maori Runangas should be recognised, I was prepared, subject to the Governor's approval, to sanction the appointment of Runangas in the principal Native settlements or localities. I saw no objection to appointing one Runanga for Maketu, its members to be chosen by the residents irrespectively of tribal distinctions, if all would unite in nominating a limited number of intelligent men to compose such a Runanga. This proposal was agreed to, and a Runanga was accordingly appointed for Maketu, consisting of thirteen members; the old Chiefs pledging themselves to give it their full support, and to transfer to it whatever "mana" or authority they possessed over their respective tribes or hapus. Among the favourable indications observed by me in communicating with the Natives throughout the district occupied by the Arawa, the existence of a good understanding between the old Chiefs and the younger and more intelligent leading men on the subject of establishing institutions for the government of the people struck me as contrasting with the state of things formerly prevailing. There appears now to be a disposition on both sides to act in concert. The old men appreciate the superior knowledge and intelligence of the younger Chiefs, who, on their part, seek rather to enlist the authority of the former on their side, than to subvert or ignore it. In appointing several of the Runangas, it was stipulated that the old Chiefs should be considered honorary members, allowed to be present at but not required to take part in the deliberations. At Maketu, as at most of the other places, the question of pay for the members was strongly urged, on the ground that the Runanga really did the work which the Assessors received pay for doing. I pointed out that the Runangas had hitherto very improperly usurped the functions of the Magistrate, and that this abuse must be put a stop to for the future; that the function of the Runanga was to devise rules for the guidance of the Magistrate, but that the administration of the law, the adjudication in cases of dispute, pertained solely to him. As, however, under the law which it was proposed to bring into operation, the Magistrate might in certain cases be assisted by a jury, the Runanga, or certain of its members, might assist the Magistrate in that capacity as required. The Runanga might also act as a local board for managing the public business of the community, making arrangements for carrying on public works, such as making roads, building schools or court houses, &c.; all questions affecting the community should be referred to the Runanga, which should also consider and put into shape any proposed regulations for submission to the District Runanga. With reference to the question of pay, I endeavoured to show that it would be unreasonable to expect the Government to do more than make some provision for defraying incidental expenses; this I was prepared to recommend, and promised to bring the matter under the notice of the Government; I reminded them that the Pakeha Runanga was not paid, and that if every member of a Maori Runanga were to receive a salary, the funds would be exhausted and there would be nothing left for paying the Assessors and other officers. This kind of reply was generally sufficient. At Maketu, it was decided that the Runanga should enter upon the exercise of its functions at once, leaving the question of remuneration or provision for expenses to be decided by the Government. A Chairman and Secretary were appointed forthwith, the duties of these officers being duly explained, and rules for the conduct of business suggested. The Runanga was then invited to consider what appointments would be necessary under the heads of Assessors and Police for Maketu and its neighbourhood, extending to Kenana on the Kaituna river, and to Otamarakau on the coast. It was decided that the two Assessors already appointed would be sufficient under that head, and that a chief Police officer with three or four subordinates would be required. Persons suitable for these offices were to be selected by the Runanga at its next meeting, and their names submitted for approval.

On Monday, December 30th, I proceeded inland to Te Rotoiti, a distance of about twenty-five miles, accompanied by Mr. Clarke, two Native Assessors, and several Native Chiefs, to meet the Ngatipikiao; who had assembled at Pukeko, where a large flour mill is in course of erection by that tribe. We found upwards of two hundred collected. The result of two days' discussion, in which the Natives themselves took the principal part, was the unanimous assent of the Chiefs and people to the adoption of the new system. Some of the old Chiefs spoke with much feeling, referring to the loss of the flower of the tribe in feuds which might have been prevented under a better system. They welcomed me as returning to offer again a boon which they had once slighted, but which they were now eager to receive; appealing to me whether they had ever before, as a united people, made similar professions, or consented to give up their old Maori customs or to acknowledge the authority of the Government or the Queen's laws. A Runanga was appointed for Te Rotoiti and Okataina, uniting the various hapus of the Ngatipikiao with the Ngatitarawhai. Assessors and officers of police were also nominated. Reference was made to the land ceded by this tribe to the Government in 1850 as an endowment for a hospital, and the hope expressed that the hospital would yet be built on the land, and a medical man appointed.