

Took up our quarter's in Piripi's school-house, a capital Maori building, some 30 or 40 feet long, by 15 to 20 wide. There is now no school kept, for reasons detailed in Mr. Gorst's report, *quodvult*. Natives soon began to drop in, and after we had had tea, they asked me to tell them the Governor's thoughts. One of them, however, asked why the Governor had not come to tell them himself, as he had done at Taupari. I replied that the Upper Waikato *runangas* had not asked him. He replied that they had, and he had himself written the letter of invitation. The Speaker turned out to be Heta Tuawaiki, Thompson's Secretary, and a discussion followed as to the authenticity of the letter referred to. Heta positively affirmed that they were written by order of the *runangas* of Te Rapa and Ngaruawahia, but he was not supported, and we were told privately that they were not authorised. Heta, however, very properly asked (as his Excellency will remember that I did when the letters were brought to his and my notice, some three or four weeks after they had been received at the Native Office, and laid aside unanswered) "why, if their authenticity was doubted, enquiry had not been made?" This talk lasted a long time, and when it was done we engaged the *runanga* in composing a letter to Thompson, telling him that I had come to see him, and should be in the neighbourhood for ten days. Then I engaged a young man to start the next morning, and if Thompson is really desirous of meeting me, he will probably come to Tamahere by the middle of next week.

24.—Up before sunrise, breakfasted, and rode back to Taupiri (Mr. Ashwell's), where we arrived about 10 a.m. Mr. Ashwell reported considerable excitement among the neighbouring Natives about the troops being taken to the Ia; but Mr. Morgan had told me that as he went up the Waipa, he did not find much excitement, though they did not like it. I think Mr. Ashwell over-estimates it.

25th, (Christmas-day).—Attended church service at the Mission Church. A large attendance of children, many of whom had come from Paetai and elsewhere to keep Christmas. In the afternoon there was a very interesting Missionary meeting, the especial object of which was to raise funds to assist in sending Eruera, a Native teacher, educated by Mr. Ashwell, as a missionary to the Melanesian group under Bishop Patteson. Eruera himself, and several other Natives, spoke very well. There was a collection, to which I observed many of the school children contribute pennies. I enquired how they became possessed of money, and was told that Roka, of Paetai, who had brought her children to spend Christmas, brought a cargo of kumeras with them, by the sale of which she raised some pence, which she gave to these children that they might be able to contribute.

In the evening two Natives came down from Ngaruawahia, to see me about a report which had reached them that soldiers would be sent to the Ia. All the Ngaruawahia Natives, but themselves, had gone to the *hui*, at Hangitikei. They expressed themselves as greatly startled "at the report," and wanted to know if it were true. I told them it was, and gave them the Governor's reasons for the step, laying particular stress on the Patumahoe affair of last year, and reminding them that the Ia was the Queen's land. The former ground is one which they cannot deny affords a good reason, though they say as no harm came from it, and it was not in Governor Grey's time, he ought not to notice it. The latter they admit is "Tika," that we have the right to move troops on the Queen's land where we like. But they say it makes them suspicious that we mean to attack them. I replied that wise Kings and Governors use their soldiers not to attack people, but to prevent war by locating them in places where they may stop fighting; that the soldiers would be like the policemen, whom they might have seen in Auckland, who do not seize every man by the throat, but only such as they see doing wrong, and that the fact of their being ready to seize wrong doers prevents wrong being done. "Well," said they, "that may be true; but when a man builds a gaol, he means to put somebody into it; and it is seldom long till he has some one there. So it will be with the soldiers, if they are put convenient for fighting, there will soon be fighting." I told them that that was not so; that when Governor Grey went to the Cape, he found troubles just like the troubles here, and he located ten regiments of soldiers in the same way on the frontier, and there had been no fighting. I then told them that Governor Grey did not wish to fight about the King, and that the Queen did not wish it. If Her Majesty had wished to fight with the King, she would have kept Governor Browne here, who began the fighting, and not sent Governor Grey, who was their friend formerly, and did them good for many years when they lived at peace. I reminded them that His Excellency had ever since he was young been trying to do good to the Natives of different countries, in South Australia, in New Zealand, and in Africa; and that when he heard there was trouble and fighting here, he came here hoping to stop it, and to put things right again. "Then why does he begin by bringing soldiers?" "I have told you he brings them only to prevent fighting." "Ah, that is what Governor Browne said when he took soldiers to Taranaki. He said he was not going to fight; but he no sooner got his soldiers there than fighting began. How can we believe Governor Grey after that?" There was too much truth in this, Governor Browne having told the Natives he did not intend fighting, after the proclamation of Martial Law had been privately prepared and sent to Colonel Murray. I could only reply by saying, "That then there was a quarrel about land, whether it was the Queen's land or not; here there was no quarrel about land, and the troops would only be on that land which the Natives themselves admitted was Queen's land." I told them also that the soldiers would be employed in making roads on the Queen's land, from Maungatawhiri to Auckland, and to Waiuku and other places. They expressed great anxiety that the soldiers should not be allowed to cross the river at any time,—they did not mean the officers who behaved well, but they were afraid that if the private soldiers were allowed to cross to the Maori ground, there would be mischief. I told them that I had no doubt that the Governor would direct that no soldier should cross the river, and that if any did, they should be brought back by the Maoris, and the General