

construction of roads were the work they had been set to do. If men say they are not sick, they are made to work, otherwise they are not. Bob sometimes makes them work. Their prayers have been interfered with. They were asked whether their prayers were Hau Hau, and some of their number gave information that they were. When disobedient, they were kicked and cuffed. He was not here when the examination took place.

Horomona Tutahi (Bishop's Teacher): "Their troubles were not very great. One cause was the exposing of the men and women. The second, the interference with their prayers. People came in smoking when they were praying." On being asked who did this, he said "Bob and the guard." He would not have it understood that the officers did this. I had better settle whether they should go or stay.

Epena Tupuna gave the usual expressions of welcome. "The fault was all with him because he rose against the Bishop; he was here very justly. If told to go he will go, and if told to stay he will stay. The Government sent them here, and they were all very happy. Don't let Government take them away one by one. Let them all go or all stay."

Henare Pata (Omaranui): "Mr. McLean's words were 'Be quiet.' His crime had been the following of a strange God. Their prayers were interfered with, owing perhaps to the action of their own people." They have done as Mr. McLean told them. The interference with their prayers was the only real complaint. He wished I should so arrange that there will be no more of this.

Rewi (Wairoa). He was ashamed to come forward because of his crimes. Spoke of the kindness of the Government in allowing some to go back; but did not wish it to be left to them to decide whether they should go.

Nikora (Assessor, Omaranui,) sang a song of welcome and love for their old country; then greeting and acknowledgment of the love of the Government. Objected to only part going.

Karanama gave similar expressions of welcome and good feeling, and of his own repentance and gratitude. Alluded to the shooting of a prisoner. They were satisfied that no blame was due on that account. Captain Thomas saw to that. When they had to go to work, if not quick, they were told to "hook it;" and then they were kicked and struck with the fist. Elliott is the man who has done this. I have told Captain Thomas of that word. I inquired whether this had often happened. He replied: "Hemi Pakuru was told to 'hook it' when sick. He was killed through work. Meihana I saw kicked at Tikitiki: that caused sickness and he is dead. Te Atarau was another. From the same cause he is sick. These are the men I have seen: also Ropata and Herewini. To this day I have done no wrong to those in command. Why, if you have come to show love to us, do you select one and leave another."

Karanama (No. 2): "As to the words of the last speaker and of Nepia, we have seen the cause of evil in hurrying us to put on our clothes, telling us to "hook it," and kicking us. The word of Captain Tuke was, 'Leave Jehovah and keep to Christ,' alluding, I believe to the Hau Hau partiality for the Old Testament. "He threatened to shoot us for following Hau Hau practices." He proceeded to complain of the examination of the women, and the general neglect of the medical officer.

Petere (Omaranui) sang a song of the war from the beginning.

Hohepa Taka Taka said he would rather stay behind.

Hemi Taka Te Whiwhi came forward somewhat ecstatically, said he would take his name Wharekauri to Wellington. He laid down at my feet a carved stick.

Wirihana said he would go, though it was not his wish.

Rawiri: "I will go."

Heta: "I will go."

Puka: "I will go."

Tipene: "I will go."

Epena Tupuna gave a song.

Horomona Tutahi said he would go, as it was the thought of the Government; would like to take his son Tamati Petera, who was ill; he was anxious to take him. I told him I would inquire into the case. I ascertained from the doctor afterwards, and from seeing Tamati myself, that he was quite unfit to move. He pressed very urgently to be taken, alleging that if Horomona was taken there would be no one to take care of him. I told him he was unfit to go, and on asking Horomona whether he would stay and take care of him, he said he would. The sight of the two men with tears in their eyes was one of the most touching I have seen.

Henere Pata said: "As to work for Europeans, his work was hard, and his pay was small. When on road work at Kaingaroa he got no pay, and at Wharekauri he received no pay. He thought that if they worked at a distance they ought to be paid, as it was not properly Government work. At Wharekauri he got three and a-half bags of flour, and when Major Edwards came he got payment for some work."

Nikora spoke again, expressing satisfaction generally, and saying that it only remained for them to obey their rulers, and to pray to God.

Nepia said that he thought if they worked for Captain Thomas they should receive no pay; but that if they worked for any one else they should—even if working for the doctor or Mr. Shand.

Heremaia complained of the doctor, who does not know his work, and says men are shamming. They are sent to work and die.

SIR,—

Waitangi, 28th January, 1868.

At the meeting which took place yesterday evening with the prisoners certain statements were made to which I wish to draw your attention.

First: The Natives complain of harshness of treatment on the occasion of their being called on to go to their work, and that they have been subjected to kicks and blows for not responding with sufficient alacrity to the instructions of the non-commissioned officers set over them.

They complain, secondly: Of interference with their religious worship; and,

Thirdly: That on one occasion they were subjected to an unnecessary indignity in the exposure of their persons for a medical examination.

General negligence on the part of the Medical Officer was also complained of, and there is