

No. 4.

Mr. CLARKE to Mr. HALSE.

SIR,—

Civil Commissioner's Office, Auckland, 3rd February. 1871.

In continuation of my report of the 27th ultimo, I have the honor to inform you that the "Luna," with the Hon. the Native Minister on board, arrived at Opotiki early on the morning of the 21st ultimo.

A few of the Whakatohea chiefs were in the town and were present at the formal surrender of Te Hira Te Popo and party to the Hon. Mr. McLean. Te Hira spoke earnestly, and regretted his former attitude towards the Government, and stated candidly that he had been misled by the flattering tales of deceivers. He closed his remarks by saying that there were many Natives who were avowedly loyal to the Queen and were friends to the Europeans, but he had resolved to outdo them all in substantial proofs of loyalty. I would here remark that Hira Te Popo, though involved with his tribe generally in the disaffection, has never been known to take up arms against us, and he has, on one or two occasions, chivalrously given us information of intended raids. On one occasion, in particular, when Te Kooti gave out his intention of attacking the Bay of Plenty tribes, he gave warning of the threatened attack.

Immediately on the surrender of Hira to Major Mair, he applied to be allowed to put in crops on some of the reserves; not wishing to be a tax upon the Government; and the result is that he has a considerable breadth of ground under cultivation, and his thriving crops are the admiration of the European settlers of the place. I have very great faith in the sincerity of his declaration of allegiance to the Government, and have more confidence in him than many others of his tribe who make loud protestations of friendship.

The change that has come over the Opotiki military settlement since the last visit of Mr. McLean is very marked. Last April the settlers were dejected, and many of them thoroughly demoralized, consequent, in a great measure, upon the insecure and unsettled state of Native matters; they were never sure when a marauding party might not make its appearance and destroy both them and the fruits of their labours. Now they are contented and comparatively happy. The public-house, the only one in the settlement, is nearly forsaken, and the European inhabitants are occupying their farms, extending up the Opotiki and Waioeka Valleys. A feeling of security pervades the district now that Te Hira and the remnant of the Whakatohea have surrendered themselves, and are now emulating their Pakeha neighbours in the extent of their cultivations.

The best feeling prevails between the two races. I think it will be admitted that this favourable change is mainly attributable to the successes of Majors Kepa and Ropata last year.

In the afternoon of the same day Wiremu Kingi, the chief of the Ngaitai, arrived and held a conference with the Hon. the Native Minister as to the disposal of Nepia Tokitahi and his people, who had submitted to Major Mair. It was decided that Wiremu Kingi should take entire charge of the party for two years, provide them with food until they were able to grow their own crops, and supply them with a piece of land to cultivate upon, for the very reasonable sum of one hundred pounds. As soon as these arrangements were concluded, Nepia Tokitahi was called in and told that he and his people were to take up their quarters with Wiremu Kingi at Torere; and he was desired to bear in mind, that if at any time proofs were produced implicating any of his party in any flagrant crimes, they would be punished according to law.

Wiremu Kingi gave it as his opinion, that bygones ought to be bygones, and that the people should be forgiven, else many of them would be kept in constant terror; and on the other hand some might charge the Government with treachery, for having fed them with their food and having allowed them to be at large, to be pounced upon at some future time. Piahana Tiwai of the Whakatohea also gave the same opinion.

Mr. McLean said that he did not wish those men who had committed great crimes to suppose that by giving themselves up they condoned all offences. The law was above all, and was not dead, and all men committing flagrant crimes would be tried by it.

On Monday Mr. McLean left for Whakatane. It was the intention of Captain Fairchild to take the "Luna" into the river; but as the tide had turned when he arrived off the mouth of the river, he did not consider it prudent to make the attempt. The Hon. the Native Minister, having landed, was received by the assembled Natives, consisting of Ngatiawa, Ngatipukeko, Pahiwai, and surrendered Urewera—the usual congratulatory speeches being given by Wepeha and Hori Kawakura.

Hapurona addressed Mr. McLean, tendered his submission, and stated the present prospects of those people who had come out from the Urewera country. He stated that the land provided for them was most of it either swamp or sand, and that they could not grow a sufficiency of food. He asked that some lands in Whakatane might be allotted them.

The request of Hapurona Kohi was seconded by Hamiora, a chief of the same hapu. He said that it was a fact that they needed both food and clothing.

Rakuraku then spoke on behalf of his branch of the Urewera. He acknowledged the clemency of the Government, and admitted that the flow of blood had been stopped by the consideration of the Native Minister for the Native race.

He was followed by the celebrated Eru Tamaikowha, an independent, free, outspoken man. He said in substance: Welcome, Mr. McLean, the man who called me to come out. I have come out; I have not considered the red stain which marks Whakarae (referring to the killing of Tipene after peace had been made by Major Kemp of Whanganui). I see before me now those who did it; they tried to catch me, but (Eru himself) I was too much for them; they were not gods but men, so I escaped, but I am here now in spite of this. I do not like the invitation to come out here; I will remain in my own country. I do not like the appearance of these people who have surrendered; they are living upon the Government, and we have heard that they are even now begging for food and clothes. I cannot beg, I do not know how; but do not suppose that I have any other reason for not coming out to live on the Coast. My country is open; let the Pakeha and the friendly Natives go through and through it, they shall not