

and invited me to visit their principal kainga Papatupu, and are anxious that some of their chiefs should be appointed as assessors, and that the laws should be duly administered for the future in their district. I would venture to recommend the names of three chiefs as assessors for this important branch of the Wanganui people, viz., Tamati Waka, Taka, and Pou, at such rate of pay as the Government may deem fit to fix. I had a large meeting of these Natives and others in the Aomarama meeting house, on the 22nd instant, at the conclusion of the Court business, and Tahana, Topia, and other chiefs addressed the meeting, and the burden of the speeches was the desirability of the Wanganui tribes being again united as one people, under the protecting shadow of the Queen. Three other principal chiefs, viz., Epiha Heketua, of Pipiriki, formerly an assessor at Waikato, and lately a King magistrate, Ihaia Tataraimaka, also of Pipiriki, and one of the survivors of Hori Patene's party, killed by the 57th regiment at Tataraimaka, and an escaped prisoner from the hulk at Wellington, an aged and influential chief; and Te Rangihuatau of Tieke, Wiremu Pakau's place, leader of the King's forces against General Cameron at Nukumarū, and a very shrewd and intelligent Native, lately introduced to Hon. W. Fox, at Wanganui, were unanimously elected by the meeting as Native assessors for the Upper Wanganui District.

I would here take the liberty of drawing the attention of the Government to the importance of securing the adhesion of these tribes at the present juncture, as their detachment from the King movement is likely to check and weaken the further development of that movement, now on the decline, and to add corresponding strength to the Government party; and an increased expenditure in this direction I look upon as money well spent, and is part of a system that should have been adopted long ago, and at a period when by so doing we might have secured the adhesion of a far larger section of the Maori people to our cause than we did, and have thus avoided much expenditure of both life and money.

I expect to meet Topine, Te Ngarupiki, Parata, and Ihau, and their followers and adherents at Maraekowhai early in April, and the Hon. the Native Minister will recognize said names as being those of some of the most important and influential chiefs in the Island, and second to none in the country.

Amongst the Natives I met at Aomarama, was Toko, one of Topine's chiefs, and he asked me what reward would be given for the capture of Te Kooti. He told me he quite expects his return to the head of this river some day, as he received succour and aid from Topine's people when in distress; and further that he, Te Kooti, said to Toko that it was his intention to return. It is just possible that that wily savage may not be aware of Topine's people being likely to join the Government, and he may even now be on his way back; and therefore if a reward is still out, I should like to know, as Toko has promised to take Kooti if he turns up, and he was asking me what reward would be given for Kooti if taken dead or alive.

I find the feeling in favour of starting a school is gaining ground, and a large meeting will shortly be held to take that and other matters of importance into consideration. I am very sanguine in the matter, and hope ere long to report something definite having been done to accomplish this most important and desirable object.

Topia Turoa I am glad to say, seems most willing to assist me in every way.

I have, &c.,

Henry Halse, Esq., Assistant Under Secretary.

RICHARD WATSON WOON, R.M.

No. 33.

Mr. WOON to Mr. HALSE.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Rutland Hill, Wanganui, 2nd May, 1871.

I have the honor to report that I returned on Saturday evening last from my tour up the Wanganui River as far as Topini's place, Maraekorohai, whither I proceeded on the 20th ultimo, said chief, on learning of my return from Utapu, having at once despatched a number of Natives with a canoe all the way to town, a distance of about 150 miles, to fetch me; and intimating at the same time that if I met with any hindrance from the weather, some twenty more of his natives would be sent on to assist the others, so as to insure my reaching my destination.

I felt highly flattered at the attention shown towards me by the chief Topine on this occasion, and, putting aside other business, responded without delay to his request, and, after a most prosperous journey, arrived at Maraekowhia on Tuesday, the 25th of April. The reception I met with was most gratifying, as all the Natives expressed the greatest delight at seeing me, and gave vent to their feelings in the most expressive manner. On the Thursday evening following, upon the arrival of all the Natives living in the immediate neighbourhood, I held a meeting in the large runanga house, and addressed them at some considerable length, dwelling more particularly on the importance of friendly relations being again established between the races, and the desirability of the Wanganui tribes becoming a united people, and the advantages to be gained by the restoration of peace throughout the country, whereby the interests of both races would be promoted. I further took occasion to bring under their notice the subject of schools, the encouragement of local industries, and other matters that would tend to benefit them, and raise them in the scale of civilization, and at the same time assured them that the Government had their welfare at heart, and would ever be willing to assist them in any attempts they might make to better themselves, and in any effort having for its object their happiness and prosperity as a people.

I have great pleasure in stating that Topine and people heartily concurred in my remarks, and signified their approval of the same in the most unanimous manner, and expressed an earnest wish that I should visit them again soon, and extend my circuits to their settlements, and hold periodical sittings of my Court in their neighbourhood, which I promised to do in the summer months.