

No. 5.

Wi TANA PAPAHA to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

A REPORT OF THE MEETING AT WHANGAPE.

Whangape, 25th January, 1872.

THIS meeting was called to discuss the statements made at a meeting held at Ohacawai, by Wi Katene and his European friend. Therefore was this meeting convened so that all the tribe might hear. There were present the Rarawa of Hokianga, of the West Coast, of Whangape, and Herekino. When they had assembled at the place appointed,

Iehu Ngawaka rose and said, let us proceed to discuss matters.

Wi Tana Papahia: Welcome the tribe. I have not much to say to this meeting. There is much which might be said about the Road Boards, but you have not considered that those subjects should be gone into now. As it is there is one law which has attracted all your attention, and on account thereof this meeting has been called. I will speak of that law to you. By that law, if a man possess but one acre of land he is to pay one penny to the Government; if he has 2,000 acres the same pennies; if he has 200,000 acres, the same pennies up to the time of your death, to the death of your child, of your grandchild, up to the time when men shall cease to exist. That is all I have to say to you.

Te Tai: Welcome the tribe. I have nothing to say. I have only one word to say. It was Ngapuhi who agreed to the treaty of Waitangi formerly, our parents did not understand it, they did not hear of it, they did not see it. Afterwards there was a fight between Ngapuhi and the pakehas, they were defeated. Now, here is a law for collecting money for the Governor upon all the lands; I therefore say that this law for collecting money for the Governor has been agreed to by Ngapuhi. I do not approve of this law. My land is my own, it was not given to me by the Governor, to justify the payment by me of my penny. I do not want to write it as a debt against him. Sufficient.

Te Herewini Te Toko: There is no reason why I should have anything different to say about this new law of the Governor's. All I have to say is that I do not agree to give to the Governor this penny per acre upon our lands, that is to say, the lands of our ancestors which have been left by them to their descendants. We are their descendants, the land is ours; what the Europeans have was sold to them. As it is at present, let further consideration be given to the subject by and by.

Iehu Ngawaka: Welcome my friends. Bring with you the law of the Governor. It was stated in some of his laws, "Survey your lands so that you may have a firm title to them, lest they slip from you into the hands of another tribe." That law was agreed to; the lands were surveyed, and then money had to be paid therefor; then the Crown Grants had to be paid for, and then the applications to the Custodian of the Grants in Wellington had to be paid for. Now, hearken the tribe, do not introduce any new matter, let us all consider one thing; let us all consent to what we approve of, and disagree with what we do not approve of. You are all aware that this new law has not been brought into force by a strange tribe. I think that if we agree to this law we shall suffer for it in this way, that if we allow one year to pass (without paying) our land will be taken. I therefore say let the operation of this Act be confined to the Bay of Islands. The boundary is at the Hokianga River, from the head of the river to the sea and from thence to Herekino, where it ends.

Iehu then said "Shall we then express our disapproval of this law?" All the tribe replied "Yes." He asked the same question again and received the same reply. That concluded the business.

I forward this in order that you may know what all the people in the district have said against this law. Sufficient.

Wi TANA PAPAHA.

No. 6.

The Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER to Wi TANA PAPAHA.

To Wi TANA PAPAHA,—

Wellington, 28th March, 1872.

My friend, salutations. Your letter of the 25th January has been received; it reached Wellington on the 12th March, and I was away at the time and have only just returned. This is why your letter has not been answered sooner.

I am very glad to see that you have had a meeting, and I read the speeches with much interest, because it shows me that the northern tribes are taking a real interest in the legislation of the country.

From what I am able to gather from the speeches at the meeting, it seems to me that you are opposed to the Native Districts Road Boards Act, which was passed in the last session of Parliament.

The opposition appears to be based on two grounds—

1. That the money to be collected by the Road Boards is for the Governor.
2. That the rate is fixed at 1d. per acre over all lands in the district.

Now I must point out to you that the speakers who addressed the meeting are mistaken on both these points.

1. The money to be collected is not for the Governor, or for the Government either, but is to be spent in opening up new roads, and repairing old ones in the district; by which all the people who live in the district are directly benefitted. The Government take no part of the money, on the contrary they give some to help on the roads.

2. The rate to be levied is not fixed at any amount, either 1d. per acre or any other. The way it is done is this: the people, themselves, meet together, and choose from amongst themselves a certain number of people who form a Road Board, for the management of all roads within the district; and the first thing this Board does is to decide what amount of rate is to be paid for road