

perty had been destroyed, and some of whose friends and connections had been killed, and even eaten by the Natives, who were now adopting a new mode of irritation. Is it not plain to every comprehension that the danger of bloodshed and warfare was extreme, notwithstanding the peaceable professions of Te Whiti and the wonderful forbearance of the settlers? The Government of the colony shrunk back apparently appalled and confounded by a condition of affairs in which it had no precedent for a guide, and in which experience seemed of no value. The Maoris who were engaged in the ploughing were, it is true, unarmed; but who could say that the first effort made to resist the outrage should not light a fire which could only be quenched in blood? But the settlers of different districts instinctively took the right course, and determined to stop the ploughing and arrest the ploughmen. They met armed, and, as was inevitable, under high excitement: still, with a self-control deserving of the highest praise, they restrained themselves from excesses, and were content to stop the depredations which were being committed by the arrest of the culprits.

The example set by the settlers was everywhere followed by the Government, and wherever the Natives attempted to plough the land of the settlers they were taken into custody. And the Maoris quietly submitted. It appeared to them that this was a portion of Te Whiti's mysterious plan to secure the domination of the Maori race. They did not understand it; they did not presume to question it; but they had faith in Te Whiti, and they laid their liberty at his feet.

They were apprehended, and charged with forcible entry and malicious destruction of property. But were these the offences of which they had been guilty? They had been guilty of those offences, it is true, but the intention underlying them was of a far graver character, and of a nature fraught with danger to the whole community, and likely to bring swift destruction on themselves, for the merest accident might have produced a war of races.

The situation was exceptional in the highest degree, and required to be dealt with in an exceptional manner. To have tried the prisoners who were taken under these circumstances for the comparatively trivial offences with which they were charged would have been ridiculous, and would by no means have shown a true appreciation of the circumstances of the case. The men could not have been released on the expiration of a short sentence such as the technical offence charged could only have entailed, because in that event the offences would assuredly have been repeated, and very probably in an intensified form. If so rash an experiment as the release of the whole of these men were even now tried, those best acquainted with the Maori character and Native affairs would be the least likely to under-estimate the danger thereby incurred.

Much has been said about the rights of the British subject under Magna Charta, and the writ of *habeas corpus*, but few will be found to deny the right of the State to hold these charters in suspension in great emergencies, or in extreme or highly exceptional circumstances. At any rate, it will be admitted that if it is justifiable in modern times to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* in one of the British Isles, where all the appliances of modern civilization for the preservation of peace are at hand, it can scarcely be a matter of question that here in New Zealand, in the extraordinary circumstances of the case, a similar or greater justification may fitly be pleaded.

Since the termination of the "ploughing of the belly of the Government," other modes of "trying the heart of the pakeha" have been resorted to, such as the persistent erection of fences across the road in course of construction on the West Coast; and further arrests have in consequence been rendered necessary. These call for no additional remark, being merely further manifestations of the same feeling which caused the ploughing the settlers' land. There is, however, one phase of the mental condition of the Maori which it is necessary to refer to. From previous remarks in this paper it will be evident that Te Whiti has an overwhelming influence over the minds of the Maoris who are attached to him, and I have indicated some of the causes which have produced that result, but I have not yet alluded to what certainly is now the principal reason for the chief's power and influence. The Maoris not only had faith in Te Whiti as a man able to do them good, but they feared him, and particularly they feared Tohu, who is Te Whiti's relative and associate. This was no trifling feeling. I am convinced that it has been a feeling far exceeding in its intensity the ordinary fear of death. It is now, I hope and believe, passing away, but it would be difficult to over-estimate the strength it once possessed. Even at the present moment it possesses a force difficult to describe. Their faith that Te Whiti can ever become the ruler of the country, or can make the Maoris the dominant race, has faded and is gone; the expectation that he will achieve any good thing for them has almost left their thoughts: but the horrible dread of being *makutued*, bewitched, or bedeviled to death, is an ever-present fear. They adhere to Te Whiti and obey him because they dare not do otherwise. I have myself heard a chief whose feelings towards us were of the most friendly character, and whose rank in the West Coast tribes was higher than that of either Te Whiti or Tohu, declare that he dared not refuse to send supplies to the Parihaka monthly gathering; and, although he was a man of undaunted courage, I have seen him tremble with dread while he avowed his fear.

To give another illustration of this peculiar feature of the case. Men have been sent down from Parihaka to obstruct the road by fencing, and I have personally again and again refused to arrest them. In such circumstances I have known them beg to be arrested, with every mark of earnestness; and, when at last I have compelled them to return to Parihaka unarrested and free, I have seen them go back ashamed, and evidently shrinking from the terrible ordeal which awaited them, when they would have to meet what we should call the "evil eye" of their chief. Again, a short time since the Government determined to try, as an experiment, what effect the return of some of the prisoners would produce, and accordingly released twenty-five of them, and returned them to the West Coast. What was the result? They went back avowing that they returned unwillingly, and that they would still obey Te Whiti's orders, although such obedience should lead them again into imprisonment, and even to death. This dread of Te Whiti's and Tohu's destructive power, unreasonable as it may seem to us, is no empty fear. Instances have occurred where the disapproval of these chiefs has apparently, and I am disposed to think really, caused the death of individuals, probably by the force of imagination, possibly by more tangible means. In any case the dread is in the minds of the Maoris, and it is an important factor in the consideration of the circumstances which justify the detention of the Maori prisoners.