

required, and nothing occurred to create any lasting ill-feeling between the Natives and Europeans, each party seeming to be satisfied, after the Court had broken up, that they had brought their case to a successful issue.

During the time the Court was sitting a fatal accident happened to a Native of some rank named Hohepa te Rauhihi, who was thrown from his horse, and received injuries to his spine that proved fatal in a few days. Hohepa belonged to the Kiriwera section of Ngatitamatera, and was (with Tukukino) a staunch opponent to all roads, railways, and such-like through Native districts. Had his influence during the last few years been exerted in favour of, instead of opposing, road-making, he would in all probability be alive at the present time, it being well known that it was to the notoriously bad state of the road (or track), at the place where the accident happened, that the mishap was attributable. Hohepa's people—like most Natives of their class, in proportion as they are opponents to our advancement in their midst, so do they also decline to accept favours at our hands—refused all offers of medical assistance, preferring to let the sufferer take his chance, at best a poor one, with their rough Maori usage, which, as is well known, is seldom successful, that if once in a while (by accident or otherwise) a cure is effected, it bears more the semblance of a miracle than the result of treatment; and the Natives, in the simplicity (and duplicity) of their hearts, extol it as such.

The next event of importance occurred in October last, and was connected with a subject about which the Maori mind is often much agitated, and the firm belief in which it is very hard—I was going to say, impossible—to shake. I refer to *makutu*, or witchcraft. Some four years ago an elderly Native named Te Pukeroa was accused of causing the death of the great Ngatitamatera chief Te Moananui; in fact the man (who is really a harmless monomaniac,) confessed that he had exercised the black art, the result of which confession was a threat by Te Moananui's people to take his life; and, to show that their rage was genuine, several of them surrounded his house one morning at daylight, and poured a volley into it. I do not think, however, they really meant murder, as they took the precaution the day before to send word to the Thames about their proposed expedition, so that the opportunity was taken to have the old man removed from his house to a place of safety. But, although saved for the time being, his life was still thought to be in danger; therefore the Government had him removed for a time to the Chatham Islands, where he had relations. He, however, after remaining there some time, returned to New Zealand, and, after residing for a short time at Otaki, again turned up at the Thames. His return was the signal for another outburst of injured feelings on the part of the Ngatitamatera, and they again threatened to take his life; but the old man in the mean time had found friends amongst his own people, the Ngatimaru, and also the Ngatipaoa; who, now recognising clearly that the man was partly an imbecile, and therefore not responsible for all his actions, considered that his banishment to Chatham Islands was atonement enough for his crime, and therefore let it be pretty generally known that any attempt upon his life would be resented by them. This, at first, looked like causing trouble, but in reality it produced the best possible results; for now that each saw that the other was determined, they did what many others have done before them—thought it best, now that a difficulty was pending, to consider how to get out of it. The result of which was they forgave the old man (but cautioned him not to do the like again) averted the threatened tribal quarrel, and, metaphorically speaking, a general hand-shaking took place—not on the quiet, or in secret, but in grand style, according to most approved Maori custom. The meeting was held at Ohinemuri, and the Natives from the Thames (with whom was the wizard) were conveyed thither in two war canoes, one steamer, and numerous boats, all the men being armed; the whole, when they landed and joined with the Ohinemuri people in their war dances, &c., making quite an imposing spectacle. The speeches that were made were very few, being merely expressive of forgiveness on the part of the late Te Moananui's relatives and of peace-making on the part of the others; an exchange of muskets took place to show that the wrong inflicted was forgiven, and the peace made a genuine one; after which the meeting ended and the Natives returned to their different homes apparently satisfied that, if a long and bloody war had not been brought to an end by their action, at least a threatened catastrophe had been averted.

The next occurrence of note was the satisfactory settlement, by the Hon. Mr. Whitaker, of a long-standing dispute that existed between Mr. Henry Alley (and, previous to him, Mr. McCaskill) and a section of the Ngatipu Natives living at Hikutaia, regarding the ownership of a portion of Mr. Alley's farm—known as Kakaramaea—which the Natives strongly asserted was wrongfully included in a Crown grant for land issued to Mr. McCaskill many years ago. This dispute which had, on more than one occasion, nearly resulted in blood-shed, was amicably settled by the Hon. Mr. Whitaker on the 8th October last, after having had one meeting with the Natives at Hikutaia and another at the Thames; the Natives agreeing to accept two blocks of Government land at Hikutaia, of 250 acres and 100 acres respectively, and in return to vacate the disputed Kakaramaea Block, where they were then residing, and resign all claim to the same in favour of Mr. Alley. The settlement of this dispute was looked upon with favour by many Natives in the district other than those concerned, as it had been in existence for so many years, and, although repeated trials had been made to settle it, they had always been unsuccessful—so much so, that the Natives had begun to look upon this dispute, and that with Tukukino about the road at Komata, as a sort of continual running sore that could not be healed.

Following quickly after this event was the discovery of gold at Te Aroha, and upon land that was under promise by the Government to be given to certain Natives for reserves. This necessitated getting their consent before the land could be thrown open for gold-mining; whereupon the Natives, seeing what they thought was their opportunity (and being wrongly advised by some Europeans), did not hesitate to take advantage of it, and modestly demanded that the Government should first pay them a bonus of £1,000, after which they would agree to their promised reserves being thrown open for gold-mining. This extortionate demand was, of course, out of the question, (especially when it is considered that the Natives were to get for themselves all the miners' rights fees, timber licenses, &c., as well as town rents,) and it was found necessary to discover a way by which to get over the difficulty. This was done by enlisting on the Government side several Natives—including W. H. Taipari, Makena Hou, and others—who, through owning lands within the Thames Gold Field, had already tasted the sweets of being able to receive Native revenue from the same in the shape of miners' rights fees, &c., at regular intervals. These people were negotiated with, and after the matter had been explained to them, they readily signed the agreement to open the field in so far as their blocks