

who are now agreeable to surveys, by whatever name or in whatever shape or form, and who are now anxious to substitute their rude and undefined Native title for that of a legal one, issued under the authority of the Crown, are the self-same Natives who for the last twenty-five years have not only been bitterly opposed to anything of the sort, but have also during that time resolutely closed their country against all progress and civilization. I think it must undoubtedly be a matter for congratulation to every one when we consider that not only have the feelings of the Natives of that large district changed from those of sullenness and distrust to those of friendliness towards us as a race, but also because a large area of country which has been locked up for such a number of years will now be thrown open for settlement.

I cannot help thinking that one of the reasons of the success that has attended these surveys, especially those in the Whanganui and Tuhua Districts, is attributable to the good terms upon which we now are with the Natives who reside in those localities, which has to a great extent been brought about by the issuing of the Proclamation of the Governor which pardoned their chief Ngatai and those who were concerned in the murder of the man Moffatt some three years ago. These people do not now apprehend any punishment or harm from us, and they are therefore anxious to show us in return that we need not fear anything from them. Proof of this is shown by the way in which they treated the men Barry and McDonald, who were caught prospecting for gold only a few days ago in the Tuhua ranges, and brought in to Alexandra. Had this happened two years, or even twelve months ago, those men's lives would have been seriously endangered. Now, however, instead of being assaulted and robbed, or perhaps murdered, they are well treated, and none of their property taken from them with the exception of a bottle containing a small quantity of gold, which the Natives naturally concluded had been got from their land, and which they were justified in retaining.

I think it is a pity that Europeans should attempt just yet to prospect for gold in those districts. In the first place they are breaking the law by going there for that purpose, and in the second place the Natives do not want them there, and would rather they would keep away until matters that are of more importance to them are settled. Not only that, but the very fact of their going there in the surreptitious way in which they are doing is really delaying the opening-up of the country, and making the Natives suspicious, as they think we want to take an advantage of them. I think we cannot be too careful of the way in which we treat the Natives just now. They are at present all-absorbed with this new policy, which they have lately started, of surveying and putting their lands through the Court. The whole thing is quite a new experience to them, and their opinions as to the probable result are very diversified, some seeing in it elements of downfall for the Maori people, whilst others again claim that it will be for their benefit. Time will show which of these opinions is correct; but I think that we, as Europeans, ought not to lose sight of the fact that as it is mostly through our exhortations, and the pressure that we are bringing to bear upon them, that this result is being brought about, so shall we be to a great extent responsible if, by bad management, bad laws, or bad example, the Natives as a race are allowed to suffer by what is now being done through our agency and at our express desire. That we as Europeans will benefit by having so much new country thrown open, and our public works allowed to proceed without hindrance, there can be, I think, no doubt; whether or not the Natives will equally benefit remains yet to be seen. Similar cases in former times have shown us that, where we have been gainers, they have been losers: where we have benefited and advanced in the social scale, they have suffered and degenerated; what has resulted in success to us, has brought ruin to them. This surely ought not to be the case; and, with this new country, and, to a great extent, new people that are about to be given into our hands to manage and manipulate (so to speak), it behoves us, I think, to take special care that not only we, but they also, shall be benefited by the change.

Defection of the Chief Rewi.

In the month of January last some little excitement was caused by the Ngatimaniapoto chief Rewi (or Manga, as he is sometimes called) seceding from the arrangement, previously come to between himself and other chiefs and their people, with reference to the surveying of their land and putting it through the Court. When the matter was being discussed in the presence of the Hon. Mr. Bryce and of the rest of his tribe, in November last, Rewi was one of the most forward, and appeared most anxious that not only should everything be done that was proposed to be done, but that it should be done at once; in fact, he seemed to vie with Wahanui as to who should take the leading part in the matter. Such being the case, it seems rather strange that within less than two months afterwards he should so suddenly change his mind, and I must say that it appears difficult to give a good reason for his action. By some it is thought that he was influenced and made use of by Europeans who were connected with land speculation, and who objected to the temporary delay that was going to take place in surveying such a large block, and putting it through the Court, first as a whole, and afterwards subdividing it. What they are charged with wanting was, that it should be put through piecemeal, and quickly, so as to have something tangible, of which they could negotiate the purchase at once. I am not, however, prepared to say that that was really the reason why the old man so suddenly changed his mind—although it might have had something to do with it. There is no doubt that some influence was at work to cause him to act as he did. I am almost inclined to think that he, being an old man and very impressionable, was suddenly seized with feelings of remorse whilst listening to the speeches