

Rev. B. Y. Ashwell.

13 Oct. 1860.

876. I wish to direct your attention to a passage in a despatch from the Governor to the Secretary of State, and to ask if you will be good enough to give the Committee your opinion as to the propriety of the mode of treating the King movement as therein expressed. The passage is as follows: "I trust that firm and absolute indifference and neglect on the part of the Government will teach the Natives the folly of proceedings undertaken only at the promptings of vanity, and instigated by disaffected advisers?"—I certainly do not think it was a proper course in the first instance; but rather a direction should have been given to that movement, so as to make it an engine of Government.

877. *Chairman* (at suggestion of Mr. McLean)] Were you ever, or are you still, of opinion, that if the King movement had not been interfered with, it would have died out?—I think it would; but I refer to my last answer. At the present time that would be the best course, because the confidence of the Natives in the Government is so shaken that no interference from it would be acceptable till confidence were restored.

878. Did you hold these opinions at the time Mr. Fenton was removed?—Previous to his removal my opinion was that the King movement would be absorbed; gradually leavened by the system then working.

879. Did you consider Mr. Fenton's operations as an opposition to the King movement, or a direction given to it?—The latter, inasmuch as many of the King party applied to Mr. Fenton for instructions. One of them actually requested to be allowed to sit with him, in order to get an insight into his method.

880. Do you think if Mr. Fenton had not been sent to Waikato, the King movement would have died out?—Yes, I think it contained elements of its own dissolution.

881. Do you think that the same elements of discontent in the Native mind would have produced a movement of a similar nature?—Unless prevented by learning, they would have returned to their old method of settling quarrels, owing to the discouragement they received.

882. Have you at any time entertained opinions different from those now expressed?—I have not.

883. Do you consider that if opposed by the Government the King movement would have ceased to exist, or would it rather have gained strength by interference?—If by interference is meant opposition from the Government, it would have increased. If by interference is meant friendly direction, it would have been an engine of much good.

F. D. Fenton, Esq.

F. D. Fenton, Esq., called in and further examined.

884. *Mr. Heale.*] Can you tell us anything of a conversation between Ta Kerei and Potatau relative to your proceedings?—I can. Ta Kerei was in Auckland, I think, about September, 1857, and when he went away he said to me, "I should like to see my elder brother: is there any reason why I should not go to him?" I said, "Certainly not." He went, and came back again, and told me that Potatau's mind had *huri ke* (twisted, gone crooked, contrary to us). I asked him what was the reason of that, as he was the man who had asked for these arrangements. He told me that Potatau had informed him that when Mr. McLean came back from the South, he went to Mangere, and told Potatau that Fenton and Ta Kerei were separating Waikato from him. That was the beginning of my difficulties.

885. Will Ta Kerei be here?—I have sent for him. I believe he will be: the word separating was, *wehewehe*.

Heta Tarawhiti.

Heta Tarawhiti called in and examined.

886. What is your name?—Heta Tarawhiti.

887. Are you an ordained Minister of the Church of England?—I am.

888. Are you in Deacon's orders?—Yes.

889. How long have you been ordained?—Four months.

890. Where do you reside now?—At Taupiri.

891. With Mr. Ashwell?—With him.

892. How long have you resided with him?—Twelve years and a-half.

893. What has been your work under Mr. Ashwell?—Teaching in a school.

894. At Taupiri?—At Taupiri.

895. Are you well acquainted with the people of Waikato?—I am.

896. And know their thoughts?—I do.

897. What were the thoughts of the people of Waikato about Mr. Fenton's work?—Some approved of it, and some did not.

898. What tribes were unfavourable?—Some of the Ngatitipa were favourable; there was but one man who was not.

899. Was Ngatipou?—Of the Ngatipou, Tamihana was favourable to Mr. Fenton's proceedings.

900. Was there much opposition to Mr. Fenton's proceedings?—Many opposed them, and many were favourable to them.

901. Did the party who opposed him increase or diminish?—It diminished.

902. Mr. Fenton then gained strength as he proceeded; as his work went on?—Yes.

903. Did any of the old Chiefs endeavour to stop Mr. Fenton's proceedings?—Some of them were averse to them.

904. If Mr. Fenton had proceeded would the work have been good or evil?—In my opinion, good.