

3. The proceedings were conducted with the utmost decorum throughout; there was no hoisting of flags, nor anything calculated to disturb the harmony of the discussions by allusions to old grievances.

4. The questions discussed were whether any of the Ngatikahungunu tribe would give allegiance to the King; and, if not, whether they would agree to the system of Runangas.

5. On the first point, the assemblage was divided. Moananui had, twelve months ago, promised allegiance to the King, who, in order to secure his adherence, had sent down an appointment for him as local Vice-Regent (Kawana), with the honorary name or title of Ouenuku. This compliment had, of course, the desired effect; and Moananui, and all over whom he could exercise an influence, declared for the King. A curious and hardly-to-be-expected division hereupon arose. Moananui, with his immediate relatives and followers, withdrew to a little distance from the rest, calling upon those who were in favour of the King to join him, when he was almost immediately followed by the representatives of all the settlements between Waipureku and Porangahau, including Patangata, Te Aute, Te Tamumu, Waipukurau, Pourere, &c. Karaitiana, Renata, and Tareha, who had up to this time withheld their decision, hereupon stated their determination not to acknowledge the King, but to agree to the Runanga system. They were immediately joined by a great part of the Mohaka, Wairoa, Nukutaurua and Turanga people, and part of Ngatihineuru. These had expressed from the first their intention of not joining the King—especially the Wairoa party, who indeed said they never would have come had they not been led to suppose the object of the Waikato visit was to make peace between Te Hapuku and Ngatikahungunu, and expressed some dissatisfaction at finding the latter object, to be a very secondary part of the business. Nikora's party from Tarawera, and the Tanguio Natives, with a few others, declined to join either party.

6. The main points thus settled, the meeting proceeded to appoint Runangas, and to discuss and arrange various minor differences amongst the Natives themselves—their decisions mostly appearing to meet with general approbation. It was generally (though not unanimously) agreed that no more land should be sold to the Government; but that all sales already made should be respected, and that all bargains on which money had been paid in advance should be completed.

7. The meeting then broke up, and emissaries were sent to travel through the settlements and instruct the Natives in the way of holding Runangas, and transacting business thereat.

8. A deputation from the Waikato party was sent up to Poukawa to try and make peace between Hapuku and the others; but that chief being absent, nothing could be accomplished. He is known to be opposed to both the King and Runanga movements, and yet the Waikato emissaries have succeeded in obtaining the adherence of some of his hitherto staunchest supporters, including Maika Iwikatea and Paora Kopakau. Indeed, in as far as I can see, he is now deserted by all except Te Waka Rewharewha and his own brother Haurangi; although it may be questioned how long the loyalty of Maika and Paora to their new King will survive Hapuku's return.

9. We thus see the Natives divided into two parties—the Pakeha and the ante-Pakeha, the former representing those who prefer the rule of the Queen of England, and the alliance and protection of the English nation, albeit they show but small allegiance to the one or affection for the other; the latter relying solely on themselves, looking upon the Maori as a separate race and nation, and with different, and, in their eyes, for the most part conflicting, interests from the Pakeha; the former consisting hereabouts of a miserably small minority at present, yet having the advantages of unanimity of sentiment and feeling, and a superior model and protecting nation to look up to; the latter a now overwhelming majority, yet already split into two powerful and nearly equal sections, which may be called the Monarchical and the Republican parties.

10. The Monarchists cannot survive long as a party, here at least. They profess to derive all their authority directly from the King, and from him alone; thus they are not supported by the traditional feelings, superstitions, and customs of the Maori race; they lack the countenance of the Europeans, and the prestige attaching to the support of the Government; nor do they receive their authority directly from the hands of the people. The Republicans, although they have the latter advantage—which, indeed, amounts to a pretty close imitation of local self-government—do not possess either of the former ones; and, although they seem likely to last longer than the Monarchists, there can be little doubt that no long time will elapse, after the first novelty of the situation has worn off, until both parties die out from want of vitality, or rather from elements of weakness inherent in both.

11. If this state of parties maintains for any time its present aspect, or even one tolerably resembling it, a great change in the political relations of the Natives here may be brought about, not unattended with advantage to ourselves. Te Hapuku is pretty sure to lead the loyal (or Pakeha) party, for he will never consent to take any other position than head of whatever party he belongs to; he will never acknowledge a Maori King, submit to the decisions of any Maori Runanga whatever, or join any league to oppose the sale of land to the Government; he is too ambitious for one, too haughty and imperious for the other, and too avaricious for the third. A division has occurred amongst his opponents (whose unanimity was the sole cause of their success in the late war), who have formed two parties, neither of which possess sufficient inherent adhesiveness, or is based on a firm enough foundation, to last very long, and both of which (especially that already shown to be the weakest) contain many of his own near relatives and quondam staunchest supporters. If, therefore, Te Hapuku, in this situation, manages matters with that astuteness that may be expected from him, he will gradually draw to himself all those who (from any of the thousand-and-one reasons that are likely to create dissensions among them) may from time to time secede from either of the other two parties; for there now exist, and will continue to arise, so many petty jealousies between the Monarchists and the Republicans that neither party is likely to gain many recruits by desertions from the other.

12. Meanwhile, the present state of affairs may still be productive of good. For the Maories, who can rarely and with difficulty be made amenable to law, will now, as a general rule, and so long