

at that time was, that there was no noise or disturbance, but they all listened to the speeches which were made. The first who rose was Aperahama Te Reiroa, one of the Hauraki teachers. His words were these,—

“Friends, think of the land which descended to us from our ancestors. They died and left us their words, which were these—‘Farewell; hold fast to the land, however small it may be.’ And now, as gold has been discovered in our land, let us firmly retain it, as we have the power over our own lands, lest the management of them be taken by the Europeans. Who made them chiefs over us? No, we will ourselves be chiefs.”

His speech was hard throughout. When he had finished and sat down, Te Huirama Whetihua arose; his words were these,—

“O elder brothers and friends, descendants of our ancestors, who carry out their last injunctions. Hold firm, hold firm our land; we ourselves will retain the management of our lands. Let what we say is wrong be wrong, and what we say is right be right. This it is, if we dispose of our lands to the Europeans, it will not be right, and it will not be acting justly to our children who come after us. If the Pakehas occupy our land, we must drive them off. Do not allow them to come upon it.”

His talk was all hard. He sat down, and Tuterei Kawera arose. These were his words:

“Yes, let us talk about the land. We say that we have the power over the land, and the Europeans say that they have the power over our lands. Yes, it is correct, they have the power over the parts which they possess, and we have the power over the parts belonging to ourselves. It is thus, O my parent; do you carefully consider the subject. The people of Hauraki are here, Te Aute and Te Whawha.”

Here his words ended, and he sat down. Te Wharetaka then arose. Before he stood up he kept shouting out, and was trembling with passion. He said,—

“Alas Hauraki! You stand there alone. Where is the loneliness of the men? There are the parts to which farewell was lately bidden. Farewell; hold fast to Ngananganaia. It is thus, O Friends. Hold fast, hold fast to the land. We do not hold it for us old men, but for our heirs who are to succeed us. Is not this day which has dawned? If fine, the belts will be fastened round the loins. It is but three steps to Summer. The Kakaho has flowered. Friends, hold fast to the land.”

When he had concluded, he sat down, and Riwai te Kiore stood up. His words were these:

“Friends, we may bid farewell to the land, inasmuch as gold has been discovered, the Europeans’ great treasure. This is the thing which will cause our land to be taken. But those Europeans must not be allowed to come on shore. I will act as a chain to hold our land; my land must be taken from my hands.” Here he recited a song:

“Oh ye mothers, how painful thus to know
That my features are ever aged,
Whilst my heart is torn asunder.
I will not be jealous, for the Summer
Days have come, and the third month
Will separate us from each other.”

When his talk was ended, Eruera te Ngahue arose. His words were these:

“Friends, do not suppose that we are here merely for the purpose of talking about a small piece of land. No, our meeting has reference to the whole of Hauraki. It is not as though Hauraki belonged to the Pakehas; it belongs to ourselves. Friends, let us properly arrange our lands. If it is right to yield up our lands to the management of the Government, let us give it up to them; and I think that if we do so, the Government will not mismanage them, because it was they who gave us just laws. Our only fear is for us Maoris, lest the Europeans should molest them. The Governor will not break his own laws. I have finished.”

When he had concluded he sat down, and Te Rarounga Koropango stood up. His words were these:

“Hearken, fathers and grandfathers, I dug this gold, but do not suppose that by digging I wish to dispose of it to the Europeans. I dug without any intention. The arrangement of the land is with you, as I have no place here myself.”

He sat down, and Warahi te Matapihi stood up. These were his words:

“Hearken, my grandfathers. Hearken, my fathers. This is what I have to say to you. It rests with yourselves to hold your lands. Hold them firmly. If you dispose of Hauraki to the Pakeha, you will live in solitude. Do you all consider this. One of my feet is planted on the sea shore, and the other on the land; now, if you let the land go, I will shift my foot which is on the sea shore on to the land inland. Here is another thing: at present we are a praying people, but if the Europeans come here with their strong drink, our religion will become disturbed, and the men will take to drinking. It is in reference to spirits that I now speak. Look, some have taken to it already. Do you think it will be done away with if the Europeans increase?”

Here his speech ended, having spoken in favour of hardness (that is, of holding the land). He sat down, and Te Aperahama Wharerurutu arose. His words were these:

“Hearken, my sons and my friends, hearken. Hold Hauraki; hold fast to the land, that you may dwell quietly upon it. I have not much to say, O Ngatimaru. Only this; do not suffer the Europeans to come on shore. Think of our Church (or religion), all ye ministers, that there may be no confusion here; that is, do not suffer the Europeans to come on shore.” He then recited the following song:—