

No. 8.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. R. PARRIS to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.
(No. 220.)

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 3rd August, 1868.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a circular letter dated 8th July, from the Native Secretary's Office, respecting information of a very unfavourable nature, which has been received by the Government in reference to the intentions of the Natives of the King party. I will do my utmost to obtain information in reference to the subject referred to, but up to the present time I am unable to get a clue to anything confirmatory of the reports, but it is quite possible for any deep scheme for a sudden rising to be beyond my detection.

More, the Native often mentioned in my reports as a travelling emissary from the head-quarters of the King party at Tokangamutu, has been stopping with the Taranaki Natives in the Warea District ever since his arrival from the North, about two months ago. Wiremu Kingi te Rangitake, of Waitara, has also been stopping at the same place for the last year and a half and for some time past his own people, who are living in the Kirikinga District, by the Waitara River, towards Ngatimaru, have been very anxious for him to return to them; and when More and his party last came from the North, about ten of the Ngatiawa Natives, Wiremu Kingi Rangitake's followers, accompanied More from Kirikiringa to Taranaki for the purpose of inducing him to return.

Teira, of Waitara, whose wife is a Taranaki woman, has been for the last month stopping at Opunake, he and his wife, on a visit to their relatives.

About a fortnight ago Wiremu Kingi Rangitake and his followers, in company with More and some others, left the Warea District to return North, and went by way of Opunake; but before arriving at the latter place, Wiremu Kingi Rangitake sent on a message to Teira, telling him that he would rather not see him the first time at that place, but in their own district.

On arriving at Opunake they halted there and while food was being prepared for them, the Ngatiawa Natives expressed a wish to see Teira, and among them was W. Kingi's grandson, Eruera Kingi. W. Kingi raised no objection to his people seeing Teira, but declined to himself, and moved off some distance from them. More went to Teira, who was stopping in a house in the village, and explained to him that his relations wished to see him, but that his (Tuakau) brother, W. Kingi, would rather see him first in their own district. Teira went out of the house to meet them, when a long tangi (crying match) ensued, and the meeting was a very friendly one, after which More addressed Teira and the Opunake Natives respecting the proceedings of Titokowaru and the late outrages in the Ngatiruanui District.

More stated that when he last came from the North, whilst at Te Ngutu-o-te-Manu, he had some unpleasantness with Titokowaru and his people, he having reproved them for the action they had taken in reference to the settler's horses, mentioning that he had brought a proclamation from the King (More and party arrived there from the North at the time the horses were being demanded by Mr. Booth, before the murders were committed). In reply to More's reproof and mention of the King's proclamation, the Ngutu-o-te-Manu Natives commenced the performance of a "haka" derisive of the Maori King, which More construed into a curse. Whilst the "haka" was being performed, More and his party commenced karakia (worship), both things going on at the same time for a great part of the day and through the night up to 3 o'clock a.m. (a perfect bedlam for the time, I have no doubt).

After the trial of each party to weary the other, and when the uproar was discontinued, Titokowaru asked More to produce his proclamation, which he refused, telling him they had cursed the King.

More told the Opunake Natives that if the Governor did not extend his operations beyond Titokowaru (beyond his district), that he, Titokowaru, would very soon have occasion to be ashamed of his evil works, for he will have no support. That is the interpretation of what More said, by the Natives who heard it. I will, however, put what he said in Maori, as it was related to me:—"Mehemea kahore ano te Kawana i te wakanui tana mahi ki a Titokowaru ka wakama ia mo toña hara, kahore he tuara Mona."

From all I can learn up to the present time, it appears to be the decision of other tribes not to support Titokowaru; but I am afraid that if he obtains a few more advantages, such as Turu-Turu-Mokai attack, and the attack on the convoy last Wednesday, that other tribes might feel themselves at liberty to alter their decision in the matter.

A short time before the murders at Ketemarae a few of the Ngatimaru Natives had gone to Ngutu-o-te-Manu to be tattooed, a custom very much revived of late. On hearing from Hone Pihama that they were there, I communicated as early as possible with the chief Nepetarima, Hapurona's uncle, who lives inland of Pukerangiora. After consulting with him about the chances of the late outbreak spreading, which he was of opinion would not be the case, unless the Government extended it itself, he agreed to go inland through the Ngatimaru District, to consult with Hapurona, and ascertain what the feeling of the Natives of the district was. Last week he returned, with a most favourable account.

The Ngatimaru Natives sent for their people who had gone to Te Ngutu-o-te-Manu, and brought them away. They also stated that they would have nothing whatever to do with Titokowaru's proceedings. A small party from Ngatimaru arrived at Waitara a few days ago, on a visit to their relatives at that place. Hapurona requested Nepetarima to tell me, that if Titokowaru's followers came into the Ngatiawa District he should order them away. That for two years, whilst hostilities were being carried on in the Ngatiruanui and other districts, he (Hapurona) had refused to sanction any offensive operations by his people in the Ngatiawa District (this is perfectly true and I have often reported it), and that he should continue to do so now.

The Taranaki Natives continue quiet, and are very civil to people travelling between New Plymouth and Opunake. A party of Natives, over twenty, arrived from Te Kauae (Manaia's people) last week, with fifty head of cattle for sale. They are chiefly young men, and most of them purpose remaining