

Inland of Mataitawa, there is a small party under a Native named Tamati Teito, who came in from the rebel district about nine months ago, and settled down at a place called Te Kaporoa, close to a military settler's house. They have been very quiet and friendly with the settlers, but lately Tamati Teito has been recommending that the Europeans should leave the confiscated land, and go across the line of the Tarururangi purchased block, which has been the cause of some excitement and exaggerated reports. On Wednesday last, I and several of our Natives received a written invitation from him (copy herewith enclosed) to meet them at their place on the 1st October. The next day being the 1st, I started early in the morning accompanied by Mahau, Tahana, and six others, and went to Te Kaporoa, but on arriving there were only two men and a boy at their place, Tamati Teito and the others having gone to the bush, pig hunting, to provide some pork for our entertainment for Friday, which by an error in their reckoning they thought was the 1st October. I returned without ascertaining the purport of his invitation, but Mahau and five of his men remained for the purpose of seeing him on his return. Mahau had not come back this morning, but when he does I shall get particulars.

Mahau was inclined to be severe with him if he said anything about the Europeans leaving, but at present we cannot afford to take very high ground until we have succeeded in gaining some advantage in the Patea District.

Tamati Te Ito returned from the Melbourne gold diggings in 1853, and a few years after commenced imposing upon the credulity of the weak-minded Natives of the district, by setting himself up as a prophet, and professing to know how to destroy the power of the spirits in possession of their ancestral tapus (sacred grounds of their forefathers).

A party of young men, varying from twenty to thirty, was made up for him from the different tribes, and maintained for a very long time doing nothing but digging over their tapued grounds, gathering stones and old trophies, such as he chose to pronounce to be sacred. These stones, &c., were burnt in a large fire to destroy the spirit, during which process there was a religious ceremony performed, which was generally a cause of great attraction and excitement, on account of the large number who assembled to witness the ceremony. At that time he had no doubt considerable influence over the Natives of this district, but during the rebellion very little has been heard of him. He was always with the rebels but never took a leading part, being, from what I know of him, constitutionally a coward. He is a superstitious impostor, and goes out at night performing incantations and invoking the spirits from whom he professes to receive inspiration.

Nothing whatever has been seen of any of the Ngatimanipoto since More and party went North in August last. Wiremu Kingi te Rangitake is with his people inland of Urenui, and Pirikawau has been there with them for about a month. They behaved very well when the prospecting party went up that way a few weeks ago by not interfering with them; but after they returned I got a message from him asking me not to allow them to go again, as he was not sure whether they were after gold or after himself.

I am sorry there is so much agitation in matters which I am convinced is to the interest of the place to be quiet upon during the present very critical state of things; but when I speak against it, it is at once set down as the Native Office opposition.

I have, &c.,

R. PARRIS,

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

Civil Commissioner.

No. 23.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. R. PARRIS to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

(No. 285.)

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 10th October, 1868.

I have the honor to forward herewith, for the information of the Hon. the Minister for Native Affairs, copy of a letter I have received from His Honor the Superintendent, relative to a settler's complaint that he had been ordered off his land in the Mataitawa District by a Native named Horopapera; and my reply thereto.

I have, &c.,

R. PARRIS,

The Under Native Secretary, Wellington.

Civil Commissioner.

Enclosure 1 in No. 23.

Copy of a Letter from His Honor H. R. RICHMOND to Mr. R. PARRIS.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office,

New Plymouth, 5th October, 1868.

Having been informed, by a settler named W. Old, that he has been repeatedly warned by Natives not to occupy his bush land in the Mataitawa District, and that on one occasion a Native named Horopapera, who appears to wish to occupy that land himself, has threatened to shoot him if he returns to it, I have the honor to request that you will inform me, after making such inquiries as may be necessary, whether there is reason to think that Old will be molested if he goes to live on his land, and whether the particular threat referred to was actually held out.

I have, &c.,

H. R. RICHMOND,

R. Parris, Esq., Civil Commissioner, Taranaki.

Superintendent.