

further. I found there, on a flat of some six acres in extent, nearly the whole of the Urewera tribe assembled, with the exception of Te Makarini and those residing at Waikaremoana. The large house which formerly stood at Te Tahora had been removed here, and a road had been formed for a few chains for the visitors to march to the settlement. The greater number of the Natives assembled were living in tents formed of sheets, shawls, &c., in the usual Native manner. Two flags were flying in front of the large house; one a red ensign, and the other showing the bust of a black man on a red ground, which was intended for the flag of the *Whitu Tekau* (seventy). When we had alighted from our horses, we were received by a war dance of about 100 men, armed with taiahas, meres, &c., and having reached the verandah of the large house, the speeches of welcome were commenced. The following spoke on the side of the Urewera:—Wata, Tamaiapuri, Tawhara, Te Wiremu, Tamana, Tipihau, Atama, Tutekangahau, Tamihana, Ngapoti (of Ngaiterangi), Te Whenuanui, Raniera, Kereru Te Pukenui, Te Haunui, Hira Tauaki, Ahipene (Ngatikahungunu). After which, Wiremu Kingi, Kaperiere, Wepiha Apanui, and Piahana Tiwai made speeches in reply. I then addressed them. I said I regretted that the meeting had been put off so often, as it had kept away both Natives and Europeans from the Bay of Plenty, who had at first purposed to attend. That I had come in accordance with instructions from the Government, and had arrived on the day fixed by themselves. That the party who had accompanied me was small; but that the absence of roads, and the nature of the country, made the travelling to Ruatahuna a serious undertaking to Natives as well as Europeans, more especially in the bad weather which had been prevalent. I then retired to a tent which Te Whenuanui had erected for me and Captain Swindley, who had come up to attend the meeting on private business of his own connected with leasing land.

Early on the following morning I was visited by Paerau, Te Whenuanui, and Kereru, who wished me to wait a few days to see if Mr. Locke, R.M., and Ngatikahungunu would attend. I replied that I had received no notice from Government that Mr. Locke would attend, but that, in deference to their wishes, I would wait until Monday, the 23rd instant, but as I had other duties to perform, I could not remain much longer. It was then settled that I should start on my return not later than the 25th March.

I ascertained from conversations with various chiefs that they expected Mr. Locke would remove the confiscated line on the Bay of Plenty side, the several chiefs of Urewera who had lately visited Napier having promulgated this idea.

On the 20th and 21st of March I employed myself in conversation with the several chiefs. On the 23rd, the business of the meeting was opened by Te Ahikaiata (the Secretary to the *Whitu Tekau*), who gave out as the subjects for discussion,—

1. The confiscated boundary.
2. The *Waka Matatua* to be united (*i.e.*, that all the tribes who are said to have come over in this canoe should join in a sort of land league).
3. *Te Whitu Tekau*.
4. The forbidding of roads, leasing lands, magistrates, and other “bad things.”

After some hours had been spent in discussion, the food for the visitors was presented, consisting of a canoe (*Matatua*), forty feet long, half filled with preserved birds and a quantity of potatoes.

I was then asked by Paerau and Kereru to accompany them to another part of the ground to receive the food set apart for the Government. Taking Wiremu Kingi with me, I went with them, and Paerau then presented to me, on behalf of the Government, ten large *tahas* (calabashes)—some of them carved and ornamented—said to contain about 1,800 preserved birds. He said the Urewera presented them to the Hon. Mr. McLean, Captain Porter, and Mr. Brabant. Atama and Kereru then spoke, the latter saying that he was blamed by his tribe for taking money from Government: that the *tahas* were for his fault.

Hira Tauaki (one of the principal men of the *Whitu Tekau*) then spoke at some length. He said the Urewera had had many things from Government: they had received food and clothing after their surrender; they had also taken rations when they visited Napier, Opotiki, and other places; and worst of all, Kereru had taken money from Government. That they begged the Government to accept these *tahas* (calabashes) as payment for the rations and for the money which had been given to Kereru. That they feared the Government intended at some future time to exact land in payment. That the *tahas* were a small thing, but the Urewera were not rich; and that although individuals took rations from Government, the tribe wished the system to be stopped, as they thought that ultimately they would be called upon to pay for them in land.

I then addressed them. I said I would accept the *tahas*, not as payment for rations or for anything else, but as a mark of the friendship of the Urewera towards the Government. (This remark was received with cheers.) I then entered into a full explanation of what I conceived to be the intentions of Government in giving Natives rations, presents, &c.

I explained that Government collected money from both Europeans and Natives by Customs duties and other taxes; that it then became their duty to distribute this money all over the country, and to provide public officers, to pay them out of this money, and to carry on public works, such as roads, bridges, &c. That the Government had considered that although the Urewera and some other Native tribes declined to have public officers appointed within their boundaries, or to have roads and other public improvements gone on with, that they were nevertheless entitled to some share of the revenue until they were sufficiently advanced in civilization to appreciate our system of government and of public works, as they would doubtless do in