

The VISIT of SIR DONALD McLEAN to see TAWHIAO at Waitomo.

ALEXANDRA, 10th Feb., 1875.

ON the 11th day of January, Tawhiao sent his messenger to invite Major Te Wheoro to go to Waitomo and converse. On the 12th Major Te Wheoro and that messenger of Tawhiao's went at eight o'clock in the morning, and arrived at Waitomo at 11 o'clock. The chiefs there were Tawhiao, Takerei te Rau, Whitiora, Wi Tara, and Karaka Hiko. At night, Tawhiao and Major Te Wheoro went to a place apart from the others to talk there. Tawhiao expressed his word to invite Sir Donald McLean to come in order that they may talk together. He also spoke of the subject on which he would talk to Sir Donald McLean. He also said he was not willing that any other person of authority should accompany Sir Donald McLean if he came. On the rising of the sun on the 13th, Major Te Wheoro returned to Alexandra to transmit the word of Tawhiao inviting Sir Donald McLean, but on the receipt of that message the trip of Sir Donald McLean to Ngapuhi had been some time before arranged, so it was left until his return. On the 20th day of the month he arrived at Auckland on his return from Ngapuhi, and on the 26th he proceeded, accompanied by his friends, Messrs. Kemp and Davies and Paora Tuhaere, and arrived at Alexandra on the 27th. While there the formal letter of Tawhiao came inviting Sir Donald McLean to come and see him. A person also came with two canoes and men to paddle the same, to convey Sir Donald McLean. Whitiora was their elder. At early dawn on Tuesday, the 2nd, at four o'clock in the morning Sir Donald McLean embarked on board the canoes which were sent, together with Mr. Kemp, Major Mair, Messrs. Bush and Davies, and Paora Tuhaere. The friendly chiefs of Waikato also went as companions of Sir Donald McLean; they went on horseback; they were Major Te Wheoro, Revd. Wi Patene, Hone te One, Hemi Matini, Mohi Te Rongomau, and numbers of other people. One European went overland, namely, Serjeant Fraser. When the overland party arrived at Tuahu they met the youngest son of Tawhiao and his friends who came to welcome us; they returned at once. Then Sir Donald McLean's canoes arrived. They had dinner, and immediately after they proceeded by the canoes and on horseback. When the canoes had got one mile distant Sir Donald McLean and party proceeded overland to Otorohanga; at three o'clock they all arrived with the canoes. The messenger of Tawhiao arrived to invite the Maori chiefs to proceed on the same day. It was agreed upon, for it afforded more accommodation for Sir Donald McLean. Those chiefs then went, for it was the crying meeting for Tiaho te Wherowhero, and Sir Donald McLean and party remained at the house of John Hetit. When these many chiefs had arrived and had wept, when it was over, Takerei te Rau stood up and spoke regarding the dead. From the other party stood up Paora Tuhaere, and spoke also regarding the dead. Then stood up one of the other side, Wi Tarahawaiki, regarding the dead also. Hone te One then stood up and sang a song; then stood up from the other side Tawhiao, who sang a song; he sat down, and Mohi Te Rongomau stood up, which finished the speeches about the dead. Then the people of the place shook hands (with the guests,) after which all went to rest, and at daylight, or next morning, which was the time that Tawhiao had appointed to meet Sir Donald McLean, for Tawhiao had long before said that he was not willing that any other chief should speak on their day, that is his and Sir Donald McLean's, but that it should be for them alone lest that day be disturbed. Major Te Wheoro and Paora Tuhaere then returned to escort Sir Donald McLean, Mr. Kemp, Major Mair, and Messrs. Bush and Davies, who proceeded on their way, when they were met by the friendly chiefs who came out to welcome them, they were Hone te One, Wi Patene, Hemi Matini, Mohi Te Rongomau. As the guests went forward, the others, namely, the Hauhaus, waived their garments and welcomed them as follows:—"Welcome, guests from afar; 'twas my youngest son who brought you from the distant horizon; come along, welcome." On nearing the place Takerei te Rau and Te Tuhi Maioha led them, Sir Donald McLean and party, to the place set apart, which was under an awning of calico sheeting for them to sit under. Both parties remained silent, without any of them speaking, for about two hours, or it may have been three hours.

Then Tawhiao stood up to speak, and welcomed Sir Donald McLean. He first said,—“Greeting to you, McLean; greeting to you, McLean, to you and to Potatau. McLean, greeting, my word to you is one (request) alone. Give back Waikato to me, extending to the place which was pointed out (meaning Mangatawhiri by this). If it is returned I will be after it, I will go to Waikato; that is all I have to say.” Then Sir Donald McLean stood up to reply, and said,—“Greeting, Tawhiao, it is appropriate for you to welcome me the same as your father welcomed me when he was living. You are also expressing the same welcome as your father did. My word in reply to your word about Waikato is I will not hastily reply, but I must maturely consider your words.”

Then Tawhiao and a number of the chiefs extended their hands, being pleased with the manner of Sir Donald's reply to those words. The speeches were finished that hour; they then remained two hours, the food having been brought. After that Tawhiao, Takerei te Rau, Te Tuhi, Maioha, Hone Wetere, Te Ngakau Taonui, Arama Karaka, and Te Ngarangara, that is Te Wi Panewaka, came forward to shake hands, and Tawhiao and Sir Donald McLean remained together. After they were together for some time, Tawhiao spoke to Sir Donald McLean, and said, “McLean, my word to you is that you and the Governor come to Te Kuiti.” Sir Donald McLean replied, “I am not quite clear about your word; rather let Kawhia be the place for you to see the Governor.” Tawhiao said, “Let it be at Te Kuiti, for there are the old men, the women, and the children. This discussion is for the many of the people.” They continued, one saying for it to be at Te Kuiti and the other at Kawhia, for some time, while all the chiefs were listening, we and the Hauhaus as well. The only chiefs who were absent at this meeting were Manuwhiri and Rewi.

The talk on this day being ended, Sir Donald McLean and party returned to Otorohanga, and next morning all the Hauhaus and Tawhiao and party went to Otorohanga, where Tawhiao and Sir Donald McLean conversed, a room having been set apart for them to talk in alone. Tawhiao had arranged to have certain friends in that room, who were Tu Tawhiao, Takerei te Rau, Te Tuhi Maioha, Tiria te Wherowhero, and the wife of Tawhiao. Sir Donald McLean had also arranged to have certain friends