

followers; and this is not confined to those in out-districts who acknowledge him as their head, but is also noticeable amongst those who are under his own eye (notably Ngatimaniapoto). Such being the case, it is only natural that he should desire to satisfy himself of the exact state of affairs by personal inspection, and that he can only do by travel.

It was well known that when the King movement was first started, and Potatau was elected King by unanimous consent, that not only did Waikato and Ngatimaniapoto, but nearly all the tribes in the North Island, with the exception of Ngapuhi, the Arawa, and Ngatiporou, acknowledge him as their head, and handed over their lands into his keeping, professedly with the intention of keeping them intact, and from falling into the hands of the pakeha by purchase. The fighting against us, and the subsequent confiscation, was a matter that was not taken into account by them at the time the King movement was first started. So universal was this handing over their lands to the King, and with it supposedly the allegiance of the people, that Tawhiao and his immediate followers during subsequent years have continued to imagine, or caused it for political purposes to be understood that they imagined that the compact still held good; certainly the tribes in other districts, so far as I know or have heard, have never formally withdrawn themselves and their lands from the King and Cause. In fact, as has been continually brought before his immediate notice, the very opposite has been the case, for, whenever delegates from these tribes have attended the periodical meetings called by the King, they have, as a rule, been profuse in their expressions of allegiance and willingness to leave their lands in his keeping, notwithstanding that it was well known to Europeans and others of the districts from which they came, that they and those whom they represented had virtually long since separated from the King, were managing their affairs themselves, and had sold or were perhaps then selling or leasing their lands to whomsoever they thought fit, without reference to Tawhiao or any one else outside themselves.

I think we may safely say that Tawhiao, although he must have known such was the case, still, for the purpose of keeping the cause together, kept on ignoring the fact. Things, however, are changed now, and he sees the end is coming; and I think that, in order to get out of the position gracefully and with credit to himself, and possibly with the idea of putting himself in the position to accept terms should they again be offered to him by the Government, he is now travelling through the country, and visiting the people who—and whose fathers now dead—assisted five-and-twenty years ago in putting up Potatau as King, and swore allegiance to him, and also at that time handed over their lands to his keeping. The changes that he has seen and will see during his travels will, I think, put him in a position to say by-and-by, should he decide to say so, that “Those who put me up have now deserted and ceased to support me; those who gave their lands into my keeping have since disposed of them without consulting me; surely they cannot be followers of mine, and I cannot any longer be representing them.” In fact, I think it will be patent to him that those who have through all been true to him are only the few that live in his own now circumscribed district. Under those circumstances, I think he could then say, with dignity, to himself, “Seeing that I am now virtually deserted, I shall resign, or give up my former position as King, and make the best terms I can for myself and the few people remaining to me.” The above is my opinion of the cause of Tawhiao's present action in travelling through the country.

The formal opening of Kawhia, in February last, by the Hon. the Native Minister, accompanied by the Hon. Mr. Rolleston, and the taking possession of a piece of Government land there, known as Pouewe, which has since been surveyed as a township, was another event which must go plainly to show the Natives how much the policy of Government has changed during the last few years, and how we are slowly but surely gaining strength and ascendancy, whilst they are proportionately losing ground. They do see this, I am sure, and they also see that they are powerless to stop it, especially when, as they watch what takes place, they see that everything that is being done is done in accordance with law and right, and, in some cases, even in accordance with their own Maori customs. To have attempted to throw open Kawhia Harbour and occupy the land upon its shores some years ago would have brought about for the time being an open rupture with the Natives, notwithstanding that our right there was as good then as it is now; but circumstances are changed, and the Natives, instead of obstructing us by force of arms, now quietly look on and let things which they cannot help take their course. Sometimes (as in the case of the chief Hone Wetere, at Kawhia,) they even welcome us, and render us every assistance.

After the opening of Kawhia, the next step taken by the Government was the pardoning of Te Kooti and other Natives who had committed crimes which, although in some cases—especially that of Te Kooti—were of a most ferocious and savage nature, were, under the Amnesty Act, looked upon as semi-political. A meeting was held at Manga-o-Rongo in February last, at which Te Kooti was present, when, after making satisfactory promises as to his future good conduct, he was formally pardoned by Mr. Bryce. It is only fair to say that, whatever may have been the nature of the crimes committed by him shortly after his escape from the Chatham Islands, he has during the last twelve years lived a very quiet and peaceable life at Te Kuiti, no graver offence than that of drunkenness having been laid to his charge during that time.

By the pardoning of a man like Te Kooti an important obstruction to the opening of the King Country has been removed, for, with Te Kooti and his people living at Te Kuiti, it would have been almost impossible that the country could have been occupied with safety, or public works carried on, as it would have been necessary for safety's sake to first take Te Kooti or drive him out of the district before settlement could follow, and Te Kooti, of course, would have resisted any attempts at arrest. By pardoning him that difficulty is got over, and Te Kooti, instead of being a source of strength to the King people, is now, if not entirely on the European side, certainly neutral. My own opinion is that, should anything occur hereafter in which it is found necessary on our part to use force to bring about a desired result, Te Kooti, if he takes any side at all, will take it with us. Unless, however, he gives up the drinking habits to which he is now almost a slave, he will not live very long. He is also a victim to asthma, from which he suffers a great deal, and that, accelerated by drink, will soon