

of Tawhiao and others of the King party, at a meeting at Whatiwhatihoe (purposely to attend which he had come over from Kihikihi), for having deserted the King cause, of which he was one of the originators, and subsequently one of its mainstays and supports, and that while under that influence he determined to go back to his first love. Be that as it may, go over he did, and great was the rejoicing of the King party when they heard of his decision to return to them.

But this action, important as it appeared at that time, had very little effect for evil on the new policy that had been initiated: everything was so completely arranged, and had been so unanimously agreed to by all the tribes, that the falling-out of one of their number did not have any appreciable effect. Like a number of rowers in a boat, the mere fact of one ceasing for a while to row makes very little difference in the speed and direction in which the boat is going, provided that his companions keep on rowing; there is certainly a little more vigilance required on the part of the man who is steering, but that is all. In this case, whilst Rewi, as it were, ceased to row, his companions still kept on rowing, and were true to the cause they had agreed to support. The result was that things went on almost as if nothing had happened. Nothing was stopped, nothing was put back. Wahanui and all the others remained firm, and things went on as if Rewi had not fallen out of the ranks at all. I think that that was really what the old man wanted, for when he had decided to return to his child (as he called him), Tawhiao, he waited upon me and formally told me of his decision, informing me at the same time that he did not wish to influence any one else, and that he was merely carrying out the promptings of his own heart. He said that he really did not know his own mind, and he wished to be known in the future by the name of "Kopikopiko noa" (wandering about, or backwards and forwards). I was sorry for him, as there is no doubt that on account of his great age his mind is not so strong and active as it used to be, and he is therefore more easily led away.

#### *Election of Native Committees.*

During the month of March last I conducted the elections for Native Committees for the three Districts of Kawhia, Waikato, and Thames, in accordance with the provisions of "The Native Committees Act, 1883." In each case the maximum number of members allowed by the Act was elected, namely, twelve. The Ngatimaniapoto Natives in this district profess to take a great interest in the working of the Act, and nearly all the members that were elected for the Kawhia District were nominated by them; and, although they took the precaution to choose members from different districts within the boundaries, still the fact that the Waikatos neither nominated, voted, nor in any way took part in the election will, I think, militate against its being a success at present. However, those who have been elected are anxious to be called together (as provided by the Act) and to commence work. Their great wish is to be allowed to decide upon, or rather hold, a preliminary investigation of their own claims to the large block that is now being surveyed, upon which they would make a recommendation to the Native Land Court; but I am very dubious as to their being the proper tribunal to adjudicate, even in a preliminary form, on that block, especially as their opponents and counter-claimants, Waikato and Ngatihaua, would not be represented on the Committee.

As I have already officially reported to Wellington, I found a great deal of ignorance existing in the minds of the Natives regarding the principles under which the elections had to be conducted; and I would suggest that, should it be necessary to hold any more elections for a similar purpose, more facilities be given for recording votes by fixing more polling-places within the different districts.

#### *Tawhiao's Visit to England.*

For a long time past Tawhiao and his people have entertained the idea that, if all hope were lost of their being recognized by the New Zealand Government as an independent people, with power to make laws for themselves within their own territory, some of them would go to England and lay their case either before Her Majesty the Queen in person, or before her Ministers. The starting of the King movement twenty-five years ago, and the formal handing over of the land to King Potatau at that time, was, I think there can be very little doubt, intended more for the purpose of preserving themselves as a race, and retaining a certain territory intact for the benefit of all, over which our laws, which they thought were detrimental to them, should not have effect, than with the intention of opposing or coming into conflict with us as a race. It was more as a progressive measure for themselves than as an aggressive one against us. That I think was the original intention of the promoters of the movement, but the opposition that was shown to it by the Government of the day, coupled with the lawlessness of some of the turbulent characters who afterwards joined it, caused it in a short time to assume a very different aspect, namely, a desire on the part of the Maoris to measure swords with, or rather to pit their strength against, that of the Europeans. But, putting on one side the results which followed the setting-up of the Maori King (as this is no place to discuss them), I think I am right in saying that Tawhiao and his supporters take up the same position now that the promoters of the movement took up twenty-five years ago—that is, that, while they lament and deprecate the evils that have emanated from the action that both races took in the matter when the movement was first started (and for which they say we are more to blame than they are), they at the same time take their stand upon the position that, as it was considered then so it is considered now, the only way to save the Maori race from destruction is to let them have a king and make laws for themselves.