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THE POSITION OF THE KING PARTY.

[FROM OUR OWN REPORTER.]

TE AWAMUTU, Tuesday.

REWI'S OPINION OF MR. BRYCE.

SPEAKING of the Native Minister, Rewi said: Mr. Bryce is straightforward in speech, and one gets to know what he means. I appreciate a man who acts thus. I am pleased with Mr. Bryce. I find, in reading the report of the interview, that my utterances are faithfully given, and Mr. Bryce's also. There are certain omissions relating to my avowed adherence to the King movement and my perfect oneness with Tawhiao, and Mr. Bryce's observations on the same subject are omitted also, so that I ought not to complain, as both sides are silent on that subject in the report.

WETERE'S LETTER.

Rewi, in speaking of Wetere, said: I did not see the letter that was published in the HERALD re the Mokau lands. I know nothing whatever of such a letter being written, although it was dated from my place—Kihikihi. I feel sore on this subject, that I should be dragged into a dispute about which I know nothing. My land is beyond Mokau, but the land referred to in the letter rests with Wahanui, who has gone to Mokau to demand an inquiry. I hold Wetere's letter now in my hand, and I impeached Mr. Grace, saying to him: "How could you send a letter of this nature, dated from my place—Kihikihi—and keep me in ignorance of the matter. I cannot come to any decision at present regarding my innocence or the innocence of Tawhiao and Mr. C. O. Davis. I must suspend my judgment until I know the whole of what has been said, and if I find that Tawhiao and Mr. Davis have acted wrongly in regard to their correspondence, then I will turn upon them both, and censure them severely, but if I find that their line of conduct has been clear, then all we three will turn upon you (Mr. Grace), whose action has been so ungracious, and Wetere will suffer with you."

COPPER, GOLD AND COAL IN THE KING COUNTRY.

Rewi said: Many years ago, a European who planted the acacias you see yonder, informed me that in digging at Kakepaku mountain, he discovered copper, but I paid no heed to it, and I am equally indifferent about it now. Regarding the gold: I had specimens in my own hands from the Tuhua country, but in consequence of so many coming to look at them, I threw them into the river, and I have no desire whatever that the gold in that country should be touched. There let it lie. As to the coal at Mokau, I recommended that the coal should be used by the Europeans, if required; that the land should not be sold, but if necessary, it could be leased, and as it is known there are quantities of it there, it may be turned to account for the advantage of both parties.

NO MORE FIGHTING.

Rewi said: The King movement was initiated by Te Heuheu, of Taupo, consequently all responsibility devolved on him to defend the system he had set up. I had no desire to fight, and I do not think that I ever heard of Potatau advocating warfare in defence of the Kingship, but one of the chiefs said, "Go ye, and be food for the fowls of the air, *i.e.*, oppose the Europeans if they desire to fight." I disapproved of this proposition of trying our strength with the Europeans, and I wished our people to retire, but after uttering their speech about the birds some of them went into the fight, and I followed, saying, "Now, let everyone of us be killed," and when they proposed the cessation of hostilities I said, "No, let us fight to the death." Since then I have altered my opinions, and I say with Tawhiao most truly, let there be no more fighting. I have made up my mind that no more fighting shall take place unless you Europeans drag us into hostilities.

REWI ON THE PROPOSED BRIDGE ACROSS THE WAIPA.

In speaking of this Rewi said: Tawhiao acted in concert with me as to the erection of the proposed bridge across the Waipa. Beyond that point I did not assent to any proposition, as to townships, roads, railways, &c.

TAWHIAO AND HIS ADVISERS.

Rewi said: "It is not our rule that Tawhiao should act independently of his Council—the chiefs of the King party. Tawhiao's knowledge of this induces him to act with great caution, and when his advisers act independently of him they are censured, as in the case of Te Ngakau, whose line of conduct has given offence. Tawhiao does not act without first consulting his Council, nor the members of his Council without consulting him." This statement of Manga's corroborates Tawhiao's assertion in my previous report, viz.:—"I have a Parliament at Whatiwhatihoe."

SOLDIERS' GRAVES AT TE AWAMUTU.

I visited the graves of those who fell in the fights at Orakau and Rangiawhia, and were buried at Te Awamutu, and regretted to see the decayed wooden slabs placed over the graves of those who fell in action. Some of the slabs are lying on the ground rotting—the characters on some being almost obliterated, and before long all record of the soldiers buried here will be lost. Surely the Government of the country will not allow the memorials of those who fell in the Maori war to pass away, when a few pounds only would replace plain and simple headstones.

TAUPIRI MOUNTAIN.

Reference has been made to this mountain in a previous part of this report. Taupiri is often mentioned in Maori poems and songs. Taupiri is a celebrated mountain, and is intimately associated with the name of Te Rauangaanga, Tawhiao's grandfather. When passing the mountain on my return to Auckland, a fellow-passenger well acquainted with Maori legends, &c., gave me a love song, the following being the first few lines:—

Ki taku po-tanga e pupuhi
He homai aroha a tangi ata au i konei ki
Wha mamao ana
Rewa ai i au te ao i taku whakaae a nga
Te matenga ki te ao ki nei kite wahinaka
E au kataka mate ki te makau tapu.

[TRANSLATION.]

The winds are changing, blowing from the South,
And bringing hither airs of fond affection,
And I am weeping here before I move away to
Places distant.
When I behold the lightsome cloud
From my betrothed—waiting in the dim distance—
Even at Taupiri; while I die of grief
For thee, my constant lover.

OPINIONS OF THE KINGITES AS TO THE MURDERERS.

Several prominent chiefs assert that the Maoris almost universally consider that Te Kooti is not a murderer, nor Parekuta, their acts being connected with the warfare between the races. Winiata's case, however, is on a different basis, and they have nothing to say in justification of his act. To send a force, therefore, into the King country to capture the two former would be considered an attempt on the part of the Government to renew hostilities. One leading chief said:—"If you capture these men on your side of the boundary, your act will not be questioned by us, but if you cross over to our country to capture them, that is quite another matter."

I cannot conclude these letters without expressing my indebtedness to Mr. C. O. Davis, who was present during the interviews with Tawhiao and Rewi, and gave me much information as to the history and ancestry of the leading "Kingite" chiefs, and otherwise afforded me valuable assistance. Mr. Davis' skill as an interpreter, and his knowledge of how to deal with Maoris, are unrivalled. With Europeans generally the natives are more or less reticent, but they speak to Mr. Davis as frankly as amongst themselves.