



NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

FOR THE
PROVINCE OF NEW PLYMOUTH.

Published by Authority.

All Public Notifications which appear in this Gazette, with any Official Signature thereunto annexed, are to be considered as Official Communications made to those persons to whom they may relate, and are to be obeyed accordingly.

CHARLES BROWN, Superintendent.

VOL. III.

NEW PLYMOUTH, THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 1855.

[No. 6.]

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

THE following Memorial for presentation to Her Majesty the Queen was unanimously adopted at a sitting of the Provincial Council held 8th of March 1855, and is published for general information.

I. N. WATT,
Speaker.

TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY VICTORIA, QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, &c. &c. &c.

The Memorial of the Superintendent and Provincial Council of the Province of New Plymouth, in the colony of New Zealand.—

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That since the beginning of the month of August, 1854, (a period of more than seven months) this Province has been the seat of serious and increasing disturbances amongst the Native Population. Upwards of twenty Natives, including a native Assessor of the Resident Magistrate, have already fallen, and many more have been wounded, in the various encounters which have recently taken place between large bodies of armed Natives within a few miles of the Town of New Plymouth. Tribe after Tribe is involved in these feuds, and our settlement seems about to become the battle-field for a large part of the Maori population.

That the Natives are fast losing the last remnant of respect for British Law. It would indeed be a great error to suppose that British law has ever been enforced against them in this part of the country. The Native has been allowed the benefit of our law against the European, but the corresponding obligations it has never in our Province

been attempted to impose upon him. Persuasion and the influence of Chiefs salaried by Government have now and then obtained an imperfect justice for the European. We have acquiesced in the inevitable evils of our position, and have been content to await the time when the Natives should be brought within the pale of our civilization. But a crisis has now occurred, and the weak pretences which covered the supremacy of the savage have been done away with. The slaughter of an Assessor, Rawiri Waiaua, and his unarmed party, almost within our homesteads, has been followed by other acts of violence. Fortified Pahs are rapidly rising throughout the district. The Natives declare to us "your law is weak and we return to our old customs;" and though as yet their own people have been the only sufferers, we know not how soon it may be our turn, since the imprudence of an individual may at any moment involve our whole community.

That one of the two parties into which the Natives are divided, (commonly styled the friendly party,) claims a right to the support of the British Government. The general ground of this claim is the fact that this party has been favorable to Land Sales and the extension of the European settlements. Rawiri belonged to this side, and actually met his death whilst cutting the boundary line of a Block he was about to offer to Government with the sanction of the resident Land Purchase Commissioner. The other native party is inveterately opposed to the extension of our territory. The Officers of Government are continually solicited by the former party for supplies of arms and ammunition and threats are thrown out that if these be not given, they will be taken. They revile what they term our cowardice in leaving Rawiri unavenged. "He was one of your magistrates," they tell us "and he fell in your cause." It is certain this party if worsted, would fall back on the Town, from which the nearest of their Pahs is not distant

above two miles? In such a state of affairs we have great reason to fear that we shall shortly be dragged into the quarrel.

That the settlement is wholly without defence.— It possesses no kind of fortification, and the fire-arms supplied many years ago by Government and the New Zealand Company are inefficient. Of ammunition there is little, and that little not to be relied upon. The militia has never been embodied, and it is in the opinion of your Memorialists impossible at the present juncture to place any reliance on such a force for the defence of the settlement. Your Memorialists and their fellow-settlers are not to blame for their helpless position which has been enforced upon them by the pacific and humanely intended policy of Your Majesty's Government.

That Your Memorialists are not prepared to ask for the enforcement of British law against the war-like population of these Islands, being satisfied that even were it clearly just, the thing is quite impracticable. But Your Memorialists are of opinion that the presence of a strong body of Troops at New Plymouth has become essential to the personal safety of the settlers, and to the maintenance of that neutrality which the British Government has assumed in the native quarrels. We are indeed sensible that before this memorial can reach its destination it is quite possible that New Plymouth may have shared the fate of Kororareka. Yet though we should providentially escape the immediate danger, the causes which have produced the present crisis will all remain in active operation; and it is possible, and not indeed improbable from the Native character, that the present elements of strife may smoulder for many months 'ere the final outbreak. Therefore we feel we should be wanting in our duty to our constituents did we neglect to urge at the distant seat of empire our claim for help; trusting that help may reach us 'ere it be too late.

That there is no ground for supposing that the presence of troops at New Plymouth would have any tendency to embroil us with the Natives. Before the death of Rawiri which was the commencement of the present troubles, an application for troops was made to Government by Hone Ropiha, an assessor and a peace-loving and influential chief. He foresaw the mischief then brewing, and believed (we think truly,) that the presence of a military force would have averted it. A large body of natives would rejoice at the sight of soldiers. Others, it is true, might have a jealous feeling on the subject, but it would be easy to restore confidence by judicious explanations. Your Majesty will perceive it is unlikely we should urge measures really calculated to lead to a collision which (however it might result) would certainly occasion the destruction of the chief part of our property.

That in consequence of the disallowance of the greater part of the New Zealand Company's original purchase by Governor Fitzroy, of the extensive land purchases made in other Provinces, and of Reserves made in this Province for the natives of other districts, there has been a progressive increase of the Maori population of Taranaki. When we arrived fourteen years ago, we could not count tens where we now reckon hundreds. The action, if not the policy of the General Government has tended to concentrate upon us the Native population from all parts of New Zealand, thereby exposing us to increasing difficulty and danger, whilst the other Provinces are proportionably relieved.— Thus we have a special claim to protection.

That it having been alleged that the country about New Plymouth is peculiarly unfavorable for military operations Your Memorialists, (without pretending to any military knowledge,) do most unhesitatingly declare their belief that the contrary is the fact; and that the levels of Taranaki are vastly more favorable for the movement of regular

troops than most districts of New Zealand, and certainly much more so than any field in which Europeans have hitherto been opposed to Maories:

That a Garrison at New Plymouth with a few field pieces would have at command all the Pahs and native cultivations between this and the Waitara, and would thereby afford us the surest guarantee of peace with a people who are well able to compute forces, and (for barbarians) are singularly fond of property, and the possessors of a large amount of it.

That the General Government of New Zealand has been kept constantly informed on the subject of this Memorial, and is well aware of our sentiments, but has hitherto declined to take any step for the succour of the settlement either by a supply of efficient arms, or by sending troops. It is not possible here to discuss the reasons alleged for the continued refusal of troops. We can only say, that to us they appear wholly insufficient, and nothing but the respect due to your Majesty's Representative prevents us from characterizing them in more forcible terms.

That your Memorialists do not impute to those at whose disposal the Military force of this Colony is at present placed, a conscious actuation by improper motives. Time and patience have caused many Native difficulties to disappear; and in our case there may be enough to justify a public man with little knowledge of Native character in yielding to a belief of our security, which on other grounds it is convenient to entertain. But we must be allowed to deplore the undue influence which local interests have, as we believe, been suffered to acquire in the conduct of the affairs of this Colony.

That various measures for the safety of the settlement suggested by His Excellency through the Colonial Secretary and by Mr. McLean, have been considered by your Memorialists and appear to us either impracticable or inadequate. On the calling out of the Militia suggested by Mr. McLean, we have already expressed an opinion. Another suggestion is the embodiment of a Native Force. A knowledge of the Natives of this district assures us that the experiment would be a very dangerous one. We are unable to preserve discipline amongst our small force of Native Police, and should consider an armed body of Natives more dangerous to ourselves than to the enemy, except indeed as allies of an European force. Moreover the connection of the various members of such a force with one or other of the native parties in the present warfare would be likely to compromise ourselves. We cannot pass without remark His Excellency's main suggestion that our Police Force be increased to 30 or 40 men to be armed with carbines and revolvers. We do not intend to deny the efficiency of such a Force composed of men acquainted with the country and (as His Excellency has suggested) previously used to arms. But the number named betrays in our judgement a wonderful misapprehension of the actual exigency. Indeed in another Despatch of the Colonial Secretary, His Excellency states from 300 to 500 troops as what might be required. Nor are we even told where we are to enlist 40 men of the kind required.

That the reality of our danger is undisputed. It has been urged on the Government by the Chief Land Purchase Commissioner Mr. McLean to whose Report on the subject made to His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government and accompanying this Memorial we respectfully beg to refer Your Majesty. Most of your Memorialists are old settlers habituated to the ways of the Maories. That we have maintained our ground in Taranaki under great discouragement from a Native opposition, fostered rather than checked by the early Governors of the Colony, is proof that we are not subject to vain terror, and that our present application to Your Majesty is worthy of regard.

That your Memorialists are convinced that un-

less a considerable military force be for some years maintained in New Zealand and especially in districts like Taranaki where a large Native population is in contact with a British Settlement, another costly and deplorable war with the Aboriginal race will be ultimately inevitable. We beseech Your Majesty not to be misled by flattering accounts of Native progress into the belief that the New Zealander is a civilised man. The progress made (often we regret to believe more apparent than real) cannot be secured if your British subjects are left at the mercy of semi-savages. Maintain for a time that display of strength which has hitherto ensured some respect for the British power, and it will we believe at no distant date become unnecessary—Withdraw it prematurely, and Your Majesty may witness in this part of Your Majesty's Dominions calamities as great as those which have recently occurred under British rule in South Africa. Savages despise the weak—we have fallen into contempt; and those who have become contemptible are no longer safe.

Your Memorialists therefore pray that Your Majesty will be pleased to cause an efficient Garrison to be posted at Taranaki for the defence of the Settlers. And we further pray Your Majesty will be pleased not to reduce the military force at present in these Islands unless indeed the requirements of the righteous warfare in which Your Majesty and the Empire are already engaged should unhappily render it absolutely necessary to recall Troops.

And your Memorialists will ever pray &c.

NOTICE.

IN compliance with the 7th of the following Resolutions they are hereby published for general information.

CHARLES BROWN,
Superintendent.

Superintendent's Office,
15th March, 1855.

PASSED unanimously at a Public Meeting held at the Masonic Hall on Saturday, 10th March, 1855.

"That this Meeting having taken into consideration the Despatch of the Honorable the Colonial Secretary of 10th February, in reply to two memorials addressed by the inhabitants of this Province to His Excellency the Governor; and considering also the ample information laid before His Excellency by His Honor the Superintendent and the Provincial Council of

New Plymouth and by Mr Commissioner Mc Lean, expresses its deep regret that no steps have been taken by the Government to protect the lives and properties of the settlers of New Plymouth endangered by the hostile attitude and lawless condition of the native population.

"That in the opinion of this meeting the Government project of entrusting the defence of this settlement to a Militia and Armed Police Force not yet organised is not only illusive, impracticable, and wholly inadequate, but would inevitably ensure the most disastrous results in the event of a collision with the natives."

"That in the opinion of this meeting the expedients suggested by the Government are not of the slightest practical utility—that they would tend to bring the Government into still greater contempt with the natives, and wholly destroy what little may yet remain of respect for British authority."

"That the present unsettled condition of the native population is mainly attributable to the policy pursued by the Government of purchasing from the scattered tribes of Taranaki their claims to land in other parts of the colony, thus rendering inevitable the return of such tribes to this district, and compromising the safety of the Province."

"That so far from the presence of a Military force preventing the acquirement of fresh tracts of land from the Natives, it would on the contrary materially accelerate it as those who are now willing to sell are overawed by those who are opposed to any further sale of land."

"That in the opinion of this meeting the presence of a Military force would not only provide for the present safety of the Resident and encourage the location of new settlers, but ensure such deference on the part of the natives to constituted authority as would eventually prevent any future embarrassments."

"That the chairman be instructed to forward a copy of the resolutions passed at this meeting to his Honor the Superintendent requesting him to publish the same in the 'Government Gazette' of the Province."

"That a Committee consisting of Messrs R. Brown, I. N. Watt, and T. King be appointed to draw up a Memorial on the subject of the above Resolutions to His Excellency Colonel Gore Browne."

"That this Meeting do adopt the address to Her Majesty of the Superintendent and Provincial Council which has been read by the chairman at the commencement of this Meeting."