

It would tend much to preserve the peace and harmony of the settlement, if a judicious officer, acquainted with their language, and able to explain these circumstances to the Natives, which otherwise are apt to grow up into serious disagreements, were permanently resident there. I have been in constant communication with some of the principal men, and have promised to send them a protector; which promise I hope soon to redeem, Mr. McLean, a gentleman in my office, being under preparation to fill that important place.

Most of the Natives at present residing at Taranaki are emancipated slaves, who when the doctrines of Christianity began to influence the conduct of their captors, were allowed to return to their homes and re-assume their possessions; owing to this circumstance, many of their countrymen have looked upon them as contemptible, and treated them disrespectfully. The interested among our own countrymen, also, taking a similar view of their position, have represented them as having no claim to the soil. The effect of all this has been, as might be expected, a most determined stand on the part of these despised people against the assumptions of their detractors; and it has even led them in some instances, as a means of wiping out the stain upon their honour, to defy their conquerors, who, but for the growing influence of Christian principles, would probably have taken advantage of this, and by re-capturing them, have thereby secured so many advantages as the possession of the Taranaki district held out for themselves; but an accurate and faithful report upon the state of this district can only be rendered after an intimate knowledge of their condition is acquired by residence amongst its inhabitants.

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### No. 10.

EXTRACT FROM SUB-PROTECTOR CLARKE'S REPORT TO THE CHIEF PROTECTOR, DATED 29TH JUNE, 1844.

On the 31st of May Mr. Spain held his court at Taranaki, and closed the investigation of the claims to that district, the result of which was a verdict in favour of the Company's having effected a valid purchase; considerable excitement prevailed in consequence among the Natives, but by impressing upon their minds the danger and certain ruin they would bring upon themselves, if they resorted to violent measures as a means of obtaining redress for their real or supposed grievances, and by pointing out that the proper course for them to pursue was to communicate a statement of the facts in writing to the Government, I persuaded them to desist from any general attempts to molest the settlers.

In order to enable you fully to comprehend the nature of the obstacles to the amicable settlement of this branch of the question, I feel it necessary to refer to circumstances which occurred nearly 14 years ago, when Te Rauparaha persuaded a large force of the Ngatiawa and other tribes to assist him in his wars with the original inhabitants of the northern and southern shores of Cook's Straits. The Waikato Natives, taking advantage of their absence, suddenly invaded the Taranaki district, and took Pukerangiora, a large pah on the Waitara River, capturing or destroying nearly 2,000 of the inhabitants; they then attacked Ngamotu, near the present settlement of New Plymouth, but without success, and were compelled to return to their own country. They afterwards cultivated a small portion of land formerly occupied by the Ngatimutunga, to the north of the Waitara River, but if the accounts of the Natives now resident at New Plymouth are to be credited, they never cultivated any other part of the district. I believe a small party of them attempted to occupy land on the Waitara, but met with so much opposition from the original claimants, that they were compelled to retire. On these circumstances the Waikato Natives formed their claims, but I believe they never took possession of or exercised acts of ownership upon the land generally.

They never repeated their attack, though they frequently threatened to do so; and the Natives of Taranaki, finding themselves too weak to oppose effectually the expected invasion, when their principal warriors were absent with Te Rauparaha in the Middle Island, migrated with their women and children to Kapiti, and the opposite side of Cook's Straits, and rejoined their relatives.

The purchase of the New Zealand Company was transacted in the month of February 1840, when, I believe, there were not more than 60 Natives (part of the Puketapu and Ngamotu tribes), residing in the district north of the Sugar-loaves. Most of these affixed their signatures to the deed of conveyance. How far they may have understood its contents, or the boundaries of the land professed to be conveyed, I cannot say, their statement being so contradictory; but I fully believe that these boundaries, and the block chosen by the Company, comprise lands that were never occupied by or belonged to them. They themselves clearly admit that they had no general claim over the district, and that they could only rightly dispose of their own individual possessions.

After the introduction of Christianity into the district of Waikato, many of the Natives who had been taken prisoners at Taranaki, and reduced to slavery, were released by their masters, and permitted to return to their own country. These freed men first arrived there some months after the date of the purchase, and took possession of the spots they had formerly occupied and cultivated. Ever since which, parties of the tribes in Cook's Straits have been and are still daily returning, and resuming possession of the lands they respectively occupied before their migration to the southward. On the other hand, that portion of the Waikato tribes who are not more immediately under the influence of Te Wero Wero, and particularly the Natives of Mokau and the adjacent country, have expressed their determination to renew the contest with the Taranaki tribes, if they persist in a general re-occupation of the district, or accept of any payment from the Europeans.