

23. *Chairman.*] What do you mean about distant tribes?

*Te Keene.*] I mean we cannot speak for them,—they must speak by their own representatives.

24. *Chairman.*] Would it be considered just to prevent innocent Natives from visiting the district in which the offenders live;—would it be considered just to prevent their relations from visiting them?

*Paora.*] It would be just.

25. *Chairman.*] Can you suggest anything to prevent offences like the Kawau robbery?

*Paora.*] This law that has just been finished is the best law. Detain the goods, &c. It rests with you. Nothing better can be found out, unless blood is shed.

26. *Chairman.*] Is this better than blood-shedding?

*All the Chiefs.*] Yes, it is better.

*Paora.*] If the powder is restored, there is an end.

*All the Chiefs.*] There should be payment besides for the wrong committed.

*Wiremu Reweti Te Whenua.*] All the out settlers should be made to return to Auckland from the wicked districts.

*Taraia.*] Not from Waiho, for that is innocent and has done no wrong.

*Paora.*] This is an important subject, and the opinion of other tribes should be taken.

The Native Chiefs then withdrew.

*F. D. Fenton, Esq., in attendance.*

1. What is the nature of your official connexion with the Government?—I am Native Secretary.

2. How long have you been so?—I have been so about three months,—and, previously to that, I was Resident Magistrate at Kaipara,—previously to that, I resided at Waikato.

3. How long have you been in New Zealand?—About seven years, and during the whole time amongst the Natives,—and, as Resident Magistrate in a Native district having had experience as to the administration among the Natives.

4. Have you made yourself acquainted with the Native Offenders Bill?—I have seen the Bill, and am acquainted with the provisions of it: the general object of that Bill is, in certain cases, to prevent trading and intercourse between the Natives and Europeans.

5. Do you consider it desirable that such a Bill should become law?—I think it desirable that such a Bill should become law for the public good, and that it would be likely to produce the desired effect.

6. Do you think it possible to carry out the provisions of this Bill at the Manai (Coromandel)?—I think in such a district as the Coromandel it would be perfectly practicable to carry such a law into effect with the means ordinarily at the Government disposal.

7. What amount of assistance would be necessary to carry out the law?—I think the least force would produce the effect of it; but, to do it completely, it might require a small armed cutter to anchor off the coast of the proscribed district, to prevent the access of coasting vessels by water.

8. Do you apprehend any great trouble in such a step?—I think it might be done without risk of collision; I have no apprehension that they would attack such a vessel.

9. Would there be any difficulty in seizing vessels offending?—I think there would be no difficulty in seizing the vessels of the offenders, if known. I do not think there would be the slightest chance of their escaping or trading: the risk of forfeiture would deter them from trading.

10. Would you apprehend any injury likely to result from the introduction of this measure?—I know of no injury likely to arise from such a law, except a trifling inconvenience to a few out settlers, and a temporary loss of coasting trade with the outlawed district.

11. Would not this produce a serious loss to the traders as well as to the Natives?—In my opinion, such a loss is no loss at all, for the Coromandel Natives; whilst the present state of things continues, there are no likelihoods of their resuming their industrious occupations. It is necessary to restore tranquillity for them to resume their habits of industry.

12. *Mr. Henderson.*] Were you in the Colony when Sir George Grey's blockade was proclaimed?—No, I was not; I never heard of the blockade,—am not aware that there was any.

13. *Mr. Daldy.*] Was the present Bill prepared under your advice and assistance?—It was. I beg leave to read a letter on the subject of a Bill from Mr. Morgan, recommending the introduction of a law of similar object to that proposed. With permission will read the letter.

Mr. Fenton read Mr. Morgan's letter.

14. Have you any suggestions to offer to the Committee as to the Bill?—Yes; as to clause 13, I think the seizing power too wide. The powers by which seizures should be made should be specified. In my opinion, the seizing power should be given "to any Officer or Officers of the Navy or Army on full pay, any Officer of Customs, any Justice of the Peace, Harbour-master, or Police constable, or any person specially authorised by writing under the Governor's hand."

15. Would you empower Chiefs of friendly Natives to seize?—In cases it might be desirable to do so, as in special cases under special authority. With respect to the origin of the Bill, I may mention that several Natives have called at different times at the Native Secretary's Office, and suggested that the supplies to the offending Natives at Manai should be stopped: they generally recommend that they should be put under forfeiture. I beg leave to suggest that, in the 5th subsection of the 2nd clause, in the 1st line, the word "or" should be "and."

16. Can you suggest any preliminary conditions, before putting the Bill in force, without destroying its effects?—I have thought it over; I cannot find any I would suggest. I take for granted that, in ordinary cases, the Governor would consult his Responsible Advisers; at the same time I think he ought not to be bound to do so, he might have members who might object to putting this law into