

GOVERNORS' DECISIONS.

It is evident that there were fifteen Natives residing at the Waitara River at the time the sale was effected, who were unacquainted with it till some time afterwards, and who did not receive any share of the payment given by the Company. It appears that the principal Native owners of those lands, after a most disastrous conflict with the Natives of Waikato at a pah called Pukerangiora (about 8 miles from the entrance of Waitara River), in which many were slain and some taken captive, effected their escape and located themselves in different parts of the country, principally at Kapiti, Nelson, and Port Nicholson. From the latter place several of them found their way to the Chatham Islands.

Within the last two years many of those who left have returned, there being now about 250 Natives residing at their paha on the Waitara. This river has always been a favourite resort of the Natives. It is not probable that the Natives will be inclined to dispose of any of their lands in this particular neighbourhood. * * *

DONALD McLEAN.

[Not before published.]

Protector McLean,
17 Dec., 1844.

Taranaki, 17th December, 1844.

The Natives of Taniwha and Waitara, who occupy the northern portion of the land claimed by the New Zealand Company, have not shown at any time an inclination to dispose of the land in their neighbourhood, nor do they consider themselves empowered to negotiate for the same without the consent of several absentee Chiefs residing at Kapiti, who own the greater portion of the land. They do not acknowledge the claims of the Company to any part of that district; they never received payment, and were not cognisant of a sale thereof, and will not be induced to suffer European settlers to establish themselves there.

The Puketapu tribe residing at Mangoraka and the Hua, over whom Katatore assumed chieftainship, are desirous that the Europeans who have established themselves there should remain on the lands they have cultivated, but are prevented by Katatore, who will not allow of or consent to any information being given as to land, or individual portions pointed out, fearing it might prejudice his assumed influence, his own claim being but small.

His Excellency the Governor, whose arrival had been anxiously looked for, paid his second visit to this settlement on the 8th November, when I laid before him such information as I could procure; in addition to which I placed before him maps of the settlement, showing the extent of individual claims, both European and Native, as far as the claims of the latter could be obtained; also a statement of the feeling evinced by the Natives respecting their lands; after which His Excellency visited the neighbourhood of Mangoraka and Waitara, accompanied by Messrs. Whiteley and Turton (Wesleyan Missionaries) and myself, when he had an opportunity of conversing with the Natives, who still evinced no desire to allow the Europeans to remain. * * *

The principal difficulties to contend with in the negotiations with the Natives, arose in a great measure from their elder men not having sufficient influence to direct and advise the younger and more unreasonable members of their tribes: the hereditary despotism of their chieftainship having become more apparently extinct in this district than in any other part of the island, chiefly in consequence of the exterminating wars which have been so prevalent here, in which many of the Chiefs were taken captive, and thus placed on an equality with their followers, so that every one, young and old, has now a voice in their deliberations, which often causes dissatisfaction and annoyance. This was very apparent on one occasion. Several of the young and unpractised orators of the Puketapu tribe had been waiting to exact a part of the payment from the people of Ngamotu for land they assumed a claim to in their district, and which occasioned a general dispute. Moturoa, the Chief from Port Nicholson, got up to assert his claim to some land at Omata. The resident Natives stated that he had no right to come and assert his claim to land from which he had been so long absent, having possessed himself of other lands in Cook's Straits, which he had sold to the Europeans, without considering his relatives, who were left behind to keep possession of and defend lands which he had forsaken. Moturoa, being a Chief of considerable importance, and unused to such insults from parties whom he did not consider his equals in rank or standing, was very indignant. Several of his and his wife's relations formed themselves into a party to revenge the treatment he was receiving, arming themselves with whatever weapons were at hand. Fortunately no collision then took place.

DONALD McLEAN.

[In Parl. Pap., 8th April, 1846, p. 143.]

XII.—EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM MR. FORSAITH TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY DATED 30TH AUGUST, 1844.

T. S. Forsaith, Esq.,
30 Aug. 1844.

Enclosed is a copy of a communication from the Rev. J. Whiteley, of Kawhia, reporting his late visit to Taranaki, and offering some valuable suggestions relative to the settlement of the complicated claims to land in that district: which I do myself the honour to forward for the information of His Excellency the Governor, and would recommend the adoption of the forms submitted by Mr. Whiteley, as calculated to be of great assistance to Mr. McLean in classifying and arranging the information he has to obtain.

[Not before published.]