

FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO NATIVE AFFAIRS.

E—No. 30

Partial Return to an address of the House of Representatives, "requesting that certain documents ordered by this House in last Session to be laid on the table by Mr. McLean, the Native Secretary, and which have not been so laid thereon, particularly Mr. Parris' journal, "Mr. Reimenschneider's letter, Mr. Halse's instructions when sent to the Waikato, and the "Report on the grass seed question, requested to be produced by Mr. McLean to the "Waikato Committee, may be furnished to the House forthwith."

FRED. A. WELD.

No. 1.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM MR. REIMENSCHNEIDER TO THE NATIVE SECRETARY.

Warea, Taranaki,
September 24th, 1855.

SIR,—

In compliance with the request of your letter of the 22nd instant, I hasten to acquaint you by the earliest opportunity, with what have been, and still continue to be, the feelings and sentiments of the Taranaki tribe in reference to the Puketapu disturbances; and in what light they view the whole case at this present moment.

Ever since the death of poor Rawiri Waiaua and throughout all the troubles and feuds, which have subsequently followed, either in a direct or indirect connexion with that lamentable catastrophe, the Taranaki people have looked upon the whole as an affair belonging, generally speaking, in all its points, wholly and entirely to the Maori aborigines themselves.

But more particularly speaking, they have viewed it in the first and in the last instance, as an internal quarrel of the Ngatiawa tribe, which having originated amongst themselves out of their own private disputes, about their own lands, without any investigation whatever either on the part of the Pakeha or any other Maori tribe, ought therefore also to be left entirely to themselves (the Ngatiawa) to be settled by them at their own pleasure, by their own means, and at their own costs.

Hence, in the first instance, the sensation created in this district by the death of Rawiri Waiaua and several of his adherents, comparatively was but slight, and very soon subsided. It had been previously known here that he had *toke*d to sell the disputed land, in spite of Katatore's decided opposition; and that he had offered to Mr. Cooper the land for sale, without having been asked for it, by the last named officer. In the estimation of Taranaki, therefore, nobody was to be blamed for that fatal occurrence but Rawiri himself; and when, shortly afterwards, Mr. Cooper was removed from New Plymouth, the Natives here looked upon this as another proof that on the part of the Government no inducement whatever had originally been given to Rawiri to offer the land in question for sale; but that much rather to the contrary, the Government had shewn its disapprobation of Rawiri's offers and proposals having been at all entertained by Mr. Cooper under the existing circumstances. All this taken together, led the Natives to the conclusion that Government had made itself, once for all, clear of the subject, to have confided to those to whom it belonged; and would, of course, not interfere with it in future.

Thus, for the space of several successive months, did Taranaki look upon the Puketapu feuds with the greatest unconcern and indifference possible in such a matter. And Ngatiruanui kept aloof till the violent death of Rawiri, caused by Ihaia, induced a number of them (te Ruahine) to come up and join Katatore against Ihaia and his party, in order to avenge the blood of Rawiri as belonging to their tribe; and which, according to the statement they had received from that wily man, Wiremu Kingi, had been spilt, not as a return for an alleged crime (*puremu*) of Rimene; but simply because he had been one of Katatore's company, and had, therefore, been shot, to be part of payment for Rawiri, slain by Katatore. Thus, by having unfortunately got Rimene's death to be mixed up with the land question, Katatore had at once obtained the assistance of a large party of the Ngatiruanui against Ihaia *ma*; and that very unfortunate circumstance, had, at the same time, very nearly involved all Taranaki in the conflict. For being closely related to the Ngatirawanuis, by intermarriage, &c., Rimene's death, without any (to them) satisfactory proof of his guilt, in the first instance, exerted amongst them a strong feeling of sympathy, and this excitement was considerably increased when, shortly after, on the occasion of the storming of Te Mawaku (pah) several of their Ngatiruanui friends and relatives, such as Paori Mautangi, Hemi Tutere, &c., had been killed and a few others wounded. In fact at that time all Taranaki was assembled under arms here at Warea, ready to march, and only waiting to be called, to the assistance of Ngatiruanuis against Ihaia and his party. However, on Christmas Day, 1854, Ngatiruanui left the Kaipakopako and returned home by the mountain road (by which also they had come) after having declared to me that since blood had now been spilt on either side they considered that matters had now become straight, and consequently their quarrel with Ihaia *ma* was now settled, and that, therefore, as they entertained no longer any feeling of ill-will or resentment against him, Taranaki, on receiving here at Warea the news of Ngatiruanui's return, had immediately dispersed.