

MEMORANDUM BY THE NATIVE SECRETARY.

In conformity with the request contained in Your Excellency's minute of this day's date, I have to state that I have consulted one of the officers of my department and another gentleman of great practical experience in Native matters: and the conclusions arrived at by these gentlemen and myself on the points to which attention has been more particularly directed, may be briefly stated as follows.

1. As to the advantages to be obtained by an expedition against the Taranaki and Ngatiruanui tribes, and whether it should be undertaken at once, or at a future time; and if so, when?

It is considered that an expedition undertaken against these tribes at this season of the year would not be attended with any permanent result. The Ng tiruanui who occupy the country between Haupokonui on the North and Patea on the South have almost entirely abandoned their pas and villages on the coast, resorting to them only occasionally in summer to fish. Their settlements and cultivations are chiefly along the margin of the forest, in places not easily accessible during the winter months, owing to the entire absence of roads, and the numerous creeks and gullies that intersect the country. They have no property near the coast, nor is it considered that they would meet the troops if they landed in their country: but it is quite probable they would, as they have already done at New Plymouth, rob, plunder and take the lives of defenceless Europeans at Whanganui and elsewhere; while it would, at the same time, complicate the negotiations with the Waikato. The planting time in spring would be the best season of the year for sending an expedition to the Ngatiruanui country.

"2. If such an expedition be postponed, whether it be desirable to send to those tribes the specific terms which the Governor intends to propose, or not?"

It is submitted that the specified terms should be sent to the Taranaki and Ngatiruanui tribes.

"3. Whether it is desirable to open negotiations at once with Waikato, or wait till the Taranaki and Ngatiruanui are settled with?"

It is considered desirable that negotiations should be at once opened with the Waikato, as all the really important questions of the country have to be settled with that tribe.

"4. If such negotiations are opened and fail, whether an invasion of the Waikato is practicable?"

Full time should be allowed for negotiating with the Waikato, without relaxing in such preparations as may be necessary for the defence of the different settlements in the Northern island: all of which, except Auckland, are very much at the mercy of the Natives should they meditate simultaneous attacks upon them. The invasion of Waikato is practicable.

"5. What number of men it might be expected would have to be met in Waikato?"

The force to be at first met there would probably not exceed from 3,000 to 4,000 fighting men; but about double that number would be found to sympathize with them throughout the country. These would be ready either to join them, or to act in concert with them, in any plan they might conceive for attacking the English settlements.

"6. Whether the Waikato country is such as will admit of an expedition there in winter with a reasonable chance of success; if not, what are the difficulties?"

It is considered, from the difficulty of communication and bad roads, that an invasion of the Waikato in the winter would be attended with great inconvenience and loss, especially with a small force. From the present unsettled state of the Natives throughout the country, I do not see that it would be possible, with the force at present at your Excellency's disposal, to do more during the winter months than to defend the scattered and isolated English settlements in the Northern Island.

DONALD McLEAN.

No. 9.

COPY OF A DESPATCH FROM GOVERNOR GORE BROWNE TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

Government House,
Auckland, New Zealand,
3rd May, 1861.

MY LORD DUKE,—

In continuation of my Despatch, No. 51, of the 13th April, I have the honour to forward copy of a further correspondence between myself and Lieut.-General Cameron, C.B.

In his letter of the 15th April, the General observes that "he strongly recommended that they (the Waikatos) "should be called to account without loss of time," and also "that much valuable "time has already been lost in dilatory negotiations."

There can be no doubt that much valuable time is always wasted when it is necessary to negotiate with the Maoris, for they are incapable of coming to a decision as promptly as a civilized people. To refuse them time would be to refuse to negotiate at all. The *hapus* are scattered at great distances from each other, and no peace would be binding without the consent of a large majority of them. To demand an answer in a few days, would therefore be to ask for what would be worthless if given.

A part of the Waikatos have certainly attacked our people without provocation, and plundered them wantonly; if therefore we only seek to chastise them, the General's plan would, if practicable, be unobjectionable. I am, however, convinced that Her Majesty's Government will be satisfied with complete submission on the part of Her Native subjects, and would not approve of my resorting to force if the same end can be attained by means involving less serious consequences to both races, than must necessarily follow from a war in the Waikato.

I have therefore told General Cameron that I must give the Waikato tribes reasonable time to assemble their *hapus* and deliberate. I have not thought it advisable to insist on specific terms at once; but have written to the Chief Wiremu Tamehana, and have communicated personally with Tamati Ngapora, the latter of whom earnestly desires to induce his people to submit.