

## No. 18.

## MEMORANDUM by MINISTERS.

As His Excellency's Responsible Advisers do not take the same view as His Excellency of what has taken place in reference to the subjects discussed in his Excellency's Memorandum of the 28th of June, they beg most respectfully, in order to avoid misunderstanding hereafter, to place their views on record.

His Excellency states that "it will be found that the first proposal to establish a Frontier line in this part of New Zealand was made by the Governor to the Executive Council about the middle of June, 1863, which proposal was accepted in Mr. Domett's memorandum of the 24th of June, 1863." It appears from Mr. Domett's Memorandum that an Executive Council was held a short time before that day, at which His Excellency explained in detail the plan "he would recommend for the defence of the Southern Frontier of the settled districts of the Province of Auckland, and the establishment of a base for further operations in the interior of the enemy's country." His Excellency's plan, briefly stated, was—"To make the Waikato River," &c.

From this it appears that the Frontier proposed to be established by His Excellency was a "Southern Frontier of the settled districts of the Province of Auckland,"—a "temporary line of defence" across the Island from Waikato Heads to the Hauraki Gulf; to be defended partly by fortified posts and the intervals by cavalry. A permanent frontier, such as now proposed to be held by Military Settlers, was no part of the plan detailed. Indeed the only places named by His Excellency to be taken permanent possession of for settlement was situate outside the Frontier line he proposed to establish temporarily. It certainly appears from the papers on the subject "that the first proposal to establish a frontier line in this part of New Zealand was made by His Excellency,—but that line was of a totally different description, and altogether for a different purpose from that which it is now the object of the Government to establish across the Waikato.

So far, then, as Ministers can find any record, it appears to them clear that Mr. Domett's Memorandum of the 31st of July, 1863, assented to by the Governor on the 5th of August following, first proposed "that a Frontier line to the South of Auckland might be taken, and permanently guarded by men capable, with little assistance, of resisting the attacks of troublesome Natives beyond it."

His Excellency's Memorandum now under consideration for the first time defines "Waikato," as used in the conditions of enrolment of the Military Settlers, to mean what he is pleased to call "Waikato proper, that is, as far as Ngaruawahia." The name "Waikato" has hitherto been always considered to include a large tract of country beyond Ngaruawahia, and in proof that it was intended to do so in the "conditions" referred to, Ministers appeal to His Excellency's proposal, as stated in the Memorandum of the 24th of June, 1864, "to confiscate the lands of the hostile Natives." This proposal was generally, if not universally understood to include the land of the Ngatihaia (William Thompson's), and the Ngatimanipoto (Rewi's) tribes, for these two tribes were the principals in the rebellion, and are clearly those referred to in the Memorandum of the 31st of July, upon which the "conditions" are founded, as "the most powerful in New Zealand." It would have been impolitic and unjust to have exempted them, and neither of these tribes possess any land at any of the places named by His Excellency in the Memorandum of the 28th of June, 1864, or indeed anywhere on the Waikato River this side of Ngaruawahia. To have confined "Waikato" by such a definition as His Excellency now proposes would have left undone that which above all was essential; and Ministers cannot but think was clearly intended by the Government to be done. Moreover, it must not be overlooked that His Excellency's plan, as declared in the Memorandum of the 24th of June, 1863, was clearly not intended to stop at Ngaruawahia, and be complete and final, but to be only a "basis for further military operations in the interior of the enemy's country."

All the advantages claimed by His Excellency for the lands he specially referred to, are to be found in an eminent degree in the localities which have been selected for the Military Settlers. The positions are excellent; the lands are of the best situated, and choicest in quality in the Province of Auckland; labour in abundance will be near at hand, and water communication ready to the very doors of the settlers. Nor was there any reason that Ministers are aware of why the settlements should not have been commenced as soon in the one case as the other. There is, moreover, in the opinion of Ministers, an advantage of especial importance to the Colony belonging to the localities selected over those suggested by His Excellency; the former will really give a Frontier line across the Island, not only the most defensible, but indeed perhaps the only practicable one; the latter would have been a chain of posts up the middle of the Lower Waikato district, exposed on both flanks, and of little use for the protection of the settled districts.

So far from no part of the Governor's plan being acted on, Ministers were under the impression that hitherto every part of it had been adhered to in a remarkable manner. "The River Waikato from the sea on the West Coast to the Southern bend in the middle of the Island was made a temporary line of defence," armed steamers were placed on the river, and posts were established on its Northern bank. There was established, "from the bend of the river, a line of fortified posts, extending to the Hauraki Gulf;" the intervals were defended by cavalry. The Gulf and its shores were looked after by steamers, military posts were thrown forward from the central bend of the River up to Paetae and Ngaruawahia, and permanent possession taken of these places. All hostile Natives residing between the Auckland Isthmus and the line of the River, and fortified posts above mentioned were cleared out. And these operations, as recommended by His Excellency, have been a defence to "the Southern frontier of the settled districts of the Province of Auckland, and "a basis for further military operations in the interior of the enemy's country." The only part of the plan remaining unfulfilled is to confiscate the lands, (or, as Ministers propose, some of them only,) of the hostile Natives, give away part on military tenure, and sell the remainder "to defray the expenses of the war." Ministers have ever been ready to co-operate with His Excellency in completing his programme, and they trust that no obstacle will be found in doing so without delay.