

by the Provincial Government, or by some other competent body who might have sufficient means to undertake it.

His Honor the Superintendent, Taranaki.

I have, &c.,

E. W. STAFFORD.

### No. 3.

(No. 87.) Copy of a Letter from HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND to the HON. E. W. STAFFORD.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, New Plymouth, 29th January, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the number and date quoted in the margin, on the subject of the management and disposal of the confiscated lands in this Province.

In reference to your observations as to the proposal made by me that a proportion of the proceeds of land sales should be devoted to the construction of a harbor, I wish to state that, in making that proposal, I was actuated by the belief, to which I still entirely hold, that nothing could so greatly tend to raise the value of the waste lands of the Province, and to promote their rapid sale and occupation, as the construction of harbor works at the Sugar Loaves. I see that it is quite natural that such an opinion should be looked upon with suspicion, as intended more for the benefit of the present population than for the objects I have named, but I am confident that if the subject were fully considered by His Excellency's Government, or by a Committee of the House, it would be found that my view is correct. The work required in the first instance is not so extensive as might have been supposed. Messrs. Balfour and Doyne, as far as their present information goes, estimate that for from £120,000 to £140,000 shelter in all weathers might be provided for the vessels frequenting the port.

Leaving this point for further consideration, I would say that the Provincial Government will be very willing to take over the confiscated lands of the Province with any burthens which it may seem reasonable to believe that their possession will enable the Province to bear.

In intimating that some such arrangement is open to us, you mention the liabilities to which the lands are subject, without stating what those liabilities are considered to be.

I should be very glad if you would inform me more definitely as to your views on this point.

The principal liability, I presume, is that of satisfying the claims of friendly natives. Would it not be desirable, as a step toward the settlement of this business, that you should request the Civil Commissioner, who appears to have been entrusted with exceedingly large powers in reference to these matters, to furnish an estimate of the quantity of land required to satisfy Native claims of all kinds?

But, if, as is possible, Mr. Parris is not in a position to furnish any reliable estimate of this kind, I would strongly urge that the sitting of the Compensation Court in this Province should not be longer delayed.

I may state that Major Atkinson, on examining into the subject of the liabilities on these lands, as far as he was in a position to do so, came to the conclusion that little or no open land would be available for sale.

I am exceedingly anxious that the matter of the management of these lands should be decided on way or the other, with the least possible delay, and whenever I can obtain sufficient information as to the extent of the claims on the land to see my own way in the matter, I will, if you think it desirable, come up to Wellington, and discuss the terms of the arrangement with you personally.

My present view of the case is briefly this, that the Province ought to take over these lands, together with any liabilities which with their possession it is reasonable to hope that it will be able to meet, but that to undertake more than this would be neither wise nor right.

I have, &c.,

H. R. RICHMOND,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Superintendent.

### No. 4.

(No. 66.) Copy of a Letter from the HON. E. W. STAFFORD to HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 19th February, 1866.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Honor's letter of the 29th ult., on the subject of the disposal of the confiscated lands in the Province of Taranaki.

I have directed that an approximate estimate, as far as practicable, be prepared of all claims affecting the confiscated lands in Taranaki, in order that it may be transmitted to your Honor; as soon as that has been done, I shall be glad to confer with your Honor on the subject.

I have, &c.,

His Honor the Superintendent, Taranaki.

E. W. STAFFORD.

### No. 5.

(No. 93.) Copy of a Letter from HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND to the HON. COLONEL HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, New Plymouth, February 8th, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 19th ult., No. 891-1, in which you request me