

It has been felt to be quite possible that an order from a Maori chief in Waikato, or any trivial dispute with a European, might bring on hostilities at any time; but it would be childish to allege that the possibility of such a dispute occurring was the cause of the feeling of insecurity. I cannot suppose that the Hon. Mr. Scotland has wilfully mis-stated facts, but I am at a loss to account for his having brought so serious a charge against his fellow-settlers without taking the trouble to ascertain whether it was well founded.

Moreover, supposing such a practice as he describes had existed, it would surely have been his first duty to represent the matter to the proper authorities here, in order that, if not at once checked, the responsibility for such neglect might lie on the right shoulders.

I will only add that the statements in Mr. Scotland's letter, if, as I suppose, not wilfully untrue, imply an almost incredible amount of ignorance of the real peril to which the weaker settlements of the North Island have been latterly exposed.

I have, &c.,

H. R. RICHMOND,

Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

No. 31.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. R. PARRIS to Mr. G. S. COOPER.

(No. 335.)

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 15th December, 1868.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Assistant Under Secretary's letter (No. 407-2), of 1st December, enclosing a copy of a letter from the Hon. H. Scotland to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, with instructions to report thereon.

With reference to Mr. Scotland's assertion, in paragraph 1 of his letter, that "the feeling of insecurity said to exist at present among the settlers to the south, and to allay which the presence of an armed force is suggested, has been entirely caused by the misconduct of certain of the settlers themselves, in persistently driving their horses upon the better pasture of the Natives on the south bank of the Stoney River," I beg to state that no complaint has ever been made to me by the Natives that Europeans were in the habit of driving their horses on to their pasture south of the Stoney River; and, moreover, had such been the practice of the settlers, contrary to the wishes of the Natives, I am certain I should have been informed of it.

As to Mr. Scotland's assertion that that has been the cause of the feeling of insecurity said to exist among the settlers to the south, I can only say that I am sorry he should have expressed himself so very uncharitably towards the out-settlers, whose isolated condition entitles them to the warmest sympathy of their fellow-settlers in the present very trying and critical condition of the country.

The disasters in the Patea District and the atrocities on the East Coast are, I submit, sufficient to cause a feeling of insecurity to out-settlers in any part of the country, where there are disaffected tribes living near them, as is the case in this district; but as regards the best mode of averting similar calamities, that is a question different people are very likely to entertain different opinions upon, and I in some measure agree with Mr. Scotland on that point.

The questions which have led to disputes between the Europeans and the Natives more than any other, are looted cattle and horses. One of these cases occurred while I was at the South last month. Two Europeans went to Taihua, near Warea, to look for a horse which had got away, and found it at that place. The Natives claimed the horse, and stated that they had bred it, and refused to give it up; upon which a dispute arose, and one of the Europeans was guilty of very offensive language, when a Native threatened to strike him with a spade. The Europeans returned to town, and reported that they had had a very narrow escape of their lives, which caused some excitement in the town.

On the occasion of the meeting at the Taihua, when His Honor the Superintendent accompanied me, as reported in my letter No. 319, of the 1st instant, we inquired of the Natives what had occasioned their violence towards the two Europeans, when they stated that the horse was theirs, and that they refused to give it up. That thereupon one of the Europeans called the Native who refused to give the horse up, a "b—— b——," when the Native caught up a spade and threatened to strike the European with it, upon which they (the Europeans) went away.

The Natives stated on the occasion that if Europeans wished to come on to their runs to look for horses they were willing for them to do so, provided they brought a letter from me to that effect, when they would go with them to look for their horses, and to see that they did not take horses belonging to them (the Natives) away, which they said the Europeans were in the habit of doing, by driving them away from their runs.

I have, &c.,

R. PARRIS,

Civil Commissioner.

The Under Native Secretary, Wellington.

No. 32.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. R. PARRIS to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

(No. 314.)

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 28th November, 1868.

I have the honor to report, for the information of His Excellency's Government, that in consequence of the late disasters on the East Coast, the settlers of this district have again been thrown into a state of excitement, and it is almost more than I can do to satisfy them that there is no immediate danger, or any necessity for dreading anything like a surprise as that at Turanganui, on the East Coast.