

It appears to His Excellency that, in praying him to summon the General Assembly immediately, and transmit your petition to Her Majesty's Government, you propose that he should act independently of, if not in opposition to, his Responsible Advisers, a course which would be justified only by great and exceptional emergencies.

The object to be gained by pursuing such a course is, in your opinion, that the Imperial Parliament might not be led without due warning to pass an Act which would destroy complete representative institutions in this colony. As His Excellency is aware that there is not, on the part of the Government of New Zealand, any intention to make application to the Imperial Government to propose any such measure to Parliament, or that there is any necessity for so doing, to enable the General Assembly in the exercise of its legitimate functions to carry out in its next session, by specific legislation, the constitutional changes which by resolution in its recent session it declared to be advisable, His Excellency hopes that, with further information on this point, you will be satisfied that the prayer of your petition ought not to be complied with; and that it is also needless to make telegraphic communication to Her Majesty's Government of a fact, which must be known to them, as it might be supposed to be known to every person in this colony, that there is no person "qualified," if by that expression in your petition is meant accredited, to negotiate or communicate with Her Majesty's Government on the abolition of provincial institutions.

His Excellency is very sensible that your experience is far greater than his own in the duties of a Colonial Governor, but it is nevertheless incumbent upon him to act according to his own view of his duty; and considering, as he does, that to transmit your petition in its present form to Her Majesty's Government, with a request that it be laid before Parliament, would be in some measure to accept as matters of fact the premises upon which it is based, he is constrained to decline to accede to your prayer in this particular.

His Excellency desires to assure you that, regarding as he does with the greatest respect and consideration any expression of opinion on the public affairs of New Zealand by one so highly qualified as yourself, he will most willingly and promptly transmit any representation which you may desire to make directly through him as the appointed channel to Her Majesty or Her Majesty's Government, in regard to those affairs.

I have, &c.,

FRANCIS A. HARE,
Private Secretary.

Sir George Grey, K.C.B., &c.

No. 4.

The SUPERINTENDENT, Auckland, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, Auckland, 4th December, 1874.

Adverting to your letter of the 31st October last, No. 449, in which you acknowledge the receipt of a petition addressed to His Excellency the Governor by Sir George Grey, K.C.B., and forwarded by the petitioner to this office for transmission, I have now the honor to transmit to you the enclosed copy of a letter received by me yesterday from the petitioner, together with an unopened communication addressed to him by His Excellency's Private Secretary, and presumed to contain a reply to the petition.

I have, &c.,

J. WILLIAMSON,
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Enclosure in No. 4.

SIR,—

Kawau, 11th November, 1874.

On the 14th ultimo, I transmitted, through your Honor, a petition addressed to the Governor in reference to certain proposed changes in the Constitution of this Colony, by which the provinces in the North Island were to be swept away.

In sending that petition relating to a vital provincial question, through you, the Superintendent of the Province in which I reside, I followed the proper constitutional course.

You were so good as to send it on through the Colonial Secretary, making the prayer of my petition your own by recommending its adoption. I feel very grateful to you for this. Such a recommendation, coming from the Superintendent of this important province, who is elected by so large a constituency, ought to have carried great weight with it, and would undoubtedly have done so with Her Majesty's Ministers and the British Parliament, if the papers had, in obedience to Her Majesty's commands on such subjects, been sent on to them. The whole question would then have been brought to a fair and open issue before Parliament, to whom the appeal must ultimately lie. My memorial would not have stood alone: your recommendation would have supported it.

I now gather from your letter of the 5th instant that the only reply you have received to my petition, and to your own request, is a dry acknowledgment of the receipt of those papers.

At the same time I have received the accompanying packet from the Government (I enclose it to you unopened), which I presume contains the reply to my petition. I beg that you will be so good as to send it on to the Colonial Secretary with a copy of this letter, for I believe that I am entitled to a reply to my petition through the same channel through which I transmitted it, and that you were, at the same time, entitled to a proper reply to your letter, stating whether your recommendation was to be complied with or not, and, if not, the grounds on which your request was refused. I cannot myself treat with the very slightest want of respect the Superintendent who represents so large and important a community, nor ignore your position and rights, thereby relinquishing the whole question for which I have contended. On the other hand, I cannot too earnestly declare that I have no intention of