

SESS. II.—1879.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# NATIVE DISTURBANCE AT OTAUA, HOKIANGA

(PAPERS RELATING TO A).

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.*

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## No. 1.

Mr. VICKERS to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

(Telegram.)

Auckland, 4th September, 1879.

HAVE received telegram from Mr. Kemp, who is at Bay of Islands, relative to an affray between Natives at a place called Otatau, near Hokianga. Dispute was about a survey. Mr. Kemp says, this morning: "Further particulars connected with Native affair. There are two killed and two wounded on one side, and one killed and two wounded on the other. It is purely a Native question." Von Stürmer, R.M., in whose district this has occurred, has just arrived by steamer from Sydney, and is on his way over. Marsh Brown and Hone Mohi will report direct to Native Minister. It has no political significance.

T. W. Lewis, Esq., Under Secretary,  
Native Department, Wellington.

S. C. E. VICKERS,  
Chief Clerk.

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## No. 2.

Mr. S. VON STÜRMER to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

(Telegram.)

Russell, 4th September, 1879.

JUST returned. Shall be in Hokianga to-morrow.  
Under Secretary, Native Office,  
Government Buildings, Wellington.

SPENCER VON STÜRMER.

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## No. 3.

Mr. WEBSTER to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Hokianga, 4th September, 1879.

In reference to my telegram of 2nd instant, *re* Native disturbance at Otatau, I have the honor to inform you that I proceeded there yesterday, and, on inquiry, was informed that Wi Pou, a Native chief of Otatau, and his party had gone to cut lines in a block of land lying between Otatau and Mataraua, with the intention, on completing the lines, to have it surveyed. The Natives at Mataraua were asked to join in clearing the lines, that their boundaries might be settled. They objected altogether to have the land surveyed. On the 1st instant Wi Pou and his party proceeded to clear the lines, and while resting to cook food about noon they were fired upon by a party from Mataraua, killing two of their party and wounding two (one dangerously). The remainder ran away for guns they had in the bush and returned the fire, killing two of the Mataraua party and wounding one slightly. Each party dispersed, and next day some friendly Natives brought the dead to the settlement. I am assured by Wi Pou and party that they have no intention of renewing the conflict, as they acted in self-defence; they also promise that they will not proceed to clear the lines again until the matter is investigated. While at Otatau a deputation of friendly Natives arrived from the Mataraua party, and assured me that there will be no renewal of the conflict; so the disturbance will end for the present. No doubt that Wi Pou and party had a good claim to the land they were clearing, and the other party had also a claim for an adjoining block. Te Huehue was shared between both parties at last Native Land Court. There has been a very bad feeling between both tribes for many years on land disputes.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM WEBSTER,  
District Officer.

The Hon. the Native Minister, Wellington.

## No. 4.

Mr. E. M. WILLIAMS to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Puketona, 5th September, 1879.

It is with much regret I have to report for the information of the Hon. the Native Minister that on Monday last, the 1st instant, a Native disturbance took place at Mataraua, resulting in loss of life, four having been killed and three wounded.

I have also to regret that, being confined to the house by ill-health, I was unable to visit these Natives myself, but have learnt with satisfaction that several of the influential chiefs of the district went at once to Mataraua and have succeeded in quelling this disturbance.

This quarrel has been the result of an endeavour on the part of certain Natives to push the survey of a block of land at Mataraua, for which they had received a sum of money in advance, the boundaries of this land being disputed by another party not interested in the sale.

I had been informed by Natives from Kaikohe of the probability of a disturbance should the survey be attempted, and at their request wrote to the surveyors recommending them to withdraw until the Natives could arrange their difficulties; and I was glad to learn to-day that, acting upon my advice, they at once retired.

It appears, however, that the Natives who sold the land continued cutting the lines after the surveyors had left, and, being met by the opposing party, shots were exchanged, with the results already stated.

I have not as yet obtained full particulars of this sad affair, but will not fail to report as early as possible any further information I may have to communicate.

I have, &amp;c.,

The Under Secretary, Native Office, Wellington.

EDWD. M. WILLIAMS, R.M.

## No. 5.

MAIHI P. KAWITI to the Hon. Mr. SHEEHAN.

[TRANSLATION.]

FRIEND,—

Waiomio, Kawakawa, 11th September, 1879.

Salutations to you and Sir George Grey. Salutations to you both. This is my word to you. If you both stand upon your Government (*i.e.*, remain in office), let the benefits arising from your conduct of affairs continue to increase over the two peoples—the European and the Maori—so that the approbation of the two peoples may rest upon you both. No more upon that subject.

I have received your telegram referring to the Ngapuhi disturbance, in which four persons were killed, two on one side and two on the other. Your telegram states that you are very much grieved on account of this evil work; secondly, demands that the matter shall be investigated according to law; thirdly, states that this has been a decided trampling upon the law by Ngapuhi; and, fourthly, expresses your desire that the evil-doing of Ngapuhi should stop at the fighting of Hone Heke, and cease from that time, so that no further evil should arise after those two, including Kawiti.

Friend, I concur in what you say in your telegram to me. Hearken, O friend, Mr. Sheehan. This people, Ngapuhi, is a strong and a stiff-necked people, about whom their proverb says, in the song which you have heard, “Puhī ko whaorau tenei, puhī tani wharau.” That is their proverb.

Sufficient. We went to trample upon that disturbance, and held a meeting at Kaikohe. I stood up and spoke this word to the chiefs of Ngapuhi: “Hearken, O ye chiefs of Ngapuhi, and ye candidates for election. This is my word. The candidates from Ngapuhi from Hokianga; the candidate from Kaikohe, Hirini Taiwhanga; Heta te Haara, from Ohaeawai; Wiremu Katene, from Te Waimate—let all these candidates be overthrown. Let there be no candidate from Ngapuhi. Let the member to represent us all be elected by Te Rarawa, by the peaceful and well-behaved people. Let there be no member for Ngapuhi, because this is the seventh time that blood has been shed in the District of Hokianga, Kaikohe, Ohaeawai, and Te Waimate.” When I had finished, Hirini Taiwhanga stood up and said: “O my friend Maihi. You saw that I was a person of low degree, and that is the reason why you suggest that I should be overthrown.” Then I said to Hirini: “With reference to what you have said, when have you advocated the law during these many years past? Do you cease.” These (words) are sufficient.

Now, upon our arrival at Otua, we found the two dead persons belonging to Ngaitu lying there. We made application that the land should be given up to us, to the establishment of peace (or to the mediators). This was agreed to by Wi Pou; and that completed the business with the enemy. At daybreak next morning we started, I and Kerei Mangonui, with Te Tai and fifty others, and arrived at Mataraua, where the other belligerents were. Peace was established, and we made application that the land upon which their people had been killed should be given up to us. The deceased persons were chiefs of high rank belonging to Ngapuhi. We persisted in our application. Then Whakamautara stood up and called (upon the others) and said: “Shall it be so; shall we give up the land?” And all his people agreed to the proposal. Then Whakamautara said to us: “Take ye the land. Let neither I nor my enemy have it. I am quite willing. If my friend (enemy?—the word ‘riri’ having probably been omitted) receives any portion of it, we two shall get into trouble again.” And here he gave utterance to his second word: “I am not willing that there should be a rehearing by Court, or an arbitration respecting this land, but that it should remain in the hands of the peacemakers, who will hold it.” Here ceased the talking.

This is a word of mine to you, O friend, Mr. Sheehan. I am in favour of leaving this matter with the council of the chiefs of Ngapuhi, so that they may carefully consider what shall be done with the land upon which the people of Ngapuhi have been killed. If you have any opinion upon the subject, write, so that I may know what it is.

The Hon. Mr. Sheehan, Hauraki, Auckland.

From MAIHI P. KAWITI.

## No. 6.

HETA TE HAARA to the Hon. Mr. SHEEHAN.

[TRANSLATION.]

FRIEND,—

Ohaeawai, 12th September, 1879.

Greeting. I have received your telegram in reference to the quarrel between the Ngaitu and Ngatitautahi tribes.

Friend, when your telegram arrived, peace had been made; nevertheless, Ngapuhi are willing that the offence should be tried by law. Probably you have received a letter from Ngapuhi asking that the law should deal with it. My word to you is that it should be tried by law. Ended. From your loving friend.

The Hon. John Sheehan, Native Minister.

HETA TE HAARA.

## No. 7.

Mr. S. VON STÜRMER to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Hokianga, 3rd October, 1879.

In compliance with instructions contained in your telegram of the 5th September, I have now the honor to report for the information of the Government that, on my arrival in Russell from Sydney on the 4th September, I was informed that, during my absence in Australia, a land quarrel had arisen between the Ngaitu, residing at Otaua, and the Ngaitewake, residing at Mataraua and Kaikohe, and that a fight had taken place in which several persons on both sides had been killed and wounded. I at once landed from the steamer, and, as soon as possible, proceeded to the settlement of the Ngaitewake at Mataraua, where I was informed I should meet Maihi Paraone Kawiti, Kerei Mangonui, and other leading chiefs, who had gone thither to act as mediators between the two parties. On approaching Mataraua I was met by several influential chiefs, who informed me that both parties had agreed to cease fighting, and had handed over the land (Mangamaru) to Maihi Paraone Kawiti and Kerei Mangonui, and that there was still a good deal of excitement over the matter. It would be better if I did not visit the Natives, as my presence might tend to reopen a discussion on the cause of the trouble, and lead to fresh complications. I therefore proceeded at once to Hokianga.

On making careful inquiries, I find that the Ngaitu, of whom Hoterene Wi Pou is the leading chief, had received large advances from Europeans for the purchase of land situated between Otaua and Mataraua, and in which the Ngaitewake claim to have a large interest. Early in August certain members of the latter tribe had written to Mr. Williams, Resident Magistrate, asking him to caution surveyors not to come on the disputed land, which that gentleman at once did, and so matters remained until the 1st September, when Wi Pou and Kanere, with an armed party of sixteen men belonging to Ngaitu, proceeded to Mangamaru and commenced cutting a line. About midday, whilst preparing food, a party of the Ngaitewake of nineteen men, under the leadership of Taniora and Te Whata Patumauku, came suddenly upon them, and one of them shouted, "Stop work, or you are all dead men." In another instant one of the party shouted, "Puhia, puhia!" and a volley was fired, Ngawaka, of Ngaitu, being wounded. Ngaitu then rushed to their arms, which had been piled a short distance from the party, and a sharp conflict took place, in which Paraha Hare and Te Akatiti, on the side of Ngaitu, were killed, and Ngawaka and Hoani Tuoro wounded. On the side of Ngaitewake, Paora Anaru and Hiri were killed, and Te Kohe wounded. Both parties then ran away, leaving the dead and wounded on the ground, where they remained for twenty-four hours.

As soon as the fact became known, Maihi Paraone Kawiti, Kerei Mangonui, Hone Mohi Tawhai, and other chiefs, proceeded to mediate between the two parties, and on the 4th September the trouble was finally settled by both sides consenting to hand over the disputed ground to Maihi Paraone Kawiti and Kerei Mangonui, on the understanding that no further action should be taken by the Government in the matter. This being agreed to, they returned to their respective kaingas, considering the affair finally settled.

I have since informed some of the ringleaders that I considered it highly probable that the Government would take proceedings against them for this serious breach of the peace, and have endeavoured to ascertain the feelings of disinterested chiefs on the same subject. In each case I am advised not to push the matter at present; and that, as no European was in any way offended or injured, there is not much harm done, as each of the parties engaged lost an equal number of men, and they seem to think that any attempt at a forcible arrest of the parties might lead to serious trouble.

I may mention that during the last four years I have three times prevented the same people from coming to blows, and that I do not believe this land is the sole cause of the quarrel, but that it is the outcome of an old tribal grudge of very many years' standing.

I may mention that Sergeant Donovan and Constable Coughlan, of the Armed Constabulary Force, were at the scene of the conflict, and identified the bodies.

The Under Secretary, Native Department,  
Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
SPENCER VON STÜRMER,  
Resident Magistrate.

