

17.—I do not see that any object would be gained by setting a part any district in the neighbourhood of New Plymouth, for the maintenance of native laws. The sooner our laws are put in force amongst the natives the better, and as the natives are so rapidly decreasing and the settlers increasing, we shall soon be able to enforce our laws, but at present we must tacitly acquiesce in some of their customs, but I think an open acknowledgement that there were two systems of laws in force would have a bad effect and might tend to retard the operation of our laws.

18.—I regret to say that several breaches of the Arms Ordinance have occurred in New Plymouth district lately.

I understand that it has been ascertained that as many as 25 guns have been sold to the natives lately, the high price which natives offer for arms has been an inducement to unscrupulous persons to infringe the law; and I fear that the settlers do not look on such suicidal acts of individuals of their own body with sufficient disapprobation.

A great number of good fire arms had also got among the natives prior to the passing of the ordinance, from the settlers, finding little use for their guns in the way of sporting, and disposing of them to the natives. The natives I believe are amply supplied with ammunition.

19.—On the whole, unless a greater emergency than the present arises, I do not think it would be expedient to send a force to New Plymouth, but if it is thought necessary to send one, I should recommend that a number, not less than 250 be sent, and that in the first instance it would be amply supplied in all points, considering that from the situation of New Plymouth it may be cut off from all communications with Auckland and Wellington for six weeks or two months.

20.—On the 9th inst., I left New Plymouth to return to Auckland overland at the Waitera river, 10 miles north of New Plymouth. I found William King, one of the principal, Chief of the district, he received me with marked civility and gave me two men to carry my baggage, he also paddled me over the river himself. This man is supposed to be hostile to the Government for his being opposed to the sale of land, but I think a good deal of opposition may be attributed to the fact of several men of inferior rank being appointed assessors over his head.

He stated that he would remain neutral during the present troubles, but was fortifying his Pah as a shelter, he said, in case he was attacked. William King was one of our allies during the war in the Southern district, against Rangihēata, and has seen our power, and I think has very little idea of acting in a hostile manner towards the settlers, independently of which he must know his position on the Waitera, would be very precarious in case he took an active part against us, and would not risk his valuable property.

21.—The natives about New Plymouth, have made a greater advance than any tribe I have seen in the country, and I have been told by competent authority that they possess much as property in carts, ploughs, stock, and agricultural produce, as settlers, and I can hardly suppose that they would risk all this by a collision with the Europeans.

22.—On the 11th I arrived at Mokau, where I saw the influential Chief Takekēi of the Ngāti Maniapoto tribe, he stated that he would not allow any of his young men to meddle in the disputes at Taranaki.

He has lately sold a block of land to the Government, and is anxious for settlers, but I fear that Mokau is too isolated to tempt settlers for some time to come. Here also there is some difference about land, and an influential chief has tapped the river, so that the natives are not allowed to catch fish.

23.—On the 15th I arrived at Kawhia. Here is the usual division among the natives, relative to the sale of land, some being opposed and some in favor of it; great caution therefore will have to be exercised in any purchase, in order to avoid exciting disturbances between tribes.

24.—On leaving Kawhia, I went inland to the Waha and Rangiciowhia, about 5 miles from the head of Kawhia harbour. Ngatitukairo tribe have got a good flour mill just finished, which seems to occupy the whole of their attention.

The last instalment for this mill is still unpaid, and the natives request a loan of £100 to enable them to pay the millwright, proposing to repay the same from