

A few weeks after the Waikato flag had been raised in Taranaki, His Excellency Governor Browne had arrived here (February 1859) at New Plymouth on a visit; the Taranakis were anxious that he should be informed, and rightly informed of the steps they had taken and of their motives and object in having done so. Now, although I had from the first beginning of the King movement up to the very last opposed it openly and most strenuously step after step and in every stage of its development, clearly foreseeing as I did its dangerous tendencies and the reprehensible and threatening consequences it was fraught with; and although my open and declared opposition continued unabated, still I felt it nevertheless at the same time to be my duty to comply with an urgent request made me by the Taranaki people (Natives) to the effect that I would see the Governor and lay the matter before him with an explicit assurance on their part, that by having raised King Potatau's flag they meant no disloyalty to Her Majesty's Government, no hostility whatever towards it or the pakehas generally: but, on the contrary, simply to maintain peace and order among themselves and to secure a lasting and uninterrupted peace and good understanding between themselves on the one part, and the Government and the settlers on the other part. My own private opinion was that it might be of very great importance that His Excellency should have personally every information attainable on the subject, in order to be able to form such judgment of it as might be serviceable in assisting him to realize a mastery over it (in time and whilst the Natives were still in a tractable temper), and to accommodate it in such a manner as without prejudice to the honour of the Crown might perhaps have preserved the peace of the country and attached the Maori race upon clear and definite terms, honourable and satisfactory to both, more firmly to our throne and Government.

Accordingly, as soon as I had the opportunity of waiting upon His Excellency Governor Browne, I took the liberty of mentioning the subject to him; but he told me that it was a subject beneath the dignity of Her Majesty's Representative to take notice of.

On my return home to Taranaki, the Natives were eager to learn how the Governor had received their message and what reply he had given to it; I felt it to be a most delicate point to deal with, and therefore answered with caution and rather evasively, that it was not for me to put questions to, and to ask for an answer from, the Governor. If this did not entirely satisfy them nor meet their expectations, it at any rate avoided affording a direct cause to them for prejudice against His Excellency.

A few days later, on the 8th March, 1859, the Governor held a public meeting here in town, with the Natives of this neighbourhood, on which occasion Te Teira had offered the Waitara land for sale, accompanying the offer by spreading a mat at the Governor's feet; and Wiremu Kingi had openly declared his opposition to the sale. A Taranaki Chief, Poharama Te Whakatiki had been present during the proceedings, and reported home on his return that immediately upon Te Teira's proposing the land for sale some Chief and Chiefs whom he named (but here I am at fault to recollect exactly who they had been and therefore do not give names) had interposed, cautioning Te Teira by way of good advice to relinquish the subject, as, if entered upon, it would surely bring again trouble. Finally Wiremu Kingi had put his word against the sale and then had left.

A day or two after these proceedings had taken place, a kind of proclamation, printed in Maori and signed by the Governor, and containing the sum and substance of His Excellency's speech to the Natives at the meeting of March 8th, was sent up the coast and circulated among the Taranaki and Ngatiruanui tribes. That paper made a very unfavourable impression upon the Taranaki Natives. They felt struck at once with what they took for its three leading points, and which were, the 1st, condemnatory of Katatore on account of his having killed Rawiri; 2nd, exonerative of Ihaia Te Kiri Kumara, the principal assassin of Katatore; 3rd, initiative of a new policy respecting the acquisition of Maori land by the Governor.

To further crown, as it were, all the rest that had thus far come before them, His Excellency had returned home to Auckland, and there was nothing further heard about his coming to pay a visit to the Taranakis and Ngatiruanuis.

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place them side by side (though in an entirely separate and subordinate Council of an elementary and initiative character and tendency) with their white British fellow subjects in a position of national representation; although it might have at first only served them as a guarantee that there was nothing of a spirit of exclusiveness or partiality with a tendency of antagonism against them in existence; but that, on the contrary, they were recognized as a body of people who in virtue of their being Her Majesty's subjects, held a certain status in the country with a right and privilege secured to them to at least in so far participate in public affairs, as to hear all that was being done, and to be heard in reference to all that might affect them more especially and immediately. Nothing of all this. The Europeans had it all to themselves. They (the Maori) were left after, as before, to all their internal disunion and disorders. Sir George Grey had left the country before the new order of things had been inaugurated and set in motion. The expected new Governor knew nothing of them nor they of him, to afford them a sense of security; the general cry of the Europeans was, land! land! let Government urge the Maori to sell their lands, to come under and submit to British rule and law, &c. The consequences soon became apparent. The Natives took alarm, fearing coercion, expropriation, slavery, even ultimate extinction. Seeing themselves left being uncared for, they began to bethink themselves of ways and means whereby to take care of themselves. They soon conceived it to be a matter of absolute and unavoidable necessity to take steps for their self-defence and self-preservation. Quickly the first step of a hazardous tendency in that direction was taken, by the formation of an anti-land-selling league between several of the tribes along this coast; but it soon proved inefficient for securing the object aimed at. They seemed to become more and more sensible that to accomplish this they must be able to come up to and cope with the Pakeha on the same level, and that this was only attainable by imitating their example of uniting themselves closely together as one body, in the form and strength of an organized national community. Thus they have been drifted and have they been left to gradually drift, on, on, with an increasingly augmenting spirit of antagonism toward the other dominant race, until they have assumed the defiant and disastrous status of an independent *imperium in imperio*. Truly, all of us who have laboured here throughout all these past years incessantly to counteract such a dangerous course and to ward off and prevent such an issue, may well say in this respect, "We have laboured in vain and have spent our strength for naught." It was too late for to obtain any good results, to call a Native Conference at Kohimarama in 1860. Had something of that kind been thought of and done a year or two sooner, it might, perhaps, have saved the country from its recent and present calamities. At that time there was still peace, and the Native mind was more or less tractable, now it is infatuated. Then they would have more or less viewed it as an act of royal grace bestowed on them. In what light did they view it in 1860? The hostile Natives seemed very generally to regard it as an act of deception.