

## MINUTES BY THE GOVERNOR AND MINISTERS.

MINUTE BY MINISTERS ON THE POSITION OF THE COLONY AT THE DATE OF THE ARRIVAL OF SIR GEORGE GREY: CHIEFLY IN RELATION TO THE NATIVE INSURRECTION.

Auckland, 8th October, 1861.

Ministers assume that Sir George Grey has been put in possession of all information which had reached the Home Government down to the 5th of June last, which would include the events in the month of March, or possibly to the beginning of April.

It is unnecessary to offer any comments on the origin or progress of the Taranaki war, with the particulars of which Sir George Grey is no doubt fully acquainted to the above dates. Actual fighting ceased on the 12th or 14th of March last; the Waikato contingent returned home, accompanied by Wiremu Kingi and a few followers; whilst Hapurora, Kingi's fighting general, and a portion of the Ngatiawas, submitted themselves and accepted the terms of peace offered by the Governor. The Ngatiruanuis and Taranakis also returned home, and the British force, with the exception of one Regiment, were removed to Auckland.

There were three distinct offers of terms of peace by the Governor to the different tribes who had been engaged in the insurrection. 1st, those addressed to the Ngatiawas: 2nd, those addressed to the Ngatiruanuis and Taranakis: 3rd, those addressed to the Waikatos. See Assembly Paper, E—No. 1B. p. 4 & 5.

The first have been subscribed by a portion of the Ngatiawas, including Hapurora but not Kingi. But although a cessation of hostilities has resulted, the terms imposed on the natives have not been fulfilled.

The second have been rejected.

The third were laid before a very large Runanga of Waikatos at Ngaruawahia on the 7th June last. The reply of the Runanga neither accepts nor rejects, but suggests that the Governor should give time for discussion and consideration. A letter from Wiremu Tamehana, the leader of the King movement, of the same date, rejects the terms; but he subsequently addressed another letter to the Governor, June 7th, of a less argumentative and positive character. Ibid, p. 5.  
Ibid, p. 11.  
E—No. 1B. p. 17.  
No. 1B. p. 15.

Thompson cannot be regarded as the mouthpiece of the Waikato tribe as a whole, though he probably represents, or at least at that time represented, the sentiments of a majority, and exercises much influence both in Waikato and elsewhere. A brief memoir which appeared in a late Auckland paper, illustrates his position at this crisis. It was written by a gentleman who has had peculiar opportunities of making himself acquainted with the subject.

Owing to the lateness of the season and the unprecedented wetness of the winter, all military movements have been necessarily suspended from the period of the return of the Waikatos to their own country. It is understood, however, to have been the intention of Governor Browne to insist on the submission of that tribe, and their acceptance of the terms offered to them in May.

Early in July a change of Ministry took place. A prominent feature of the policy of the new Ministry, consisted in their desire to set on foot negotiations with the natives, of a practical character, by personal communication; in the hope that amicable discussion might lead to a peaceful solution of the difficulties in which the relations of the Government and the Natives were involved. The Ministry proposed that a preliminary meeting should be held between Tamehana and some of the Ministry, at Tuakau, and then, if there proved to be a prospect of a satisfactory result, that Tamehana should meet the Governor at Auckland or elsewhere. These views met His Excellency's concurrence. Replies were sent to Tamehana, intimating that the desired meeting should shortly take place.

Matters were in this state when the announcement of the appointment of Sir George Grey led to the suspension of all important measures connected with the natives, either of a military or diplomatic character.

The attitude of the Waikatos is at present one of suspense. They say that they will not give up the King movement, that the appointment of Sir George Grey as Governor will not induce them to succumb; they must hear what he has to say. They will remain quiescent. They do not wish to fight; but if they are attacked, they will fight to the last man. These are probably the statements of a majority of the tribe: but there is a considerable section of them who are opposed to the King movement, and other tribes elsewhere, particularly the Ngapuhis and Northern Natives; and some of them are reported to be exerting themselves to induce others to abandon it. It is probable, however, that if war should ensue, the bulk of the native population to the Southward of Auckland would gradually drift into it.

The Waikatos are the backbone of the present great movement; whether called the King movement, or known by any other symbol. The Kingship is not, in the opinion of Ministers, an essential ingredient in that movement, further than as a rallying cry, and as representing in some degree ideas of self government and separate nationality. But many of the other tribes which support the movement and call themselves Kingites, would admit of no claim to supremacy on the part of the Waikatos.

Their views on the subject of the great agitation which has been going on for some years are probably not well defined; but the pervading idea of the bulk of those who support the movement aims at independence and freedom from interference on the part of the British government. It is less