

No. 28.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. G. S. COOPER to Mr. R. PARRIS.

(No. 390-2.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 2nd November, 1868.

I have the honor, by direction of Colonel Haultain, in the absence of Mr. Richmond, to forward, for your information and guidance, copy a letter from this office addressed to the Resident Magistrate, Patea, dated 22nd October, 1868.

I have, &c.,

G. S. COOPER,

Under Secretary.

The Civil Commissioner, Taranaki.

No. 29.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. H. HALSE to Mr. R. PARRIS.

(No. 407-2.)

SIR,—

Native Office, Wellington, 1st December, 1868.

I am directed by Mr. Richmond to enclose a copy of a letter, dated the 17th ultimo, from the Hon. H. Scotland, and to request you to be good enough to state whether the assertion made therein is correct, that the settlers drive their cattle on Native lands on the south bank of Stoney River, in opposition to the wishes of the owners of those lands.

I have, &c.,

H. HALSE,

Assistant Under Secretary.

The Civil Commissioner, Taranaki.

Enclosure in No. 29.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. H. SCOTLAND to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.

SIR,—

Te Henui, New Plymouth, 17th November, 1868.

Hearing that two resolutions agreed to by the Justices of the Peace belonging to this Province on the 7th instant, have been forwarded to the General Government for their approval, I have the honor to state that I was present at the meeting above referred to, and voted against the same. I now beg to protest against these resolutions for the reasons subjoined:—

1st. Because the feeling of insecurity said to exist at present among the settlers to the South, and to allay which the presence of an armed force is suggested, has been entirely caused by the misconduct of certain of the settlers themselves, in persistently driving their horses upon the better pasture of the Natives living on the south bank of the Stoney River.

2nd. Because, from the peculiar nature of the force proposed to be raised, it would be necessary, in order to its complete efficiency, to keep it continually on the move and well practised in bush evolutions; and such a mode of training, it is submitted, would become an object of suspicion to the Natives, by suggesting to them that we distrusted them, and were making preparations to meet an outbreak.

3rd. Because if the settlers cannot now refrain from committing depredations upon the Natives upon the one side of the Stoney River, they will be still less likely to do so when backed by the presence of an armed force.

I have, &c.,

HENRY SCOTLAND.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

No. 30.

Copy of a Letter from His Honor H. R. RICHMOND to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office,

New Plymouth, 21st December, 1868.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th November, enclosing a copy of a letter from the Hon. H. Scotland.

In reply, I beg to inform you that the assertion made in that letter, to the effect that the settlers drive their cattle on Native lands on the south bank of the Stoney River in opposition to the wishes of the owners of those lands, is altogether untrue, as no such practice exists either with or without the consent of the Natives. It is possible that Mr. Scotland may have heard of one or two disputes that have occurred between Natives and Europeans as to the ownership of horses which had been captured during the war time, and have strayed back to the south of Stoney River; or of one case of a more serious nature, where three or four youths, headed by a very reckless settler, attempted to carry on the practice of looting horses long after fighting had ceased in this neighbourhood.

Steps have been taken by Mr. Parris to provide for the peaceable settlement of questions of ownership of horses for the future, and the persons guilty of the rash act just referred to were severely fined by the Bench of Magistrates. I may here suggest, however, that it would perhaps be well to provide by legislation some special means of preventing settlers from going without permission into disturbed Native districts.

The sense of insecurity felt by the settlers in the out-districts is, I need hardly say, due to the serious disturbances going on in other parts of the North Island, and the hitherto very doubtful attitude of some of the Natives in the immediate neighbourhood of this settlement.