

1884.
NEW ZEALAND.

REDUCTION OF MAJOR ROPATA'S ALLOWANCE

(PAPERS RELATIVE TO).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Bryce, with leave of the House.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to Major ROPATA.

(Translation.)

FRIEND, MAJOR ROPATA,—

Native Office, Wellington, 8th April, 1884.

Greeting. In consequence of the intention of the Government to reduce the expenditure of the colony, the salary paid to you from the Militia Office and the Land Purchase Department ceased on the 31st of March last, but Mr. Bryce has been pleased to increase the salary paid to you by this Office from £50 to £100 per annum, which is the amount that you will receive from the 1st of April.

You must not feel hurt at this: it is not that the Government have any fault to find with you; no, but it has been done because they consider that the expenditure of the colony is too great, how-

From, &c.,

TE RUIHI (T. W. LEWIS).

Major Ropata Wahawaha, Gisborne, Poverty Bay.

Major ROPATA to the Hon. Mr. BRYCE.

(Translation.)

Gisborne, 18th April, 1884.

GREETING. I have received your letter of the 8th of April with respect to the retrenchment in the expenditure of the moneys of the colony, and the reduction of my salary. I have but one word in reply: I will not consent, but you can take it away forcibly. I will not acquiesce, for I have marks of the Queen's favour, which are annulled by what you have done.

That is all.

The Hon. Mr. Bryce.

ROPATA WAHAWAHA.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to Major ROPATA.

(Translation.)

MAJOR ROPATA,—

Native Office, Wellington, 1st May, 1884.

Greeting. The Minister for Native Affairs has seen your letter of the 18th of April, and, as it appears that you are not quite clear about the circumstances under which the amount paid to you has been reduced, Mr. Bryce has directed me to write you this word of explanation.

You will remember that, at the close of military operations against Te Kooti, you were appointed as Officer in Charge of the Ngatiporou District, the salary that you then received being £200 per annum, Native matters being then in an unsettled state. Subsequently, in the year 1879, you applied for your salary to be made up to the amount received by Major Kemp, that is, to £400 per annum; and, as Government were making large land-purchases in your district, in which you could be of much service to the Government, you were appointed Land Purchase Officer at £100 per annum. Subsequently, when a general reduction took place in the salaries and pensions paid in this department, your salary as Assessor was reduced to £50 per annum.

The position of the matter at present is this: The services for which you were paid salaries from the Militia and Land Purchase Departments having ceased, the salaries have been discontinued by Mr. Bryce, who is head also of those departments; but, in order that you should receive the highest salary paid to any Native Assessor, the amount formerly struck off has been restored. You will therefore see that the Government had no intention of putting any slight upon you; no, on the contrary, the Minister for Native Affairs, and the Government, have regarded you as a loyal chief and brave officer who has rendered good service to the colony.

From, &c.,

Major Ropata Wahawaha, Gisborne, Poverty Bay.

T. W. LEWIS (TE RUIHI).

Captain PORTER to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

SIR,— Militia and Volunteer Office, Gisborne, 27th April, 1884.

I have seen a letter from your department addressed to Major Ropata, advising the reduction of his salary upon the ground of retrenchment.

I am disinclined to interfere in questions which have no doubt received full Ministerial consideration; but, in this case, I feel I am warranted in so doing owing to my many years close official intimacy with Major Ropata during war and peace, and consequent full knowledge of the valuable services rendered by him to the colony.

I therefore venture to ask the Hon. the Native Minister to reconsider the matter, and, possibly, take steps to obtain a permanent pension equivalent to the valuable services of so loyal and staunch a man as Ropata. I may mention that Ropata feels pained at the action taken, more particularly as no previous intimation was given as to the desire of the Government; as, in that case, I am convinced Ropata would at once have voluntarily assented to abandon a part, or the whole, of his allowance.

Feeling assured that the Government do not desire to hurt the feelings of a chief who has rendered such good services,

I have, &c.,

THOS. W. PORTER,

The Under-Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

Captain, Commanding East Coast District.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to Captain PORTER, Gisborne.

SIR,— Native Office, Wellington, 1st May, 1884.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, with reference to the reduction in the amount paid to Major Ropata, and to inform you, in reply, that there appears to be considerable misapprehension on the subject.

You will remember that, when active military operations ceased on the East Coast, but the district was still in an unsettled state, Major Ropata was appointed to the charge of the Ngatiporou District, at a salary of £200 a year, paid from Contingent Defence. In 1879 Major Ropata applied for an increase of salary, considering that he should receive the same amount as was then paid to Major Kemp, viz., £400 a year, and, as extensive land-purchase operations were going on at the time, in which Major Ropata could be of much service, his salary was made up to the amount requested, paid as follows: For his military duties, from Defence vote, £200; as Assessor, Native Department, £100; as Land Purchase Officer, £100. Subsequently, when a general reduction took place in the salaries of Assessors, Major Ropata's salary from this department was reduced to £50 a year.

The position of the matter at the present time is this: Major Ropata has now no military duties and no responsibility as officer in charge of a district, and land-purchase operations have also ceased. The salaries, therefore, hitherto paid to him for those services have been discontinued. In order to put him on a level with the highest-paid Native Assessor his salary from this department has been raised again to £100 a year.

In the official letter to Major Ropata stress was laid upon the necessity for retrenchment, partly for the purpose of smoothing matters to an officer who has the respect and confidence of the Government as a loyal chief, and one who has rendered valuable military services to the State. A letter to the above effect will be addressed to Major Ropata, and, with this explanation, no doubt you will be able to remove any soreness that may exist in his mind on account of the reduction.

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS,
Under-Secretary.

Captain Porter, &c., Gisborne.

Captain PORTER to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, Wellington.

SIR,— Militia Office, Gisborne, 9th May, 1884.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter No. 487, relative to reduction of Major Ropata's salary-allowance.

The facts are as stated by you, and admitted by Ropata, but it is the cancellation of his military allowance that appears the hardship, as it was always considered that, whatever the changes and reductions, the £200 would not be affected, being looked upon in the light of a pension.

I have, &c.,

T. W. PORTER,
Captain.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

The UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department, to Captain PORTER, Gisborne.

SIR,— Native Office, Wellington, 15th May, 1884.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, in which you state that Major Ropata's military allowance has been looked upon in the light of a pension, and, in reply, am directed by the Native Minister to point out that, so far from this being the case, the salary was paid from Contingent Defence, a vote which up to last year was borne upon loan. Pensions, I have to add, are not charged to borrowed money.

I have, &c.,

T. W. LEWIS,
Under-Secretary.

Captain Porter, &c., Gisborne.