

[MEMORANDUM.]

February 9th, 1857.

Your Excellency's Ministers have the honor to report that there is every reason to believe that within the last few days a considerable quantity of Arms and Ammunition for the use of the Natives has again been landed within a few miles of Auckland, without any power on the part of the Government to prevent what has now become a matter of frequent occurrence.

It is imperatively required that one or two Steam Vessels of War should be placed under the orders of the Governor of New Zealand, which, amongst other advantages, would have the effect of preventing similar occurrences for the future.

The extensive Sea Board of the Colony, and the many places accessible to Vessels where no Government establishments exist, present innumerable facilities, in the well known absence of any of Her Majesty's Ships of War, to persons interested in maintaining a trade with the Natives, fraught with danger to the peace of Her Majesty's subjects of both Races.

Prominently amongst the ill effects of such a trade, is the large supply of munitions of war, which are notoriously from time to time supplied to the Natives; and this evil is aggravated from the circumstances that the Ships of foreign States are frequently the medium of the traffic.

During the course of each year about one hundred Whaling Ships of the United States visit different parts of the Colony; and are constantly cruising within a few miles of its shores. The knowledge that none of Her Majesty's Ships are stationed on the coast, enables them, almost without risk, to supply the Natives with articles which the latter are by local laws prevented from obtaining in the ordinary course of trade.

It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the ill effects of such a state of affairs; not only are the Natives supplied with articles hurtful to themselves; but they are at the same time encouraged, by the impunity and regularity with which the traffic can at present be maintained, to set at defiance laws which they are led to believe are unjust towards them, and which they daily perceive Her Majesty's Government is powerless to enforce.

Almost insensibly a feeling of contempt for the law extends itself in their minds to all matters where an observance of it would interfere with the wish of the moment; which must act as a powerful agent in destroying that spirit of acquiescence in the supreme authority of the Government which is essential alike to their own civilization and to the maintenance of peaceful relations with the Colonists. And this feeling is increased by the representations of foreigners connected with the traffic referred to and anxious to maintain it; who instil into their minds the belief that the establishment of Her Majesty's Government is oppressive to their liberties, and in opposition to their interests.

In this respect the present Government of New Zealand is most unfavourably circumstanced in comparison with that of Sir G. Grey,—whose statements of the necessity of Steam Vessels of War being permanently stationed in New Zealand were admitted and acted upon by successive Secretaries of State, while other of Her Majesty's Ships were also placed under the orders of the Governor.

The withdrawal of all these has been noticed by the Natives, and has been taken advantage of by them and by others; and the difficulty of conducting the Government of the Colony satisfactorily or with benefit to its inhabitants has been consequently much increased. Whatever measures may be adopted to meet the evils referred to must be comparatively nugatory, unless accompanied with the power to enforce them; and an earnest and frequent consideration of this question has led to the conclusion that Her Majesty's Imperial Government should be requested to supply the deficiency which has for some time past existed in this respect.

Any Ships of War detailed for that purpose should be under the orders of the Governor of New Zealand alone; as otherwise their services could not be relied on with sufficient certainty; as was evidenced in the case of Capt. Genny, when in command of the "Fantome," refusing to comply with the request of the Government to visit New Plymouth; though an active Native war was raging there.

(Signed) E. W. STAFFORD.

Government House,
Auckland, New Zealand, 23rd Jan., 1858.

SIR,—

I have the honor to forward a report from the Resident Magistrate at Napier to the Colonial Secretary with a Memorandum from myself to my responsible advisers, and a letter addressed to the Officer Commanding the Forces with his reply.

2. In accordance with the wishes of my advisers I have requested Col. Wynyard to detach a party of 300 men and 4 guns to Port Napier to be there encamped until permanent and defensible accommodation is provided for two companies, whom I propose to station permanently at that place. "The cost of providing this accommodation is not to be defrayed from the Military Chest unless authorised by Her Majesty's Government."